

A decorative graphic on the left side of the slide consists of a network of light blue lines and small circles, resembling a circuit board or a neural network. The lines are vertical and horizontal, with some diagonal connections, and the circles are placed at various points along these lines.

# SYNODALITY WALKING TOGETHER DPC: *A JOURNEY TOWARD INTEGRITY IN ACTION*

# SYNODALITY



THE FRANCIS AGENDA

# SYNODALITY: A *BRIEF RECAP*

- Listening deeply: a process encompassing attentiveness and a call to action
- Invocation of the Holy Spirit
- Synodality is the means of proclaiming Jesus, who is the good news to the poor, the margins and periphery, who brings freedom and healing
- Synodality not just a journey to ... Emmaus... but a walking together on a *camino*



# SYNODALITY

- Rooted in Vatican II from a Pope who *assumes* that the vision of the Council is coherent and accepted – that is, a given.
- This is in contrast to two other perspectives on the Council: broad open-ended and future-oriented interpretations or a narrower view that emphasises continuity with the past
- Francis takes a “both and” rather than an “either – or” approach
- Synodality seeks to move toward a synthesis between Vatican II ecclesiology, of the priority of the whole People of God, and the Church’s current praxis: in terms of the *sensus fidelium* and the Council’s vision for the Church *ad intra* and *ad extra*.

# SYNODALITY AND GOVERNANCE

- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Synod of Bishops Address (17 Oct, 2015)
- The Church is a community of persons encountering the Risen Lord in a variety of ways and through a variety of means, charisms and vocations
- Emphasises the *communio* → the process of arriving at a decision rather than the mechanism for determining the decision
- Links “peak conclave” instances of collegial listening and discernment with parallel and stable instances of governance at each level of the Church
- Discernment and Governance are not separable in a synodal model: decision-making is not an exercise in primacy or collegiality but of participation and discernment – the *sensus fidei fidelium*.
- Accepting that baptism is the primary sacrament of vocation means that all should be heard (Canon 212)
- The point of governance is not control but enhancing community; we proclaim Christ Risen, we build the Kingdom

# SYNODALITY IN THE ARCHDIOCESE

(MY THINKING A YEAR AGO)



# KEY FEATURES IN SYNODALITY

- We build relationships that allow deep listening, respect and equality of voices to flourish
- We build on the vision of the Good Samaritan: mercy, practical mercy is an obligation
- Frank Carroll: “I am sure you are doing all you can, the problem is you are not doing all that is needed...”
- Discern need, respond as we can...

# SYNODALITY IN THE ARCHDIOCESE 2

(EVOLVING THINKING...)





# WALKING TOGETHER

- Synodality in progress
- For the long haul, getting to know each other and hearing what matters to whom – a *camino*
- Necessary to stay at places – need a “tent”
- The call in the Synod documents, and implicit in the Plenary Council decrees: “enlarge the space of your tent”
- The tent, then is not a place to sleep, but a place to encounter and engage

# WALKING TOGETHER

- To invite people to recognise what we do and how we do it'
- To invite people to know each other
- To celebrate who we are
- To dream about who we want to be
- To begin to know that we need to be intersecting not parallel lines that never meet
- *Vademecum for the Synod: Authentic discernment is made possible where there is time for deep reflection and a spirit of mutual trust, common faith, and a shared purpose.*[1.1] How we should form PPCs and a future DPC.

# SYNODALITY AND WALKING TOGETHER

- First and foremost, *synodality denotes the particular style that qualifies the life and mission of the Church, expressing her nature as the People of God journeying together and gathering in assembly, summoned by the Lord Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel. Synodality ought to be expressed in the Church's ordinary way of living and working.* [1.2]
- *...intended to inspire people to dream about the Church we are called to be, to make people's hopes flourish, to stimulate trust, to bind up wounds, to weave new and deeper relationships, to learn from one another, to build bridges, to enlighten minds, warm hearts, and restore strength to our hands for our common mission ... a journey of growing authentically towards the communion and mission that God calls the Church to live out in the third millennium.* [1.3]

# DPC

- Archbishop established a working party: researched, consulted, produced a report
- Report argues case for a DPC; highlights limitations in previous models; describes a possible structure; and identifies its priority tasks, including the organisation and conduct of a Synod
- Report did not sufficiently address process or methodology; it was insufficiently theological in nature
- Archbishop responded on 20 March 2023 seeking a pastoral theological foundation for a DPC; this is an extension of the previous work, not a start-over



# DPC: *THE NEXT STEPS*

- Questions posed:
  - What pastoral theological foundations are emerging in our times?
  - How can they truly assist us in re-establishing our DPC?
  - [How might it] offer orientation for a soundly based Synod in the Archdiocese?
- Foci for contemplation:
  - Baptismal vocation
  - Community of the Holy Spirit
  - Discerning the presence of the Spirit among us with the charisms needed to build the Body of Christ
  - Profound listening and encounter with Jesus at the centre

# DPC: *THE NEXT STEPS*

The Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn is a portion of the people of God defined by their baptismal call within a specific geography, history and culture. As the Second Vatican Council taught, the baptismal call is not a single event but a sacramental reality, both inclusive and participatory, becoming a dynamic form of community guided by the Spirit in an ongoing process of conversion.

Approaching the second quarter of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, this particular Church, aligned with the universal Church, understands itself as a synodal community, journeying together in communion, participation and mission. These interrelated and dynamic dimensions of synodality both shape our Church and guide its ongoing discernment. It is recognized that the people of the Archdiocese are a diverse group inspired by the Word and the Tradition and grounded in the *sensus fidei*; all members are christened to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on making pastoral decisions which correspond to the will of God; our mission is to evangelise most particularly to those on the margins, whether spiritual, social, economic, political, geographic or existential.

# DPC: *THE NEXT STEPS*

Thematic Nuclei for the Synod	Emerging Theological Developments
Journeying Companions	Synodality as a way of being
Listening	Embrace a theology of “the People of God”
Speaking Out	Equality of Women
Celebrating	Secularisation and Service
Co-Responsible in the Mission	First Nations Spirituality (avoiding Chinese Rites controversy)
Dialogue in Church and Society	Care for God’s Creation
With Other Christian Denominations	Discerning collegially rather than determinative
Authority and Participation	Sensus Fidei Fidelium: not primacy, but participation
Discerning and Deciding	
Forming ourselves in Synodality	

# DPC WORKING PARTY

- Alison Weeks (Gungahlin)
- Soomin Chung (Gungahlin and Korean Catholic Community)
- Fr Alex Osborne
- Mrs Anna Abraham (O'Connor and South Tuggeranong)
- Patrick McArdle



## DPC: *THE NEXT STEPS*

- There is no rush, but something of an expectation that more is needed...
- Hope to finalise our response to the Archbishop's questions in early August...
- Will see what emerges from the Synod – phase 1 and the *recognitio* of the Plenary Council

# SYNODALITY, WALKING TOGETHER, DPC: A JOURNEY TOWARD INTEGRITY IN ACTION

- Last year I talked about Pope Francis' motifs....
- Solid focus on his images: margins/periphery; field hospital; smell of the sheep; walking together; care for creation
- Single word common in all is “integral/integrity”: not beginning with its moral sense precisely but in the sense of wholeness
- That which is *necessary for completeness*
- Integral ecology; integral human development; integral disarmament; integrity necessary for the common good
- Field Hospital: MASH