



This is the Spirit Weaver's submission:

## **COMMUNION**

Our Word of God/Eucharistic celebration is the core of our faith, in many cases we have lost the richness of this.

However, our spiritual life and faith can be deepened in more ways than the Mass.

We are called to be companions to each other, to walk with others, and we do not always do that well.

Today's people must be reflected in today's Church, building on what's gone before. Call for change in clergy training to enable them to connect more fully with parishioners.

Education is key – for lay people and seminarians, a particular emphasis on understanding scripture.

The challenge is how to reach those on the margins to build a Church inclusive of everyone.

For many, they haven't lost their faith but the Church has left them, they didn't leave the Church.

The Church can be 'black and white' in their stance, excluding the 'grey' – those on the margins – women, divorced, Indigenous, LGBTQIA+, people of other cultures... There is little opportunity for these people to speak up.

A welcoming community is paramount to building a strong community.

Catholics can 'hide behind the Mass' and be complacent about other ways that we can deepen our faith and build community, such as outreach.

## **PARTICIPATION**

### **Common Thread**

CHURCH STRUCTURES at all levels need to be transformed, necessitating MODELS with processes of inclusivity, participation, creativity, which encompass and are attractive to ALL – including women, the young, vulnerable, and oppressed.

For such models to be successful EDUCATION and FORMATION involving all aspects of Christian Life, are of upmost importance for ALL, both clergy and laity, encouraging the sharing of gifts and responsibilities for Parish, Diocesan and Global Life.

### **Insights**

That GOVERNANCE at ALL levels of Church Life use Synodal and collaborative processes. That decisions be taken as a result of this process and not from an authoritarian, power holding position.

### **Experience**

The sense of working together, shared responsibility and the need for the laity to be truly involved which would only happen through continuing formation for ALL.

### **Feelings**

A sense of loss for what had been experienced in the past at Diocesan level and lost over the ensuing years. Some frustration as the 'process of change' is very long. There was also an expressed sense of hopelessness...will we be listened to? However, there is a sense of hope because of the work of small groups e.g. Spiritweavers - Contemplative Active Christian Women <https://spiritweaverswagga.com.au> and individuals taking responsibility are continuing the call for change and new life in the Church.

### **The Way Forward**

Continue the Synodality process with more people, starting with friends and moving into the broader community.

### **MISSION:**

is shared with all Catholics, Christians and people of other Faiths.

results from the call of our Baptism to be part of the Mission of Christ.

is achieved by sharing the mercy of God with all with whom we come into contact.

### **We are strengthened by our:**

prayer life / relationship with Jesus.

local parish prayer community and lay-initiated groups.

constant faith formation.

developing relationships with other Christians and people of other Faiths.

### **We are held back by:**

a poor understanding of what is meant by Mission – ALL baptised to live and share the Good News, especially with the marginalised;

fear related to using our voice due to lack of knowledge or confidence;

rejection of Vatican II teachings by some Catholics;

difficult relationships within and between parishes, often related to clericalism, and non-recognition of ALL the baptised, clergy and laity, sharing a true equality and dignity;

failure to acknowledge past hurts, injustices and abuses both personal and structural;

lack of adult faith formation across the Diocese.

### **We seek a Church that is:**

synodal in practice, welcoming, inclusive, accountable

### **by**

Implementing all recommendations of The Light From the Southern Cross Report, particularly clericalism-related & establishment of Diocesan and Parish Pastoral Councils.

Valuing lay faithful, especially the role of women, to be equally represented at all levels of church administration and pastoral practice.

Providing educational and adult faith opportunities to enhance this role.

Providing better structures to facilitate inter-faith collaboration and dialogue and improve relationships with other groups in society.