



A

A Change of Era – Sent on Mission in our Time

What does it mean to be sent on mission by Jesus in the present time, described by Pope Francis as a “change of era”, not simply an “era of change”? How do we understand this era, and what are the implications for the way we carry out the co-mission entrusted to us by Jesus?

MICK CHALKLEY served as Chair of the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council until it ceased operating during the vacancy of the Bishop's Chair. A longstanding member of Kennington Parish, he has served as Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council and in several ministries. Mick has worked in Catholic education throughout his career, including 26 years at Catholic College Bendigo as Principal, Deputy Principal and Religious Education Co-ordinator. He has extensive knowledge Sandhurst parishes, schools and Church governance structures, and has participated in Mercy and Marist pilgrimages and outreach to Samoa and the Philippines, and is involved with the Bendigo Interfaith Community and Bendigo Winter Nights Shelter.

B Friday

Growing as a Community of Mission – What is it essentially about?

Exploring the parish journey from maintenance to mission.

What is a community of mission all about? How is that different from a community focused on maintenance? Why is parish, as a community of communities, important? Who in the parish has a key role in this journey?

FR RICHARD ROSSE moved from Mauritius to Australia in 1998 to pursue tertiary studies. He was ordained to the priesthood in 2010, having first sensed a vocation during World Youth Day in 2002. Since 2017, he has served as Parish Priest of Caroline Springs, Melbourne. His interest in missionary renewal emerged soon after he was appointed Parish Priest, he recognised a gap between the call to discipleship and the lived faith of many baptised Catholics. He was invited to join an initial group of priests exploring coaching in missionary renewal and, in 2022, attended a Divine Renovation conference in Texas with two parishioners. His parish has been on the path of missionary renewal since 2021 and continues to learn and grow, while already seeing encouraging signs of progress.

ANN O'BRIEN spent most of her career in the corporate world before encountering Jesus in 2019 in a way she never knew possible. That experience transformed her life and sparked a desire to help others discover the same encounter with Christ. In her parish, St Catherine of Siena, Caroline Springs, she began serving on the Evangelisation Team and later became the Evangelisation Coordinator. Since 2022, she has been part of the Parish Leadership Team, helping lead the community from maintenance to mission and raising up leaders for missionary renewal. Ann now feels she is finally living the life God created her to live—joyfully, purposefully, and wholeheartedly on mission. She takes to heart the parish vision inspired by the words of St Catherine of Siena: Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.

B Saturday

The Five Systems of Parish Missionary Renewal - Renewing Structures for Mission

There are five basic ways that make a vital difference to a parish's health and capacity to grow in mission fruit-fulness. Today, it seems that, as Catholic parishes, we need to become more intentionally mission-focused in all of them.

FR RICHARD ROSSE and **ANN O'BRIEN** as above.

C

Good News is to be Lived and Shared – Evangelisation at the Heart of Mission

Sharing the Good News of Jesus is the reason that the parish exists, so evangelisation is at the heart of the parish's mission. Catholics still tend to find this mission difficult even though all Popes have spoken clearly about its urgency for the last 70 years. What are some simple ways that the parish as a whole and individual parishioners can respond to this sending by Jesus to “tell others”?

DR CHRIS COTTER is Director of the Office for Mission and Pastoral Life, Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst. Chris seeks human flourishing for all in communities of Christian leadership and learning, forgiveness and reconciliation, justice and peace, hope and healing. He is committed to the contribution of practical theology to the re-imagining of mission in the Australian Catholic Church in a time of changing social and cultural milieu.

FR JUNRAY RAYNA is the Administrator of St Kilian's Parish, Bendigo. Originally from the Philippines, he has served in the Diocese for over a decade. With a passion for parish renewal and evangelisation, his ministry focuses strongly on hospitality, youth and young adult engagement, faith formation, and intercultural community-building.

FR NOVELITO (NOVIE) LIM is Parish Priest of Echuca and has served in several parishes across the Diocese, including Kerang, Cohuna and Pyramid Hill. After completing studies at Corpus Christi College, Carlton, he was ordained in Cebu in 2015. He subsequently served as Assistant Priest in Wangaratta. He was incardinated into the Diocese of Sandhurst in 2018. Fr Novie is passionate about nurturing vibrant and welcoming faith communities. His ministry focuses on fostering unity, encouraging active participation, and supporting pastoral and strategic initiatives that strengthen parish life. He believes all people are called to be instruments of God, working together to meet the challenges of our time while remaining grounded in the rich traditions of the Catholic faith.

D

Intentional about Gospel Mission and Pastoral Outreach? Make a Plan. Carry It Out.

How can we turn the Strategic Direction: Gospel Mission and Pastoral Outreach into a path that we can walk to grow as a community of Mission – on purpose? Making a plan and committing to it is a great start. There are resources and people to support us.

CHRISTINE SEBIRE has developed a strong and growing faith through her family upbringing, Catholic education, work in Catholic Education, and years as a Parish Pastoral Associate. She holds a Masters in Religious Education and keeps abreast of current developments in the Church via Encyclicals, Catholic writers, and initiatives such as Divine Renovation. For our Church to grow, Christine holds passionately that we must reach out, not just open the doors, but go out the doors ourselves to meet people – encouraging others to join us by embracing new ways of being Church and actively living out our faith through justice and compassion. Christine is currently a member of the St Mary's Parish Women's Group, Parish Welcoming Committee and Parish Sacramental Team, she is actively involved in the Diocesan review of Sacramental Preparation, and a member of the Sandhurst Faith Formation reference group /team. Christine is currently employed at Brigid's Light Early Learning Centre, a Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education Centre.

E

Mission and Synodality - Essential to each other in Parish and School.

The Sandhurst Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals highlight the central importance of Mission, Gospel Witness and Synodality. The Mission we are sent to carry out in church ministry settings, especially parish and school, is clear – or is it? The way that we are to carry out the mission is described as Synodality – do we know what that means? What does an intentionally Mission-focused and Synodal way of being look and feel like in parish and school?

KIM BUTLER has nearly 30 years' experience in Catholic Education, serving as a teacher, Religious Education Leader, and Principal in Casterton, Ararat, and Ballarat. Her commitment to mission and service was deepened through a year volunteering in India and Timor-Leste in 2018. Kim has worked as an Educational Consultant with DOBCEL and as a Principal Consultant with Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd (CESL) where she is currently Assistant Director: Catholic Mission and Formation. Trained as a Spiritual Director in the Ignatian tradition, Kim has always been actively involved in parish life.

FR NATHAN VERRALLO is Parish Priest of Christ the King Parish, Wangaratta and the King Valley, and Director of Vocations for the Diocese of Sandhurst. Ordained in 2018, he is passionate about faith formation, vocational discernment, and strengthening partnerships between parish, school and family. His ministry focuses on accompanying people as they discover their gifts and respond to God's call in their lives.

A The Eucharist - A Divine Mystery to be Encountered, Celebrated, Lived

The Eucharist is the summit and source of our lives as Christian believers. This divine mystery of Christ's presence is the point of encounter with him and with each other, the celebration of the Church, and the invitation to live that mystery with others by satisfying the hungers of the world.

FR BRIAN BOYLE has been the Diocesan Administrator of the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst since Bishop Shane Mackinlay was appointed as Archbishop of Brisbane. Fr Brian is also Administrator of the Cathedral Cluster of parishes and Episcopal Vicar. Fr Brian brings a wealth of experience - as a priest, an academic, an educator and fraternal leader. He holds a Licentiate and Doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and served as Dean of Studies at Corpus Christi College, Carlton from 2015 to 2020. In Sandhurst, he has served as Episcopal Vicar for Education since 2014 and is a Member of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd. Fr Brian has been a pastoral leader to Sandhurst Clergy, having served as Director of Clergy Life and Ministry from 2017 to 2023. He was a member of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart before being incardinated into the Diocese of Sandhurst in 2012.

B Friday Parish Leadership For Mission - Key to Growing a Community of Mission

The ministry of leadership: focus on priests and other parish leaders. Leadership has been described as the gift which opens the way for all the other gifts to grow and flourish. In Catholic parishes this applies first and foremost to the priest as the canonically appointed parish leader - the priest plays a central role in leading the parish towards mission fruitfulness. Yet, if the mission of the parish is to bear fruit amidst the change of era in which we live, it is vitally important to draw forth, form and release the leadership gifts of parishioners in all areas of parish life and ministry.

FR RICHARD ROSSE and **ANN O'BRIEN** (see previous).

B Saturday Evangelisation in Practice Today: Essential for Growing a Community of Mission

Evangelisation - telling others about, and inviting others to experience, the Good News of Jesus Christ - is one of the five essential practices that enable a parish to carry out its purpose. If we are to take seriously the words of Jesus, the promptings of the Holy Spirit and the teaching of the Church, evangelisation is the main essential practice that characterises a Church community. Yet, it is often a practice that the parish avoids and is weakest at. So what do we do?

FR RICHARD ROSSE and **ANN O'BRIEN** as above.

C The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) - Core Parish Business

What is the RCIA? Why is RCIA core to what a parish has been sent by Jesus to do? How is the process of RCIA conducted in today's culture? What is the role of the parish community in the RCIA process?

ANTHONY KILMARTIN has been involved in Parish life from his early 20s and in pastoral ministry for 13 yrs. He is very experienced in leading people through the RCIA journey. In the RCIA he finds that accompanying others on their faith journey is one of the times he feels closest to God. He passes on to others knowledge and experience of the Catholic faith, most importantly, what God has done for him: 'saved me, loved me and sent me out'. He truly feels that sharing authentic faith draws others to encounter God.

C Continued



MARY ZOBEC has is currently Pastoral Assistant at Kyabram Catholic Parish and has been involved in RCIA for more than 25years. She has a passion for journeying with people no matter where they are on their faith journey, often drawing inspiration from the Road to Emmaus story. Mary values helping others to break open the Word to anyone who has a yearning and openness of heart for God, just as others once did for her.

D Youth Ministry - Journey from Encounter to Intentional Discipleship

The absence of teenagers and young adults (13-30) is regularly identified by parishioners as a worrying and disheartening feature of parish life. In many conversations, parishioners and priests alike express concern, while also feeling uncertain about how to respond. Yet, the evangelisation and formation of young people remains an absolutely critical part of the parish's mission. This is an issue across the majority of parishes in the Western world. In looking ahead to its strategy for youth ministry, the Sandhurst Youth Ministry Team has identified the need to focus on the entire Christian life journey from the encounter with Jesus to a decision to intentionally follow him in life. How can we all play our part in that journey with young people?

GEOFF GOWDIE has worked in the diocesan offices of several dioceses, overseeing the work of many pastoral ministries. In all of his roles, Geoff has had oversight and close working relationship with diocesan youth ministry teams. Currently, as Assistant Director of Mission and Pastoral Life in Sandhurst, he continues that close working relationship with youth ministry, especially in supporting the Sandhurst Youth Ministry Team in operational and strategic planning for its work with parishes and schools.

E Mission to Care for Creation - A Mission for All

Of all the recent Popes who have written about human responsibility to care for creation (Francis, Benedict VI, Saint John Paul II), Pope Francis has written the most extensively, especially in his two encyclicals *Laudato Si'* and *Laudato Deum*. Catholics should be in no doubt that care for our common home is a mission in which we all share and have a responsibility, individually and communally. It's a mission in which each of us can and must do something meaningful.

Michael McGirr is Mission Facilitator at Caritas Australia. He is a writer, reviewer and educator who has published books on philosophy, literature, spirituality and ethics, as well as hundreds of articles, essays and stories, in publications including The New York Times and The Tablet. He has reviewed many books for publications such as The Age, The Sydney Morning Herald and The Canberra Times, and he was previously the fiction editor of Meanjin and publisher at Eureka Street.

Prior to joining Caritas Australia, Michael was a teacher and, most recently, worked as Dean of Faith at St Kevin's College in Melbourne. He also worked on faith formation with the boards and staff of schools and other organisations. Through all his work, he is motivated to connect faith, culture and community, and to champion an expression of a faith that encourages justice.

KERRY STONE is the Diocesan Caritas Coordinator and Social and Ecological Justice Coordinator. Kerry's work includes promotion, education, and campaigning on a broad range of justice issues. Driven by a deep belief in the centrality of justice to living the Gospel, Kerry has developed and supported a network of parish justice representatives; presented workshops on Catholic Social Teaching and global justice; led annual Just Leadership Days and the Justice Matters Camp for secondary students in collaboration with Catholic Education Sandhurst. Kerry is Convenor of the Sandhurst Care for Creation Team, promoting the *Laudato Si'* Goals across diocesan parishes and schools. Kerry is part of Caritas' Australia's Catholic Earthcare team coordinating Earthcare's National Parish/Diocese Community.