



Diocese of Broome WA

Apostolic Administrator

Hello Everyone.

There were 5 days of intense listening and conversation among 253 delegates at the Plenary Council final Assembly. I would like to give you an opportunity to read and reflect on the motions approved by the 5th Plenary Council of the Australian Catholic Church. Before my reflection, I would like to express my gratitude to all our Delegates who all made very positive contributions to the work of the Second Session and was well received by everyone. These motions except one received the necessary two thirds majority with the Consultative vote using online voting with TEAMS (the Consultative voters do not include the Deliberative voters (Bishops)). The Deliberative voters (Bishops) are then required to pass the motions formally by two thirds with a secret written vote.

One motion, similar to the intent of the Consultative vote did not receive two thirds for approval. This was to change the Canon on Preaching to include Lay People for preaching. Sometimes the total numbers varied as some delegates abstained from voting. The two thirds was based on the number of delegates who signed the attendance sheet for each day.

As you can see in the final motions put to the vote, the amendments are also listed in red. Some amendments were simply agreed by all the Delegates from the floor, others required a formal amendment to be voted on, including the Bishops before being put to the Consultative Delegates only for a formal vote before being sent to the Deliberative Voters.

This a reflection of excellent interventions by everyone with the final motions capturing the intent of the Second Assembly. As you can see from the deliberative vote, the Bishops approved the intent of the Consultative Vote.

There is nothing stopping the local Church from working through these motions for implementation in their local diocese. The question is: how can these Acts of the Plenary Council be implemented in our local church and what process should we use in our local church? How this happens will be different in every diocese which was the understanding of all delegates.

What happens in the meantime. The Acts of the Plenary Council were signed individually by all Bishops present on the last day. The motions once approved become formally in Church language the Acts of the Council.

The November Bishop's Conference will formally approve the Acts and then they are sent to the Holy See for approval. Once approved, the Acts become the Decrees of the Fifth Plenary Council and law for the Church in Australia. Unfortunately, this process might take 12 months until they are formally promulgated for the Church in Australia.

As I have said, this does not prevent the local churches from developing a process for the implementation of the Acts as they are now known.

The discussions and the disquiet that happened on Wednesday as a result of the deliberative vote on the motions for “Equality between Women and Men” brought to light how Catholics with differing views can come together and resolve the differences or misunderstandings. Everyone including the bishops worked through this process on Wednesday with grace and faith. It resulted in a better document for this section.

The Plenary Council with a sense of hope with an awareness the Holy Spirit had guided everyone especially on the Wednesday which was a difficult day. The process of implementing the work of the Council will now begin. My hope is the process used over 4 years and through the past week for the Council will model how these decrees and other matters can begin and happen in our diocese.

Wishing you every blessing and peace,

Bishop Michael Morrissey
Apostolic Administrator
DIOCESE OF BROOME

14 July 2022

Links to Plenary Council Voting Outcomes:

[Final Voting Outcomes July 5](#)

[Final Voting Outcomes July 6](#)

[Final Voting Outcomes July 7](#)

[Final Voting Outcomes July 8](#)