

PASTORAL LETTER TO THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY REGARDING THE SYNOD OF SYDNEY 2026

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The idea of a 'synod' (Greek: *syn* = one; *hodos* = road "on the way together") has a long and rich history in the life of the Church.

We might think of the Council held in Jerusalem around the year to decide what parts of the Old Jewish Law still applied to Christians, especially the Gentile converts (Acts 15). Ecumenical councils, Council of Nicaea (325), right through to Vatican Council II (1962-65). Or the various Synods of Bishops held since Vatican II, including most recently the Synod on Synodality (2023-24). **Or the five Plenary Councils of Australia, the most recent of which took place in 2021-22.**

Pope Francis **has stretched the concept of Synodality** in various ways to provoke new thinking about how we might discern and govern as a Church. He has described Synodality as **"an expression of the Church's nature, form, style and mission"**—the whole Church as *fratelli tutti* (all one family), "an open square where all can feel at home and participate". It imagines a Church **more aware and responsive to people's needs and aspirations**, gathered to pray and reflect upon a common theme, while journeying together as a pilgrim people.

To engage in *synoding*, then, is **to stop, encounter the other, listen** "with the ear of the heart", discuss and discern together so as to come closer to Christ and one another. So, a more synodal Church, according to the Holy Father, will be one that **is more welcoming and accommodating, involving diverse people and engaging them in "sincere, open and fraternal discussion"**. It will be oriented **not just to more talk but to active service of others.**

The Fifth Plenary Council of Australia resolved that each diocese should conduct a diocesan synod within five years of that council.

From these initial consultations, three particular 'longings' emerged:

- That our **liturgies** be more prayerful, occasions of real encounter with God and opportunities to enrich our faith lives.
- That our parishes and other Church communities be more Christ-centred, places where all are called to **ongoing conversion** and living out their baptismal dignity. This will require reflection and action bearing upon the **cultivation of faith, charity and holiness.**
- That our people be more **mission-oriented, carrying Christ to the world**, and committing themselves to the service of all, especially the marginalised.

I hereby convoke a synod of the Archdiocese of Sydney to be held from 30 April to 2 May 2026.

Over the coming year we will prepare for this ecclesial moment through regional gatherings. In listening carefully to the different voices and through them to the Holy Spirit, we hope to arrive at **some concrete proposals** in 2026 for deliberation and decision.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT



THIS WEEK



Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit through the wilderness, being tempted there by the devil for forty days. Luke 4:1

SATURDAY 8 MARCH

5:30pm - 6:00pm Reconciliation

6:00pm Mass

SUNDAY 9 MARCH

9:30am Mass + KidsChurch, Morning Tea

10:30am Kensington Youth Ministry - Hall

3:30pm Indonesian Community Mass

5:30pm - 6:00pm Reconciliation

6:00pm Mass

MONDAY 10 MARCH

9:00am Mass

6:00pm Adoration/Reconciliation

WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH

9:00am Mass

11:00am Funeral – Elisa Da Silva

6:30pm CHARBEL RAISH – PARISH HALL

THURSDAY 13 MARCH

5:00pm Holy Hour/Adoration/Reconciliation

6:00pm Mass

FRIDAY 14 MARCH

9:00am Mass with OLR School - Year 4

SATURDAY 15 MARCH – JULES CHEVALIER

BIRTH 1824

5:30pm - 6:00pm Reconciliation

6:00pm Mass

SUNDAY 16 MARCH

9:30am Mass + KidsChurch, Morning Tea

3:30pm Indonesian Community Mass

5:30pm - 6:00pm Reconciliation

6:00pm Mass

We acknowledge the traditional owners the Gadigal Clans of the Eora Nation, who cared for this land for thousands of years and their descendants who have maintained these Spiritual connections and traditions.

PARISH DIRECTORY



4 Roma Ave
Kensington NSW 2033
T: 9663 1070

E: parishoffice@olrkensington.org.au
W: <http://olrkensington.org.au>

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR

Fr Peter Hearn msc

E: parishpriest@olrkensington.org.au

PARISH SECRETARY

Maria Caetano

Mon, Wed & Fri 9:30am-3:30pm

ADMIN ASSISTANT

Amanda Janturi

Tues & Thurs 9:30am-3:30pm

PARISH SAFEGUARDING

SUPPORT OFFICER

Lily Murcutt

E: safeguarding@olrkensington.org.au

MASS TIMES

Sat 6:00pm (Vigil), Sun 9:30am, 6pm

Mon, Wed, Fri - 9am, Thurs 6pm

Indonesian Mass Sun 3:30pm

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

9:00am Mass First Friday

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 5:30-6.00pm

Sunday 5.30-6.00pm

Thursday 5:00pm-6pm

ROSARY

First Saturday before 6.00pm Mass

BAPTISMS | WEDDINGS |

SACRAMENTS | RCIA

Contact Amanda - Parish Office

E: sacraments@olrkensington.org.au

INDONESIAN COMMUNITY

Fr Agustinus Handoko msc

E: hanhanmsc@yahoo.com

M: 0420 347 002

OLR PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Principal: Jenny Chu - 9663 3346

<https://olrkensington.syd.catholic.edu.au>

OLSH COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

Principal: Gilda Pussich - 9662 4088

<https://olshkensington.syd.catholic.edu.au>

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Roy Rigotti - 0400 467 809

John Hill - 0411 315 533

Sr Pauline Richards - 0419 482 408

Nani Widarto - 0411 850 350

RESPONSES

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

When he calls on me, I will answer him;
I will deliver him and give him glory,
I will grant him length of days.

FIRST READING

Deuteronomy 26: 4-10

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.

SECOND READING

Romans 10: 8-13

ACCLAMATION

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
king of endless glory!

No one lives on bread alone,
but on every word that comes
from the mouth of God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ,
king of endless glory!

GOSPEL

Luke 4: 1-13

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

One does not live by bread alone,
but by every word that comes
forth from the mouth of God.

NEW PARISH EMAIL ADDRESSES

Please note, we have new parish email addresses as follows:

Fr Peter:

parishpriest@olrkensington.org.au

Amanda:

sacraments@olrkensington.org.au

Maria:

parishoffice@olrkensington.org.au

OREMUS

Let us Pray

SICK

Almarinda Cruz, Lily Rose Parks, Bernard Fonti,
Alice Gatt, Peter Haylen, Manuel Mouco

PARISHIONERS IN RESIDENTIAL CARE/HOMEBOUND

Tom Carlton, Sr Joan Pender, Frank Mifsud,
Margaret Stocker, Jill Rees, John Dorahy,
Brenda Longworth, Christine Moyle,
Olga Nasser, Maria Pockaj, Lucienne
Radzynski, Nicole Chiaradia

BELOVED DECEASED

Elisa Da Silva, Ena Delaney, Helena Adamek-
Zychowicz (*mother of Anna Jordan*),
Br Reg Pritchard msc

ANNIVERSARIES

Maria Taranto, Carlo & Alfredo Pengue,
Aurelio Coelho, Gracinda Rodrigues,
Jack Papallo, Anthony Jahja

SACRAMENTAL DATES

Confirmation:

Sacrament Administered Wednesday
28 May 6.30pm

First Holy Communion:

Enrolment: 6 August, 6.30pm Church;
Masses 9.30am Sunday 14 and 21
September

First Reconciliation:

Enrolment: 17 September;
Sacrament conferred: 12 and 19
November 6.30pm

ROSTERS

8/9 MAR	SAT 6PM	SUN 9:30AM	SUN 6PM
Acolyte	John Allen	Arthur Handojo	Briant Koh
Readers	Jorence Jo Joyance Jo	Roy Rigotti Ross Martin	Natalia Kuirintinus Marissa Meyn
E. Ministers	Simona Wong	Trish Veness Amalia Iovanelia	Patricia Reyes
KidsChurch	Lil & Sherly		
Counters	Johanna Jahja, Marissa Meyn		
Comm to Sick	Trish Veness		
15/16 MAR	SAT 6PM	SUN 9:30AM	SUN 6PM
Acolyte	Danny Tjahjadi	John Allen	Gunawan Gunawan
Readers	Shilla Azalea Sr Pauline Richards	Kayla Thumwanich Billy Siauwidjaja	Petra Haylen Paul Haylen
E. Ministers	Vien Suhadi	Ana Corpuz Andreas Johan	Michael Ryes
KidsChurch	Arty & Herlina		
Counters	Selvi Ung, Jan Nicholas, Bob Brenac		
Comm to Sick	Jan Nicholas		

The regional gatherings **will be supplemented by online opportunities** to share your thoughts in preparation for the Synod of Sydney.

It is my hope that through the Synod of Sydney 2026, God will re-energise the Church in our region in its prayerfulness, Christ-likeness, and missionary spirit.

LENTEN TALKS with Mr CHARBEL RAISH at OLR Hall

5 Wednesday evenings beginning next Wednesday 12 March: light supper 6.30.

Talks begin 7.00pm **SHARP** (Just like I begin Mass on time at OLR ☺) – so do your best to be on time – difficult as it is with work commitments, parking etc.)

Charbel Raish has a superb “re-vert” story: i.e. he was **raised a Catholic** but nearly ended up in the **Islamic Faith in High School**. His mother is Lebanese and his Dad from Columbia, Latin America. He was brought up in a **Catholic home and attended a Catholic Primary School**. However, his Secondary Schooling was in what he describes as a very rough **State High School** at the time, with plenty of violence and threats of bullying in the playground and the class - rooms. He became a member of a **group of mainly Islamic students** who protected one another (for want of a better description).

It was these **Moslem High School students who challenged his Christianity** and while they could explain, very simply and cogently, their own Faith, **Charbel floundered in trying to answer their objections to Christianity**. After all, his Catholic formation left him with a **Primary School student’s appreciation** of it. I am sure he will tell us his story over the evenings of how he came back to the faith (**hence “re-vert”, rather than “convert”**) – and it is truly fascinating.

(I might add that you can find on YouTube endless accounts of people from all backgrounds becoming Catholics: those who left to join Evangelical Churches, or simply fell away from all religion, and how they made their way (back) to the Church. I think of “Jews for Jesus” phenomenon, and Imams, Protestant Ministers who have found their way, “Crossing the Tiber” as they say, to Rome.)

What Charbel’s story highlights is the absolute importance of all of us having a good grounding in how **to defend and explain our faith**. There is nothing new in this: St Peter was on about this to his community at Antioch and Rome: **1 Peter 3:15** “But in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. **Always be prepared to give a defence to everyone who asks you the reason for the hope that is in you. But respond with gentleness and respect, But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord.”** So, the ages old importance of our intellectual formation in what is called **APOLOGETICS** - and once was a part of our High School curriculum, goes hand in hand with a living, vibrant, **personal encounter with Jesus, a sacramental and ecclesial life, with action for a just world.** (We are a somewhat “lame duck” organisation when we lack adequate intellectual formation as St Peter requests of us.)

Charbel went on to form Parousia Media and has reached millions of viewers through his Videos. I hope to see you on Wednesday nights in the Hall. Peter Hearn MSC



HOLY HOURS

Join us for Adoration **Monday 10th March 6pm-7pm** (call in for a few minutes or stay the whole hour) and Thursdays before 6:00pm Mass. **Reconciliation is available.**



FIVE FIRST SATURDAYS DEVOTION

Please join us at OLR Church on the **first Saturday of each month** for the “5 first Saturdays Devotion” associated with Our Lady of Fatima. **5.30pm Rosary with confessions available followed by 6pm Mass.**

WEEKDAY MASSES

First Friday Masses with anointing of the Sick at 9am, also at the Thursday evening Mass the day before the First Friday. PHMSC

Dear Fr Peter,
Thank you for holding
the **2024 Catholic**



Mission Parish Appeal. On behalf of Catholic Mission, I would appreciate you thanking all your parishioners for their generosity which is going towards supporting the Church in Mongolia and House of Mercy. Thanks to their kindness, people like Chuluunbaatar will have access to the support they need to help them get back on their feet. **Total amount raised: \$1,977.55**

PARISH COLLECTIONS 1/2 MARCH

First Collection	\$1,203
Second Collection	\$718
Envelope Collection	\$575

Link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdZDdl6i6f0zA1alLpwvd6Rwl0_ujk--Ui7IUdlBsUaigPjQ/viewform

UPDATES: You are aware I am a 'temporary' PP for OLR. After Terry's untimely death and the shock and grief we all registered, the MSC Provincial had a priest on the way to OLR as PP. However, Rome derailed that by making him 'Apostolic Vicar (i.e. like a Bishop) of the Marshall Islands at the top of the huge expanse of the Central Pacific Ocean. After that set-back, plans are in place for a PP to come probably a few more months away. (While I enjoy OLR – I am looking forward to returning to my MSC Community in Adelaide.) PHMSC

A MESSAGE FROM THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY

Abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with a crime are the police. If you or anyone you know have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org or 9390 5810. You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.



PROJECT COMPASSION

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – 8/9 MARCH 2025

This Lent, we're invited to *Unite Against Poverty* with Caritas Australia's Project Compassion. This year is especially significant as we celebrate the Jubilee Year – a *time of renewal and solidarity*. Project Compassion 2025 shares three stories from around the world. We'll meet **Toefuata'iga** – (*Toy-foo-ah-tah-ing-ah*) a young student from Samoa who faced severe water shortages at her school. Thanks to Caritas Australia and the generosity of supporters like you, her school now has a 10,000 L water tank, improving access to clean water and allowing teachers to prioritise education. We'll get to know **Lam** from Vietnam. Born with short stature, Lam faced social exclusion and limited employment opportunities. Through the I-SHINE program, Lam completed a course and is now a freelance graphic designer.

And we'll meet **Irene** from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) who faced immense challenges after losing her father to war and raising her children in poverty. With support from Caritas Australia, Irene received vocational training in sewing and farming and can now support her whole family.



Please donate today

You can support Project Compassion 2025 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code above. Or online at: caritas.org.au/project-compassion Or by calling: 1800 024 413
Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty this Lent*.

GLOBAL MISSION: NO AGE LIMIT!



Ever thought volunteering overseas was beyond you? IT'S NOT. Palms always values our older participants for the wisdom and resourcefulness they share in communities! Palms is celebrating Seniors Week with a special [online session](#) showcasing older volunteers' experience and insights from the mission field. Explore our [unique opportunities](#) and match your life experience to the experience of a lifetime!

Online via Zoom- Scan the QR or register at palms.org.au/events
Thursday 27 March 2025 at 11 am – 12 pm
02 9560 5333 | palms@palms.org.au



MAINTENANCE: As mentioned last week we are making our way through a detailed list of issues drawn up by **Archdiocesan Consultants in 2018** to be completed over 10 years. We expect a quote for external painting of office – Parish House soon. The contractor for the repair of 5 stained glass windows came during the week and will begin in a few weeks (Cost: \$13,600). If you would like to donate specifically to the beautiful windows – I shall happily relieve you of your wallet. PHMSC