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Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation. Mark 16:15

Eyes on the horizon

Welcome to Proclaim, a regular newsletter to help keep parish leadership teams informed and inspired as they proclaim and live out the joy of the Gospel.

As the days lengthen and warm up, there is a sense that life itself becomes a little more open and expansive. We lift our eyes, feel the sun on our skin, look further into the distance and dare to anticipate better, clearer days ahead. This sense of anticipation is amplified as we inch ever-closer to the targets that will bring an easing of restrictions and a gradual, longed-for return to fellowship and community. Of course, this being Melbourne, we can also expect sudden cold snaps and downpours, just as there will inevitably be obstacles on our way out of lockdown. Sometimes weariness and cynicism cloud our outlook and close us in. St Paul knew as well as anyone the setbacks and disappointments that mark the path of discipleship. But he pressed on (Philippians 3:13). He kept his eyes on the horizon.

We have recently been invited to lift our eyes and imagine what the future of the Church might look like at a local, national and global level. This week, dioceses around the world (including our own) will [launch consultation processes for the 2023 Synod of Bishops in Rome](#), and in this issue, we also hear about the recently concluded [first assembly of the Plenary Council](#) in Australia. Closer to home, the 'Take the Way of the Gospel' process calls our local communities to look ahead with prayer and discernment.

Of course, while significant, these processes are just stepping-stones on the path to God's ultimate horizon. In time for your Advent planning, the [Grace of Waiting resource](#) provides weekly reflections on the Advent readings and what it means to wait faithfully and hopefully for God's promised future.

We also continue our series on discipleship, exploring what it means to [engage deeply with Jesus](#). And to mark Children's Week, the Professional Standards Unit offers some great ideas about how we can [keep kids safe online](#).

Keep your eyes on the horizon!



Synod consultation process launched

Last Sunday, Pope Francis celebrated Mass to mark the global launch of the Synod of Bishops with the theme *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission*. In dioceses around the world, local launches will take place this coming weekend, ushering in a period of local consultation that will assist with the two-year process culminating in the Synod of Bishops in Rome in October 2023. The Church in Melbourne joins the rest of the world as we embark on this intentional process of mutual listening. There are a number of resources available to help parishes understand and engage with the Synod.

[Find out more](#)



Advent resource for parishes now available

Using the weekly Advent readings, the *Grace of Waiting* looks at what it means to wait faithfully and hopefully for God's promised future, something we have had ample time to do this year. Weekly reflections use the gospel readings for each Sunday of Advent, providing many riches for contemplation and conversation and offering an opportunity to read, reflect, pray and act. The resource can be used by individuals and/or groups, and in homes, parishes and small groups.

[Download here](#)

Discipleship: Engaging in a life with Jesus

The Archdiocese is currently considering how we might more effectively draw young people into the journey of discipleship—forming and empowering them to live as disciples of Christ, and to go forth to make other disciples. This work will direct how youth and young adults are supported in our Archdiocese,



particularly as we anticipate post-lockdown life. In this series of articles, we look at the three key experiences that mark the journey of discipleship: *encounter*, *engage* and *embark*. This month, we look at what it means to engage deeply in a life with Christ.

[Read here](#)



Plenary members present final reports

At the recent First Assembly of the Plenary Council, participants (members) worked in small groups to discern important issues facing the Church in Australia. The 16 agenda questions considered, included a range of different topics such as how parishes can lead the formation and animation of missionary disciples. On the final working day, groups presented the fruits of their discernment, sharing proposals that will guide discussions before the Second Assembly meeting next year.

[View here](#)



Helping our children to connect safely

Running from 23 to 31 October 2021, Children's Week is a national celebration recognising the talents, skills, achievements and rights of children. To celebrate Children's Week, the Archdiocese of Melbourne is highlighting the issue of online safety with parents, carers, parish leaders, staff and volunteers, and with the children in our parishes. Our hope is that we might support efforts to keep children safe as, increasingly, they use digital technology to connect to activities in their parish, and with their peers and family.

[Find out more](#)

Leading a missionary parish: Signs of hope

Missionary parishes transform lives and yield a growing army of disciples for whom worship and sacraments come to life and whose ministry and service flourish. Hosted by Ron Huntley, this series of live online talks and interviews explores signs of hope in our Church—globally, nationally and locally.

From the 'imposed-lockdown' comfort of your home, be inspired by a hope-filled vision for your parish and discuss practical ideas with fellow leaders.

Join us for the final session in this series on Thursday 21 October, 7.30–8.45pm.
Topic: Signs of Hope in Melbourne (featuring Melbourne parish leaders)

Share this event with others by [downloading the flyer here](#).

Registration via www.trybooking.com/BUCSW

The new, improved *Summit Online* is coming!

On Sunday 28 November—as we celebrate the first day of Advent and embark on a new liturgical year—we will also be launching a new and substantially improved *Summit Online* website.

In 2020, we surveyed parish liturgy teams and the broader liturgical community about how the *Summit Online* could be improved to better meet the liturgical resourcing needs of Melbourne parishes. Drawing on this detailed feedback, we have developed the new site to provide Melbourne parishes with high-quality, freely accessible and engaging liturgy resources and liturgical-formation materials in a more attractive, easy-to-use online format.

As well as all the regular resources that long-time *Summit* users have come to value—such as weekly music suggestions, liturgy notes, Sunday readings, prayers of the faithful and the popular 'Exploring the Word' RCIA resource—the site will feature a range of subject-based 'libraries', where you will be directed to excellent resources from around the web on music, prayer, RCIA, Scripture, the liturgical environment, saints and seasons, and homily preparation, among other subjects. You will also be able to find regular news items on liturgy-related events and developments, and a more logical, attractive site design and more intuitive functionality will make it easier to navigate and to find what you need.

That's just the beginning though—there are more exciting new features on their way next year. Keep an eye on the *Proclaim* e-newsletter for more information as it becomes available.

'Take the Way of the Gospel' prayer resources

We are being called to enter into a time of concerted prayer for our Archdiocese as we undertake the 'Take the Way of the Gospel' journey together. This significant time of discernment begins with prayer—calling upon the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us.

For many parishes, the focus for the rest of the year will rightly be on the immediate challenges of welcoming our people back in person. However, we hope that the following prayer resources will help prepare and equip parishes and individuals to begin to begin this important conversation about the renewal of our parishes with hearts and minds close to God. All the following resources are available on the [‘Take the Way of the Gospel’](#) webpage:

- **Together we Pray:** a five-week resource that can be adapted and used in parishes as they begin the prayer and discernment process
- **prayers of intercession** for parishes
- **prayer card**
- **Beginning the Journey:** a workshop to break open the ‘Take the Way of the Gospel’ pastoral letter. Resources include PowerPoint slides, and facilitator and participant guides.

Additionally, parishes are invited to attend the **‘Launch with prayer’ workshop**. Fr Robin Koning SJ will lead attendees through the practice of ‘spiritual conversation’, integrating active listening, intentional speaking and moments of silence. Once parishes are ready to begin their discernment, this workshop is suggested as an integral part of parish discernment meetings.

Upcoming sessions will be run on:

- Friday 15 October, 11am–12.15pm
- Wednesday 20 October, 7.30–8.45pm

To register, please visit: www.trybooking.com/BUFIB

Parishes may also like to contact their regional Animation consultant for support.

The Catholic Contribution, with Professor Haldane

Commencing this coming **Thursday 14 October at 4pm**, this free lecture series will be presented over six sessions and will explore the development and self-understanding of Roman Catholicism and its contribution culturally, historically and philosophically to the understanding of human nature.

The virtual lecture series provides a great opportunity to hear from one of the most pre-eminent thinkers in moral philosophy and education. Professor John Haldane is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Chair of the Royal Institute of Philosophy in London and a member of the Pontifical Academy for Life in Rome. He is currently leading an important Catholic educational, cultural and societal project, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Melbourne and Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools.

Share this event with others by [downloading the flyer here](#).

For further information or to register, visit: www.macs.vic.edu.au/Haldane

Save the date: Red Wednesday, 24 November 2021

Parishes, families and individuals are invited to take part in Red Wednesday—a global initiative to pray and speak up for the millions of people around the world who are persecuted for their religious beliefs. In a particular way, we stand in solidarity with persecuted brothers and sisters in the Church, many of whom are suffering violence for expressing their belief in Jesus Christ.

The Archdiocese will again join with other places of worship and landmarks around Australia and the world by lighting St Patrick's Cathedral in red on the night of 24 November and hosting an evening of prayer. Further details will be provided soon.

Red Wednesday is an initiative of *Aid to the Church in Need*, a pontifical charity providing spiritual and pastoral support to persecuted Christians.

More information about this initiative and about religious persecution can be found at www.aidtochurch.org/red-wednesday. Resources will be made available shortly.



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The Archdiocese is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.





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