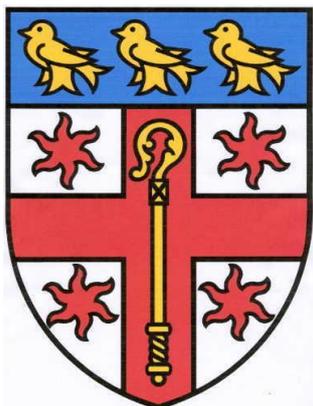


**SECOND SESSION OF THE  
FORTY SECOND TRIENNIAL SYNOD**



**THE PRESIDENT'S PASTORAL ADDRESS**

**Friday 17 October 2014**



Members of Synod,

I welcome you to the Second Session of the Forty Second Triennial Synod of the Diocese of Adelaide. Welcome also to those who are observers from the other dioceses of the Province.

I offer a particular welcome to those of you who are members of Synod for the first time. The formal processes of Synod sometimes can be a little intimidating, but remember that you are here among brothers and sisters in Christ who will be anxious to help and support you.

The term "Synod" comes from the Greek *syn* (with/together) and *hodos* (road/journey); to make a journey together. Beyond being the name we give to the primary governance structure in our diocese, *syn-hodos* is a great metaphor for the Christian calling. A journey has both direction and incompleteness. It is full of movement, change, challenges and surprises. Because it is incomplete, there is always a provisionality about journey. It does not speak with the certainty of those who have arrived, yet it knows where it is going. Because all on the journey are fellow travellers, there can be a grace and hospitality on the road.

Too often in the Church we have neither *syn* nor *hodos*. That is, we can allow our relationships to be eroded to the superficial and sometimes oppositional, surrendering the deep "with-ness" (the *syn* of *syn-hodos*) to which we are called. And at times there is far too little *hodos* (journey). The rather well-worn joke about how many Anglicans it takes to change a light bulb reminds us of our ecclesiastical trait of liking things just as they are and sometimes even more so, "just as they were". Like individuals, organisations often resort to *stasis* when they feel vulnerable or diminished.

The national report on "Viability and Structures" within our Church to be considered within this Synod tomorrow could provide abundant reason for Anglicans in Australia to feel vulnerable and diminished, and therefore to adopt a grim and defensive view of our place in the world. My view is that the report calls us to *hodos* – to an adventurous journey together under God; to be open to surprise and risk and new horizons.

May this session of the Forty Second Synod of the Diocese of Adelaide be marked by a deep togetherness under God (*syn*) as well as an adventurous spirit of journey (*hodos*). May we truly do *syn-hodos*, not just over this weekend, but into and beyond the unseen horizons of our future.

## **War and rumours of war.**

Since our last session of Synod a bitter war has been fought in our companion Diocese of Bor. The city of Bor itself has been conquered and reconquered a number of times. Many of our brothers and sisters in the diocesan Sudanese community have lost family and friends.

As this session of Synod meets, Australian defence personnel are joining those of other nations in combat missions against ISIL (Daesh) in Iraq.

Conflicts like these confront us with the difficult question of when it is right or justified to take up arms. It is a question that defies easy answers. The fundamentalist answers are always the easy ones; the extremist leaders of ISIL have no doubts about the rightness of taking up arms to impose their view of the universe. The black and white pacifist can take the opposing fundamentalist position, arguing that it is never right to take up arms.

The Christian tradition has a more nuanced approach, articulated by great thinkers like Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas. Basically they argued that there are times when to take up arms, or to go to war, is the least evil thing to do.

In his great volume *The City of God*, Augustine struggled with the question as to whether Christians could in all conscience fight in the army against those invading their country. His answer was that the wise person always lamented war, but there could be times when to do nothing was more of a sin than acting to take up arms.

This is the quandary that nations like Australia have wrestled with over recent weeks as people around the world have witnessed the terrible deeds of extreme fundamentalists convinced that their cause totally justifies the most horrible acts of violence.

By contrast, I suspect that there are few Australians who hold a black and white position on committing troops to harm's way. Once more, Christian thinkers like Augustine and Aquinas give some touchstones to hold while we agonise over these issues:

- Does the proposed military action confront an unquestioned danger? It must be clear that the taking up of arms is to confront a grave danger, particularly to the vulnerable.
- Is the resort to arms a last resort? All reasonable peaceful alternatives must have been exhausted or have been deemed impractical or ineffective.
- Has the decision to go to arms been reached by legitimate authority? Has there been a request from those who are at risk?
- Are the real intentions clear and correct? The reasons for declaring taking military action must actually be the objectives. The action should not be a proxy for another agenda or conflict.

- Is there proportionality? The good that is achieved by taking military action must not be outweighed by the harm. What good is it to wage war if it leaves the country in total devastation with no one really being the winner? Modern means of warfare give great weight to this criterion.

Guiding principles such as these come out of centuries of reflection on a question that has sadly needed to be answered in nearly every generation. Are the answers clear? Mostly they are not and thank God for that! In any situation where we might contemplate the use of military force, that touch of hesitancy, that note of caution and ambivalence, is the gift of our own humanity. So if there are times when we feel we must take up arms, let it always be with a heavy heart; and for people of faith may it always be with a prayer on our lips.

### **And what of the victims?**

For stable and wealthy nations like Australia, the tragedy of conflict should always remind us that the very wealth and stability we cherish brings a responsibility within the global family to the victims of war who have been left with neither.

My own small contacts with refugees who have family in places like Syria and Iraq have added a personal dimension to the horrifying images of brutality, trauma and loss that we have televised to us daily from these regions.

It is against this background that I add my voice to a call for our Federal Government to lift our refugee quota from its present level of 13750 to the formerly endorsed target of 20,000. The announcement of 4000 places for victims of conflict from those areas is at least a recognition of the need. However, the present intention is that those 4000 places will come from within our present capped total. I am also informed that they are to be within a special category that already has a waiting list of more than ten times the number allocated (more than 40,000).

If the situation in Iraq and Syria calls for our military involvement, then surely it also warrants an additional civil and humanitarian response its victims. It should also cause a reconsideration of the budgetary reduction in the planned growth of our foreign aid budget.

Prior to the 2014 budget, there was bipartisan support to lift aid levels to .05 per cent of Gross National Income. However, both Labor and the Coalition delayed the financial year when this was expected to be reached and in the Federal Budget this year Australian foreign aid was capped at \$5 billion over the next two financial years. In 2016-17, foreign aid is set to grow in line with the Consumer Price Index, which effectively means no growth at all in real terms.

Earlier this month *The Australian*<sup>i</sup> reported that the Government is canvassing further reductions in this area as it considers ways to cover the cost of the fight against terror. It is noteworthy that at the same time world political leaders, including our own Prime Minister, have been warning that the struggle against organisations like ISIL will take time and involve much more than a series of air strikes.

Terrorism grows in the fertile fields of poverty, lack of education and lack of opportunity, particularly among the young. Combatting these environmental factors for terrorism is, in the long term, as important as any military action. For our Federal Government to wind back the means by which it can do something about the long term environment in which terrorism flourishes not only lacks logic, but undermines the moral ground upon which a decision to take military action might stand.

I return to my reference about conflict in South Sudan. Earlier this year, as that conflict was breaking out, I attended a gathering of the South Sudanese community here in Adelaide. Over the course of an evening I heard the stories of conflict; of family members killed or on the run, and how individuals here in Adelaide were under great financial pressure as they sought to help their families in a war torn country.

But the evening was a fund-raiser. It was in support of a proposed medical clinic in Bor, a project that my wife Lindy has been promoting in response to the great needs we have seen in that region. A large cloth was placed on the floor and speeches were made. People came forward and put money on the cloth.

That evening a small community of some of Australia's newest and poorest citizens put together a contribution of \$35,000 for a diocesan medical clinic project and in response to people ravaged by war. In doing this, they not only demonstrated the great Australian spirit of generosity, they pointed the way for us all. In the end, although military action might contain violence, it is generosity and partnership that brings real peace.

### **Aboriginal leadership**

Last year Synod gave overwhelming support for the appointment in South Australia of a Bishop who is an Aboriginal person. At present the Australian Church does not have an Aboriginal Bishop in active ministry. It has been some time since the retirement of Bishop Jim Leftwich and, despite great good will, dialogue between General Synod Standing Committee and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIAC) has yet to yield a sustainable way forward. There simply are not the resources at a national level.

My conviction is that in this and other challenges facing the Anglican Church of Australia, capacity can only be created through the internal Provinces. In many ways the Province of South Australia might be regarded as the least well placed, at least financially, to undertake such an initiative. However, ministry ought to be driven more by a vision for possibility and need than constrained by finances. The Board of Anglicare SA has given a strong commitment to work within its constitution to develop a partnership around this proposal and this has given me the assurance that it is financially manageable.

In September I travelled to Yamba in NSW to the annual meeting of NATSIAC. I felt that it was important to consult with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait leadership of our Church before proceeding any further. While the NATSIAC members present reserved their right as provided for in our canons to affirm in due course a bishop as the National Aboriginal Bishop, the meeting was unanimously encouraging of the proposal for South Australia as outlined in our time together. Equally, the other diocesan bishops of South Australia have indicated their goodwill towards a possible appointment.

It is my intention, therefore, to bring a name before Diocesan Council in the near future and I seek your prayers for that shared process of discernment.

### **St Barnabas goes back to the future**

I began this address with the statement that the *hodos* of God is full of movement, turns, change, challenges and surprises. This is most certainly true as we consider the development of St Barnabas College. A year ago we rejoiced to bless a dedication plaque in the grounds of Bishop's Court looking to the construction of a new college building. It has just been announced that the college will relocate next year to the St Barnabas building on King William Road, North Adelaide.

The change of plans came from another surprising development; the gift of a very large theological library, some 80-90,000 volumes, including nearly every theological work published in the English language world-wide over the past three decades. Housing this library would have taken every centimetre of space in the planned new building, leaving little room for the college function itself!

After considerable research, including specialised architectural advice, the decision was reached to move into the St Barnabas building, presently occupied by Anglicare.

In many ways it is a case of going forward to the past. This is the original St Barnabas College site established in 1880 and reflecting the vision of Bishop Augustus Short.

Anglicare has conducted a strategic review of its operation and properties and will consolidate onto major hubs in the north, south and western suburbs.

There is a strong commitment by Anglicare to maintain a presence in the Cathedral precinct and this will be in Bishop Augustus Short House.

Other developments of importance to the future of St Barnabas College are likely to flow from current negotiations about our place within Charles Sturt University (CSU). My hope and strong anticipation is that the CSU School of Theology will develop significantly in the coming few years, with St Barnabas College as a full partner and important contributor.

### **The changing face of theological education**

We are going through a time of major shift in theological education. In the early 1990s theological education went through a major consolidation in Australia that might roughly be characterised as a trend towards nationalisation. Many smaller, local and denominational colleges were taken up within emerging consortia. Our own journey with the Adelaide College of Divinity and Flinders University reflected that trend. We are now experiencing another shift that might be characterised as "internationalisation". It is a change very evident in the tertiary sector more widely and driven by the "digitisation" of educational delivery. Increasingly, students will not need to physically enter a lecture room in order to receive a lecture and participate fully in dialogue.

This is not a trend of the still far off future. The pattern is already emerging. Tertiary students of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are already spending far less time "on campus". The campus now tends to be a "fast food" stop rather than a "long lunch" venue. Already students are graduating courses with honours from Australian universities without physically attending a single lecture.

These trends will open up new possibilities in theological education, but will also present challenges in forming people for ministry. In the very near future a student in Willochra, Wellington, Warsaw or Washington will be able to enrol in courses offered in Adelaide and participate interactively in class discussion. The fact that the reverse will also be possible will present its own challenges as colleges and courses will increasingly be marketed by their ability to bring students into a learning dialogue with high profile international scholars.

The problem for ministry formation is that as educational delivery becomes more diverse and more dispersed, so formation in community becomes more challenging. Ministerial formation must also be *syn-hodos*; a journey of deep "with-ness". The community of intellectual dialogue, sharing of life and prayer essential to forming leaders for the Church will need to be found in different ways to those many of us remember. They will need to be no less substantial and, even in the context of students doing degrees from a university, they will need to be deeply missional.

These are the balances that will need to be maintained through a time of transition. St Barnabas Council is aware of them and has resolved to set aside significant time in the second quarter of next year for reflection and planning in light of the changing environment of education delivery. May theological and ministry education at St Barnabas continue to be characterised by *syn-hodos*; a journey of deep "with-ness" under God.

### **The Canon concerning Confessions**

In this session of Synod we will be considering Canon 11 from the General Synod which met in Adelaide earlier this year: "A Canon to amend the Canon concerning Confessions 1989".

This piece of General Synod legislation has attracted much media attention, even internationally. Not all of it has been helpful, including headings suggesting that Anglicans have "abandoned" the seal of the confessional. What this canon does is develop an ancient principle upheld in our tradition that there are some limited and extreme circumstances where a higher pastoral responsibility might mean that disclosure of a matter is warranted.

The 1603 Canons of our Church "admonished" the clergy to uphold the seal of the confessional, but provided an exemption where life was at risk.<sup>ii</sup> The 2014 Canon seeks to apply that principle to the modern context, providing for the disclosure of information as a last resort under certain extreme circumstances. It is important to note that the Canon is "permissive" rather than "coercive"; that is, it gives support to a priest making a disclosure in certain extreme conditions but does not require it.

The most likely context for the application of the principle enshrined in this canon is in regard to the sexual abuse of minors. It was this sad circumstance in the life of our Church that prompted the amendment of the 1989 canon. My own experience in more than a decade of dealing with these matters as a bishop leaves me in no doubt that human life and well-being can genuinely be at risk through the perpetration of abuse, even if this is in a slightly less direct way than the 1603 canon contemplated.

For that reason I support the adoption of this canon, although in my view there are aspects of the legislation that are clumsy.<sup>iii</sup> To address some of the shortcomings, I have developed a draft bishop's protocol to be observed within the Diocese of Adelaide should this measure be adopted. A draft of this protocol is attached.

Despite the limitations of the measure, I will support its adoption, simply because, in the very unlikely event of being presented with such a confession, and after trying all available means to ensure that the perpetrator reports to appropriate authorities, I could not live with my conscience if my silence meant that one more child was abused.

## **Structures and viability vitality**

We have been asked to consider a report presented to General Synod this year by a "Viability and Structures Taskforce". I served on that taskforce for a time.

The report is a daunting one, but I welcome it, because truth-speaking can be the first step in any journey to healing and renewal. Basically the report confronts us with the view that up to a third of the Dioceses of the Anglican Church of Australia are facing pressing issues of viability. In some instances this is through rural decline and changing demography, but in others because of the inability to resource an escalating compliance regime.

The compliance demands on dioceses have grown massively in the time I have been a bishop. Those compliance requirements will become more demanding still as times goes on. In recent times three dioceses of the Australian Church have faced major crises around their investment in schools. In each instance an under-performing school or schools put the very viability of the diocese at risk. One diocese continues to face problems so huge that there is a risk of reputational damage to the whole national church.

I do not want to rehearse here the contents of a 150 page report. I do, however, offer two observations:

1. In the Australian context many of the answers will need to emerge at a Provincial level. At a national level within our Church there are neither the resources nor cohesion for an adequate response.
2. A key to the way forward will be a separation of the "diocese" as unit of mission and ministry from the administrative and legal functions we usually associate with the function of a diocese.

In the earliest expressions of Anglicanism an Episcopal See was a community gathered in mission and ministry around its bishop. It was not until after the Synod of Whitby (664) that Roman provincial and local government models were thoroughly adopted by the Church turning "Sees" into the more administrative diocesan units that we have inherited today.

Continuing to align our administration, compliance and risk management operations to existing diocesan structures is full of risk to our mission. The operation of schools is just one area of potential risk for smaller dioceses. Serious potential for risk also exists where dioceses have large involvements in State funded caring services, including retirement villages, and also in managing professional standards claims.

Developing shared administrative services at an intra-diocesan or provincial level will enable that critical function to continue with less exposure to the possibility of crippling legal or financial disaster.

If we are to retain our pattern of regional dioceses then the way we manage our administrative functions must change. My own hope, however, is for much more than administrative and compliance cooperation across the Province of South Australia. In the end a diocese is a ministering community gathered around its bishop and my strong desire is that we can develop much closer cooperation within the Province in every aspect of mission and ministry; that in regard to our missional future we can do *syn-hodos* and make a journey of deep togetherness in mission under God.

### **Professional Standards legislation**

Last year we undertook to bring revised professional standards legislation for consideration by this session of Synod. The reason that the legislation has not come before this session should be received as an affirmation of the work we have done together. Many of the changes proposed in Adelaide's revision have been taken up more widely and will be reflected in revised professional standards legislation for both bishops and clergy at a national level. It seemed unhelpful to bring revisions to this Session of Synod and then have to "tweak" them soon after when the national proposals come before us.

### **Acknowledgments**

As is my custom at the Annual Session of Synod I have listed new appointments in the diocese over the preceding year. There are many whose contributions over the past year I could worthily highlight. I do wish to mention specifically all who were involved in the support of the General Synod held at St Peter's College. There were frequent positive comments about the organisation and tone of the General Synod and much credit for this is due to the local organising team headed by our Chancellor, The Hon David Bleby, the Diocesan Office staff, St Peter's College staff, Anglicare IT, and many volunteers.

Associated with the General Synod was the primatial election. Archbishop Phillip Aspinall concluded nine years as Primate at the end of the Synod, handing over to Archbishop Philip Freier from Melbourne. Philip Freier was inaugurated as Primate of Australia on August 13 in a service in St Paul's Cathedral (Melbourne) at which the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, was the special guest and preacher. We pray for Archbishop Philip as he offers leadership within our Church through challenging times.

The ordination service later this year will bring to a conclusion the great service by The Rev'd John Stephenson as my chaplain. John has been a great colleague in this role and we wish him well as he retires (again!).

As I enter my tenth year of ministry among you, I give thanks to God for all of you who share the call of Christ's ministry within the Anglican Diocese of Adelaide. Above all, I give thanks to God who takes who we are and what we think we can give and makes of them something more than we dare to ask or imagine. <sup>(Eph. 3.20)</sup>

## +Jeffrey

<sup>i</sup> David Crowe, *The Australian*, 2 October 2014.

<sup>ii</sup> The secrecy of the confessional is urged within the 1603 Canon, but not made ultimate. The minister is "admonished" to maintain the seal of the confessional, but an exemption from the duty of secrecy is provided where this duty conflicts with one imposed by the civil power under the penalty of death. This exemption is a marked departure from the pre-Reformation ecclesiastical law on the subject.

<sup>iii</sup> An example is the provision for disclosure in the event of an offence punishable by imprisonment for life or for a term of 5 years or more. It seems to me that it is high unlikely and indeed undesirable that a priest would feel the need to approach a confessional situation with the knowledge of law sufficient to be able to identify an offence punishable by five years imprisonment.

## New Licenses Issued to Clergy since October 2013

### 2013

October	18	Yeats, Peter Derek	Area Dean of the Gawler Deanery
	18	Covington-Groth, David Andrew	Area Dean of the Western Suburbs Deanery
November	21	Colsey, Dawn Ellen	PTO
	21	Venus, John Westlake	PTO
	22	Thomson, Peter Somerville	PTO
	22	Paterson, Sonya Louise	Parish Priest, Parish of Plympton
December	6	McLean, Yvonne Lesley	PTO

### 2014

January	22	Covington-Groth, David Andrew	Parish Priest, Parish of Mitcham
	22	Brown, Peter Tasman	Area Dean, Western Suburbs Deanery
	22	Kernot, Frank George	PTO
February	1	Bassett, David Andrew	Archdeacon of Torrens
	1	Chilver, Peter Andrew	Archdeacon of Sturt
	1	McRostie, Lyn	Archdeacon of The Para
	1	Mitchell, Paul Bentley	Archdeacon of The City of Adelaide and The Port
March	3	Mathieson, Neil Thomas	Chaplain, Lyell McEwin Hospital
	26	Petterson, Karen Lee	Chaplain, Pulteney Grammar School
	6	Carter, Philip George	PTO
	6	Payne, John Lawrence	PTO

April	15	Wilson, Jennifer Lynn	Senior Assistant Priest and Canon Precentor, Cathedral Church of St Peter	
	15	Mathieson, Ruth Christa	Honourary Clerical Canon, Cathedral Church of St Peter	
	15	Bailey, Simon	Honourary Clerical Canon, Cathedral Church of St Peter	
	15	Anstey, Matthew Philip	Canon Theologian, Cathedral Church of St Peter	
	15	Patrick, Timothy Raoul Christopher	PTO	
	17	Sibly, Mark Maslin	PTO	
May	20	Huffa, Warren Kym	Parish Priest, Parish of Hawthorn	
June	20	Ragless, Deirdre	PTO	
July	1	Amol, Davidson Bol	Assistant Priest, Sudanese Anglican Congregation at the Church of the Holy Cross, Elizabeth, under direction of Venerable Lyn McRostie	
	1	Oake, Jeffrey Thomas	Associate Chaplain to the Archbishop	
	14	Woodd, Benjamin John Hampden	Associate Priest, Experimental Community St Barnabas', Croydon, under direction of Bishop Tim Harris	
	17	Mathieson, Neil Thomas	Priest in Charge, Parish of Elizabeth Downs	
	21	McWhae, Elizabeth Ann	Chaplain, Adelaide Clinic and Fullarton Private Hospital	
	21	Clark, Stephen	Parish Priest, Parish of St Mary Magdalene's	
	22	Thornton-Wakeford, David Blackstone	PTO	
	September	17	Teague, Lynda	Deacon Assistant, Parish of Edwardstown
		19	Woodsford, Martyn Paul	Parish Priest, Parish of Parkside
		27	Oake, Jeffrey Thomas	PTO
30		Edwards, John Malcolm	PTO	
October	14	Chilver, Peter Andrew	Parish Priest, Parish of Walkerville	
	16	Bloor, Stephen James	Parish Priest, Parishes of Salisbury and Parafield Gardens	

### **Locum Tenens 2013**

November	3	Priest, Alexander Gary	Parish of St Marys
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### **2014**

January	1	Langshaw, Stuart Neale	Locum Tenens, Parish of Walkerville
	1	O'Donovan, Bartholomew John	Locum Tenens, Parish of Mallala and Two Wells
	12	Rees S.I., Pamela Juliana	Locum Tenens, Parish of St Mary Magdalene's, Adelaide
	13	Deng, William Deng	Locum Tenens, Parish of Lockleys

February	10	McEwin, Robert Gavin Keith	Locum Tenens, Parish of Kidman Park and Mile End
	23	Thomson, Peter Somerville	Locum Tenens, Parish of Salisbury
March	3	Bleby, Martin Edward	Locum Tenens, Parish of Hawthorn
April	16	Asirvatham, Samson Devasagayam	Locum Anglicare SA Chaplain, Ian George Court
May	5	Whiting, Michael Walter	Locum Tenens, Parish of Belair
	27	Bowers, Maxwell John Douglas	Locum Tenens, Parish of Glenelg
June	9	Cox, Ian William	Locum Tenens, Parish of Tea Tree Gully
	12	Edwards, John Malcolm	Locum Tenens, Parish of Port Adelaide
July	1	Thomson, Peter Somerville	Locum Tenens, Parish of Warradale
	6	Davis, Stephen William	Locum Tenens, Parish of Belair
	20	Daughtry, Stephen Peter	Locum Tenens, Parish of Coromandel Valley
August	1	Sibly, Mark Maslin	Locum Tenens, Parish of Stirling
	20	Straub, Susan Frances	Locum Tenens, Parish of Prospect
September	18	Bowers, Maxwell John Douglas	Locum Tenens, Parish of Port Adelaide
October	1	Oake, Jeffrey Thomas	Locum Tenens, Parish of Stirling

## Ordinations

### 2013

November	30	Andrews, Duncan Nathanael	Assistant Priest, Parish of Holy Trinity in the congregations at North Terrace and Trinity Hills
	30	Lane, Michael John	Senior School Chaplain, Pulteney Grammar School and Chaplain, Anglicare SA
	30	Leo, Bernard Wyuen Khui	Assistant Priest, Parish of Holy Trinity with responsibility for International Students and their families
	30	Thorpe, Paula Christine	Assistant Chaplain, St Columba College
	30	Woodhouse, Luke David	Assistant Priest, Parish of Holy Trinity in the congregations at North Terrace and Trinity Bay
	30	Arnold, Lynn Maurice Ferguson	Deacon Assistant, Parish of St Peter's Cathedral with responsibility for Theology in the Public Square
	30	Brooker, Linda Rose	Honorary Deacon Assistant, Parish of The Barossa
	30	Chan, Coria Lai-Chong Hui	Deacon for Mandarin Ministry, Parish of Unley
	30	Chan, Samuel Ting Lun	Deacon Assistant for Mandarin Ministry, Parish of Unley
	30	Hill, Simon Geoffrey	Deacon Assistant, Parish of Largs Bay
	30	Moore, Grant Ernest	Deacon Assistant, Parish of St Peter's Cathedral
	30	Schaefer, Dianne Margaret	Associate Chaplain, Royal Adelaide Hospital

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## **Resignations and retirements – Clergy**

<b>2014</b>	Pennington, Cate	St Mary Magdalene's, Adelaide
	Dyke, Elizabeth Muriel	Kidman Park and Mile End
	Thornton-Wakeford, David	Parkside
	Blackstone	
	Ragless, Deirdre	Hospital Chaplain
	Oake, Jeffrey Thomas	Warradale
	Stocks, Bruce	Voluntarily relinquished his holy orders in the Anglican Church
	Petterson, Karen	Chaplain, Pulteney Grammar School, December 2014

## **Resignations and retirements – Lay - 2014**

**Diocesan Office - Retirement - Radford, Robyn**

## **Obituary**

### **From October 2013**

#### Clergy

October Pullen, Christopher

December Chiswell, Peter  
Haynes, Mark

### **2014**

January Martin, Gordon  
Blades, Jim

April Stephenson, John Henry

May Rodgers, Margaret - Deaconess

June McIntyre, John - Bishop of Gippsland

August Chittleborough, Martin

#### Lay

Christ Church, NA Bell KJSJ, George Nelson  
Sandow OAM, Brian George

Hawthorn Lawton, Colin

St Mark's College Abfalter, David

## **Diocesan Office Closure – Christmas/New Year**

**Close** Wednesday 24 December 2014 at 12.00pm

**Re Open** Monday 12 January 2015 at 9.00am

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## **PRIVATE CONFESSION**

### **DRAFT PASTORAL GUIDELINES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

Provision for private confession of sins and absolution in the Anglican Church dates from both before and after the Reformation. Provision was contained in *The Book of Common Prayer* of 1662, as well as in the earlier books of Common Prayer of 1549 and 1552. This provision was retained in both *An Australian Prayer Book* and *A Prayer Book for Australia*. In *A Prayer Book for Australia* the rite is called *Reconciliation of a Penitent*.

According to both church law and custom the Anglican Church provides for the private confession of sins in the presence of a priest. This practice is regulated by Church Law. The ministry of absolution has the following elements:

- The desire of the penitent to unburden the conscience in order to receive the benefit of absolution together with spiritual counsel and advice.
- The making of a confession of sin by the penitent according to a rite of the Church (a form for the confession of sins and pronouncement of absolution may be found in *An Australian Prayer Book* and in *A Prayer Book for Australia*).
- After hearing the confession the priest absolves the penitent. A priest may decline to pronounce absolution or may defer absolution where it is clear that some further action is required by the penitent for the appropriate expression of contrition.
- Three elements must be present before absolution is pronounced: contrition; a full and honest confession of sins; and a purpose of amendment.

Canon Law regulates what is known as the Seal of the Confessional. The tradition within Anglicanism going back as far as the 1603 canons is that the seal of the confession should be maintained, except in the most extreme circumstances.<sup>iii</sup> The 2014 Canon seeks to apply that principle to the modern context, providing for the disclosure of information as a last resort under certain extreme circumstances. It is important to note that the Canon is "permissive" rather than "coercive"; that is, it gives support to a priest making a disclosure in certain extreme conditions but does not require it.

Before a priest contemplates disclosure, a range of steps should be taken to ensure that the situation is genuinely one of last resort and extremity. There should be a genuine and pressing risk to human life and well-being that cannot be addressed in other ways.

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If, in the course of a pastoral conversation, a priest should form the view that a person wishes to reveal a criminal offence, the priest should immediately give an explanation of the limits to confidentiality in pastoral conversations and the conditions of the granting of absolution if a formal confession (according to a Rites of the Church) is made. These conditions for absolution should in most cases include appropriate expression of contrition through reporting the criminal offence to the police and making reparation to the victim. If a person wishes to proceed with the formal confession then the priest and the would-be penitent should go to some suitable private place (ideally the parish church or a chapel) where the confession would be heard using the form prescribed. It is essential that a rite of the Church is used. If a rite of the Church is not used the priest may have no privilege to refuse to disclose the confession in legal proceedings.

In the context of an act of Confession, it is important to remember that contrition and purpose of amendment would require the following action by the penitent in certain circumstances:

- Where the conduct has caused injury to another person then reparation, or the making of amends for the injury done, will be necessary. Where appropriate the priest may give advice as to what sort of reparation will be necessary;
- Where the conduct is criminal, then the reporting of that conduct by the penitent to the Police or other appropriate authority will be in almost every instance necessary;
- Where the penitent is a member of the Clergy and the conduct is inconsistent with the standards to be observed by members of the Clergy, then the reporting of that conduct by the penitent to the bishop of the diocese will in almost every instance be necessary;
- Where the penitent is a lay leader and the conduct is inconsistent with the standards to be observed by the members of the Church, then the reporting of that conduct by the penitent to the person appointing the penitent to his or her leadership will in almost every instance be necessary.

Where it becomes evident that a person may wish to disclose the abuse of a minor a priest should preface any move into formal confession by providing the following information:

- The Diocese of Adelaide has a provision for senior specially trained and licensed priests to hear confessions relating to child abuse.
- The granting of absolution is dependent on contrition expressed through appropriate reporting of the offence and such reparation to the victim as is possible and appropriate.
- That pastoral support would be provided to assist the person in reporting the matter to appropriate authorities.

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In the context of the act of confession, the priest must closely question the penitent concerning the nature of the abuse and the frequency of the abuse. The priest must indicate to the penitent the grave nature of the sin and the dire consequences abuse will almost certainly have on the abused person.

Where, despite every pastoral endeavour, a matter is not reported by the person making a confession to the police or other appropriate authority, then the priest who heard the matter confessed should give serious consideration to the provisions of the 2014 Canon enabling the reporting of such matters. Absolution should not be given where contrition and amendment has not been expressed through the reporting of the offence.<sup>iii</sup>

Experience has demonstrated that such incidents are very rare, so in every instance there should be a conversation with the Bishop. This enables pastoral counsel, but also support for the priest in a grave and sometimes difficult situation.

It is important to remember that a characteristic of child abuse is a high level of recidivism by offenders. This area of criminal activity involves the following common elements:

- The abuse is usually secretive and known only to the abuser and the victim;
- Offenders generally do not stop at abusing unless there is some intervening factor;
- Often there is a distortion of cognition involved, for example, a belief that the victim enjoyed the sexual interaction;
- The abuse generally begins with something minor, and gradually builds up to more involved sexual interaction through a process of grooming;
- The abuse continues because the child often adopts some form of survival behaviour which the offender interprets as acceptance of the activity;
- The sexual abuse is generally not a self-contained incident – it is part of a relationship that is corrupting and violating;
- When exposed, offenders will generally attempt to justify, minimize or excuse their behaviour, ranging from blaming the victim, to claiming their behaviour was a result of their own abuse or that they were under the influence of stress or alcohol.

A heartfelt expression of grief and contrition in the confessional should not persuade a priest that the person making the confession does not pose a grave risk to children in the future.

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Reporting should always be seen as an essential part of contrition. Remember also, that an offender may "test" the confessional context by making a lower level admission.

Until relatively recent times the grave damage that abuse did to the abused person was not properly understood. It was not well understood that this form of abuse, almost invariably resulted in severe psychological and spiritual damage impacting upon survivors for the rest of their lives, with grave and serious ongoing consequences for personal relationships. Increased psychological knowledge in this area and the courage of survivors to speak out has greatly increased awareness within the church and broader community of the deep and lasting impact of abuse.

Remember, there is an important difference between admission to a sin in a pastoral conversation and the provision of formal confession. Clergy are mandated reporters in South Australia, although there is a provision under law to protect the seal of the confessional.

**The Most Rev'd Dr Jeffrey Driver**  
**Archbishop of Adelaide**

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