

# Plenary 2020 Information Sheet #1



## 1. What is Plenary 2020?

- Plenary 2020 is the name given to a process initiated by the Australian bishops.
- Our bishops are inviting people to engage in listening, dialogue and discernment about the future of the Church in Australia around the Plenary Council meetings in 2020 and 2021.
- A Plenary Council is the highest form of gathering that a church in a particular country can have. It is a process by which lay people and clergy can be heard and has legislative power.

## 2. Why are the Bishops holding a Plenary Council?

- The contemporary society has changed significantly, and the Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse has exposed the significant suffering our Church has caused, revealing our failures, and calling us to change.
- "We must become a humble, listening and discerning church. The Plenary Council... will be an opportunity for us to listen humbly and with open hearts to one another and especially to what the Spirit is saying to us at this time." – Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv

## 3. What is the Plenary 2020 timeline?

- The national dialogue started in May 2018 around the question: **What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?**
- The four main stages of Plenary 2020 are:
  1. Listening and Dialogue Sessions: Now till 6 March 2019
  2. Discerning, Developing & Testing Themes: May 2019 to December 2019
  3. Drafting Council Program and Documents. Meetings Held (2020 & 2021)
  4. Implementation: 2021 and beyond

## 4. How do we participate in Stage One: Listening Sessions?

- Our Diocese has developed a Small Group Booklet to assist with offering feedback to Plenary 2020.
- Our small group booklet process encourages people to:
  1. Obtain copies of the small group booklet from our local parish or Pastoral Planning Office.
  2. Get small groups together in parishes, schools, and other settings.
  3. Pray, talk and listen to each other (a session takes approximately 60 to 90 minutes).
  4. Submit responses online via [www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au](http://www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au).
- When small groups gather they are invited to reflect on the plenary question individually; share their responses with group; decide on a topic; offer their experience and stories around this topic.
- Repeat the above process, choosing a new topic each time they meet.
- Individuals and groups can make submissions from now to 6 March 2019.
- Individuals and groups may prefer to download the *Listening and Dialogue Encounter* resource from the national plenary website.

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## 5. Our Diocesan Involvement in Plenary 2020



## 6. What do we do now?

- If you have already started engaging with Plenary 2020, this is great! Please let our Pastoral Planning Office know. You may wish to film a short video with people, seeking their response to the plenary question. Send us videos and any photos of your sessions to inspire others.
- Spread the word about the plenary. Circulating this Information Sheet may help. You can also visit [parracatholic.org/haveyoursay](https://parracatholic.org/haveyoursay) to learn more.
- Offer the plenary prayer with your local community.
- Include the intentions of plenary in your prayer of the faithful.
- Brainstorm your own local networks and contacts. Think outside of the square about who you can invite to listening and dialogue sessions.
- You are welcome to contact Richard or Tanya at the Pastoral Planning Office should you have ideas or questions ✉ [pastoralplanning@parracatholic.org](mailto:pastoralplanning@parracatholic.org)

This is a unique and exciting time the bishops have offered our church and country. Our voices are important. Let us speak boldly and with passion and listen with an open and humble heart.



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