

Plenary 2020 Information Sheet #2



1. Keeping the Spirit in Plenary

The Bishops have invited us to speak boldly and listen with a humble and open heart. Respectful listening and dialogue forms the heart of plenary. We are encouraged by stories of individuals and groups who have spent time prayerfully listening to one another, offering questions, stories and insights.

2. How are we getting the message out?

The parish representatives on the Deanery Pastoral Council are the main contact point for each parish. Catholic Education have developed a structure for engaging schools with the plenary.

Eight Information and Training Sessions have been held around the Diocese between July and September. These sessions covered information about Plenary 2020, how the Diocese of Parramatta is participating in the process, resources available and how to use them as well as a condensed listening and dialogue session. Some five hundred people have attended these sessions which were open to all.

3. What should we be doing now?

We have until Ash Wednesday (6 March 2019) to submit our responses to Plenary 2020. There are plenty of resources to help parish and local community groups engage in the Plenary 2020 process. We can make more than one submission, and once we are comfortable with the process we are encouraged to reach out to others, and listen and dialogue with them, including non-Catholics, inviting them to make submissions, or even submitting additional ones ourselves, if we have gained new insights from our dialogue with others.

4. Small group "listening and dialogue" sessions

Some parishes and local community groups have started holding small group sessions. You may wish to contact them for ideas and advice. For example, Glenbrook has developed a three-month process which covers talking points at all Masses, training for group leaders and opportunities to join small groups. Richmond and Lalor Park are planning parish assemblies to engage with Plenary. Seven Hills has conducted a small group session. Blacktown has offered a mini-session with parents of children preparing for the sacraments, and Guildford held a session with their local primary school.

The Diocese of Parramatta has created the Small Group Booklet, a multi-week prayerful resource to assist small groups discern and develop a response to Plenary 2020.

A shorter four-page Listening and Dialogue Encounter is also available from the national Plenary Council 2020 website. This resource differs from the small group booklet in that it focuses on the main steps for the listening and dialogue session.

Contact your parish or our Pastoral Planning Office if you would like to organise or be part of a small group.

5. Getting family, friends and others involved

We may find it awkward trying to start a conversation about Church with family, friends, colleagues who aren't regular Mass-goers. The Diocese has produced credit card sized conversation starters and flyers inviting people to join a small group or have one-to-one conversations.

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6. Plenary in other languages?

The flyers and abbreviated “listening and dialogue” resources are now available in Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Malayalam, Tamil and Spanish, Croatian and Arabic. These can also be downloaded from the Diocesan website.

7. Promoting Plenary 2020 in parishes

Apart from the resources mentioned above, parishes have also received other materials such as posters, pull-up and external banners to promote Plenary 2020. Parishes have also received Plenary Council 2020 prayer cards. Emu Plains and Greystanes have put up a street banner at their local intersections. Springwood advertised plenary through a column in the Blue Mountains Gazette and a number of parishes have been screening the short plenary video clips at Sunday Masses.

The Plenary Support Kit is a rich resource to help parishes and other local communities plan and engage in Plenary 2020. It includes a brief overview of Plenary 2020, tips on engagement strategies, forming teams and running parish-wide events.

8. What are other groups and agencies in the Diocese doing?

Representatives from groups such as St Vincent de Paul Society and CatholicCare attended the information sessions and are looking at how they might engage their colleagues and those they meet in the process. Catholic Schools are planning to participate in the process in Term 4.

The Council for Religious, Couples for Christ groups, our network of catechists in state schools are all planning to engage with plenary. Catholic Youth Parramatta have already engaged with young people through several forums and are encouraging participation of young people through their own communities.

We are exploring opportunities with the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders, refugees, those in prison, and those in aged care and hospitals. Parishes and schools are encouraged to reach out to their own networks to hold plenary sessions.

9. Deanery and Diocesan Forums

Each deanery is planning a regional forum to be hosted by their Deanery Pastoral Council. These will offer opportunities for parishes, schools and other local community groups to come together to offer further submissions to Plenary 2020. More details will be available soon.

10. Website for Plenary 2020

All the resources mentioned above, along with sample bulletin notices, prayers and homily notes can be found on the Diocesan webpage for Plenary 2020 parracatholic.org/haveyoursay

For additional information or to subscribe to the e-newsletter circulated by the national Plenary Council 2020 team go to plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au