

Synodality and Co-Responsibility - a Catalyst for Conversation that Leads to Renewed Hearts and Minds

On 1 November 2021, Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) will launch the second online ‘conversation,’ *Synodality and Co-Responsibility*, as part of its series of online ‘conversations’ to explore *The Light from the Southern Cross Report*. Its mission is to provide an opportunity for reflection and engagement with this landmark document, at a significant time in Church history and in light of the Plenary Council.

Rev Associate Professor Orm Rush, who is one of the three speakers of *Synodality and Co-Responsibility* said, “My hope is that the Plenary Council will show prophetic courage, not only in its reform of the Church’s inner life, but also in the way it addresses the urgent issues facing Australia and the world.”

Synodality and Co-Responsibility is a key theme in the *The Light from the Southern Cross Report* and in the upcoming event, Bishop Shane Mackinlay, who is one of the speakers and also the Vice-President of the Plenary Council, says, “Reflecting on synodality and co-responsibility is critical for us as we respond to Pope Francis’ urging that we develop a synodal Church that serves our commitment to missionary discipleship.’

Living out Francis’ vision is Mrs Teresa Brierley, Moderator for the Synod Working Party of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle; she is the third speaker whose presentation, “*The Long and Winding Road: 30 years of discovery*,” will unpack the continuing journey of Synodality in real life.

The speaker presentations will be followed by a series of interactive group discussions and speaker responses, which will open the way for questions and for group and individual reflection.

Around 150 people from around the country connected online for the first of these exploratory conversations, *Mission and Church* – amongst whom were Plenary Council members, Religious Leaders and teams, lay leaders in the Church, parishioners, educators, and others interested in the future of the Church.

Each speaker brought a unique perspective: Richard Lennan, co-author of the report, discussed the ecclesiology of *Light from the Southern Cross*. John Warhurst, also a co-author and a member of the Plenary Council, examined the contribution of the report to the Plenary Council “and beyond.” Melissa Dwyer FDCC, leader of the Canossian Daughters of Charity and a member of the Plenary Council spoke about “building bridges of encounter” through mission, inclusion and hope.

“Each conversation seeks to be personally formative – a catalyst for change and renewal that leads us towards a transformed Church, changed and revitalised through our hearts, words and actions,” said Anne Walker, CRA National Executive Director, who facilitated *Mission and Church*, providing context and creating a ‘virtual’ space for conversation.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES: Sylvia MacRitchie-Hook | comms@catholicreligious.org.au | 0410 644 356