



Plenary Council 2020: Listen To What The Spirit Is Saying...

In October 2020, the Catholic Church in Australia will gather for the first Plenary Council to be held since the second Vatican Council. In 2018, the entire People of God in Australia began preparing for this historic moment by listening to God, by listening to one another's stories of faith.

More than 222,000 people participated in listening and dialogue encounters and contributed 17,457 submissions during the first stage of preparation for the Australian Plenary Council. The voices of the faithful help all of us to understand something of the historical experience and the current reality of the Catholic Church in Australia. This gathered data also reveals some deeper hopes and questions, and the diverse yearnings, that we are now challenged to consider together. The National Themes for Discernment named below are inspired by the data and call us toward the future.

Now that we are in the Discernment phase, we continue to seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit.

We invite the groups who participated in Listening and Dialogue to now reconvene in communal Discernment on any one of the six themes. Each Discernment session is expected to result in a response that can be summarised in 1000 characters and that can be submitted through a form on the Discernment page (to be opened September 1). Our Writing and Discernment Groups will then meet and discern on these responses, with prayer and from their own theological knowledge, towards publishing thematic papers and fleshing out the agenda for the first session of the Plenary Council in October 2020.

Come, Holy Spirit of Pentecost. Come, Holy Spirit of the great South Land. O God, bless and unite all your people in Australia and guide us on the pilgrim way of the Plenary Council. Give us the grace to see your face in one another and to recognise Jesus, our companion on the road.

Give us the courage to tell our stories and to speak boldly of your truth. Give us ears to listen humbly to each other and a discerning heart to hear what you are saying. Lead your Church into a hope-filled future, that we may live the joy of the Gospel. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.