

# MARY MOTHER OF THE CHURCH CATHOLIC PARISH IVANHOE

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## Plenary Council 2020/2021

### Introduction

By now you already know (because we've said it before) the Australian Catholic Church is planning a 'Plenary Council', the first in 80 years, through which all of us together can help make our Church for young and old in the times we live what Christ is calling us to make it. The process for achieving this is "Listening to Christ by listening to one another".

### How?

The Agenda for the 2020 Plenary is being prepared by a process in which everyone can participate, so you are urged to comment right now on what you think the Plenary needs to address. You can do that already by going online at the Plenary Council website <http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au> and directly submitting your comments via an online form. There are also other options.

Alternatively, as we are called to submit our comment on the questions asked after listening to others and discerning, our Parish, as part of the Yarra Deanery (our neighbouring parishes) has alternatively arranged a simple and informal parish process which includes the option of a comfortable local 'listening' process which you can either join or informally run yourself. You can choose to participate via this local parish process, or independently directly via the Plenary Council online process. In both cases your inputs will go to the same Plenary Council 2020/2021 Agenda-setting process. The Parish option is parish-oriented and has an inbuilt 'listening' component, which is why it was developed locally as an option to encourage local parish community 'engagement'.

### The Parish Option:

The existing Plenary Council website main question is "What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?" The Yarra Deanery has alternatively broken this same question down into three component questions to provide further scope for comments.

The Parish option asks the following 3 question:

- A). "What does our Church look like now" (listening to each other),
- B). "What is Christ calling us to make our Church today?" (listening to the Holy Spirit), and
- C). "What do we, as Church, need to do to move from A to B?" (Listening must lead us to response and action).

### **How will the parish option work?**

Basically, one question will be asked at a time, the inputs gathered – and then in summarised anonymous form shared with all. Then the second question will be asked, and similarly summarised before the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final question in turn will be asked and summarised. All of the responses will then be collectively summarised and submitted into the Plenary Council process. Within the parish the questions will be asked in turn in two ways, online and also by hard copy for those who prefer that. The ‘listening’ can also be in two ways, simply by reading the collated summaries of everyone’s response, and/or by joining or organising a small discussion group, directly listening respectfully to what others are saying, from which all inputs will then form a summary of key points. As these small groups already include a ‘listening’ stage all three questions will be asked, in turn, within these groups.

### **What are examples of small groups?**

Your own family - People of all ages and generations, whether active, occasional, or lapsed Catholics. Constructive church critics are equally welcome.

Parish Group, e.g. Outreach, Youth group, Men’s group, School group, Finance group, Parish leadership group, informal groups of friends, any group.

Small groups are preferred to help make people comfortable, say up to 6 people for example.

### **How to listen and speak?**

*Listening* respectfully, non-judgmentally, patiently, listening at the same time to what the Holy Spirit is calling us as People of God to do for the times and circumstances in which we live. Recognising the need for Church renewal and re-energising.

*Speaking* openly, honestly, respectfully, constructively, in faith, and recognising that each person will have their own thoughts, which may be similar or different.

The most helpful output will be clear but short and sharp Key points that will help form the Agenda for the Plenary Council 2020/2021

### **Organising your group**

If and as you choose, but in an informal, welcoming, accommodating and supportive way. One person to very briefly and concisely summarise all of the key points for each of the three questions asked and to forward these to the Parish collection point (either online or via hardcopy). Group facilitator guide at <https://www.ivanhoecatholics.com/plenary-council>

### **Background resources on issues related to Church renewal**

The main resources for Plenary Council preparation are on the Plenary Council website <http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au> The Yarra Deanery in conjunction with Catholics For Renewal have also prepared augmented comprehensive and complementary “Background Issue Resources for the Australian Plenary Council 2020/2021: which may be downloaded from <https://www.ivanhoecatholics.com/plenary-council>

### **Any Further details or Questions?**

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