



Seek you first His Kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33



Bishop-Elect Peter and Virginia Grice

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### ARCHDEACON TOM HENDERSON-BROOKS SPEAKS AT THE SPECIAL ZOOM SYNOD

Growing up, one of my favourite NRL players was the legendary Queenslander, Arthur Beatson. Artie was the master of breaking through a tackle by getting one arm free and then off-loading a one-armed pass. Sometimes, whoever ran onto his pass would receive the most massive hospital pass. The defence would read the play and the hapless attacker would be flattened or knocked out cold! But more often than not, with Artie, that potential hospital pass became the moment of beauty that put his teammate through the gap and into the clear to score.

I am so thankful to God for the step of faith that our Bishop-Elect is making along with his wife and family. He is willing to come, without even being able to meet us due to coronavirus. He is willing to serve God and us, by catching that hospital pass and heading for the gap.

He doesn't know, and we don't know if it's going to flatten him or turn into the most beautiful line-break we have ever. But we are all going to follow him, because he is following Jesus. Therefore, he and his family, need our prayers, our support and our love.

With thankfulness to God in my heart, I announced the successful election of The Very Reverend Peter John Grice as the 13th Bishop of the Diocese of Rockhampton.

*The Episcopal Announcement was made at the Special Session of Synod, via Zoom, and live-streamed on Facebook on Saturday 18 July.*

Bishop-Elect Peter then responded, "As a former outside centre I hope it leads to something beautiful. So we'll see what we can do. Thank you very much everyone."

## ROCKHAMPTON'S 13TH BISHOP-ELECT

Currently serving as the Dean of the Cathedral in Geraldton, Western Australia, Peter, Virginia and their five children have ministered previously in the Dioceses of Armidale and NW Australia.

Born in Newcastle and schooled in Wollongong, Peter studied a Bachelor of Commerce/Law in Sydney before working for Government and then a private firm in commercial litigation. During that time Peter and Virginia *"became aware of the ministry needs in the bush and we actually met on an SU Beach Mission - we are very much mission-minded"*. Peter went on to complete his theological studies at SMBC (Sydney Missionary Bible College) and holds post graduate qualifications from Moore College (Sydney) and Trinity College (Melbourne).

After completing his initial theological training, Peter responded to the call of Parish ministry in the Diocese of Armidale, where he was Deaconed in 2001 and then Priested in 2002. He served as the Assistant Minister and then Incumbent of St Augustine's Inverell for 13 years, before accepting his current position as Dean and Minister-in-Charge of the Holy Cross Cathedral Geraldton in January 2015. He is also licensed as the Vicar General of the North West Australia Diocese.

Peter is passionate about encouraging people to know Christ and to make Him known. His desire is to shape and enable the church to communicate the good news of Jesus effectively. He also loves sport, travel (pre-COVID), maritime history, reading, amateur farming and music.

During his address to Synod Peter outlined his expectations and aspirations.

"I expect your prayers; prayerfulness. Things that you can be praying for right now – pray that we can sort out a house; pray for the ministry that's to come; pray for the logistics. Pray for my nearest and dearest Virginia, as she contemplates what we're going to do, and pray for our children."

"My second expectation is that of dedication. I expect us all to be dedicated to Jesus, in faith and in trust. I also expect all of us to be dedicated to each other (through these difficult times)."

The other expectation I have is I expect a honeymoon! (ie. *You're nice to me for 12-18 months. So that means you've got to be pleasant, 'Yes Bishop', 'Yes, exactly' that sort of thing. That'd be nice!*)

But I guess realistically my final expectation is I expect work. There is work to be done. It is a big job. It's a massive job but the good news is: as big as that job may be, God is bigger. And that's why we can always be hopeful.

The fourth thing I want to talk about is aspirations. And I think this is more a personal reflection. I want to be a Godly Bishop. I want to be a faithful Bishop - one that serves Jesus and one that serves the Diocese of Central Queensland and the people and the community. I want to be gentle, in a godly sense. I want to have compassion. I want to have empathy. I want to listen well. I want to be loving - a Bishop who consults, a Bishop who works to consensus, a collegiate Bishop who listens well and who acts decisively, a prayerful Bishop - because without prayer we go nowhere and it is my consistent experience that when people pray, God works and ministries succeed. And I want you to join with me in that prayerful adventure."

Peter and Virginia will say farewell to their beloved Geraldton Cathedral congregations at the end of 2020. Peter's Consecration is planned for Wednesday 24th February in Brisbane. His Installation as the 13th Bishop of Rockhampton is planned for Saturday 27th February 2021 at St Paul's Cathedral, Rockhampton.

"I am excited about serving God and his people in Central Queensland. I look forward to prayerfully working with the clergy and laity of Central Queensland, as we proclaim Jesus in word and deed. I can't wait to see you all in person!" Peter then read and commended Romans 5:1-11 as succinctly summarising what Jesus has done for us.

Paul Culliver, from ABC Radio Capricornia, interviewed Peter on Friday 24 July. Click the icon to listen. (*It's at 2:44 hrs into the Breakfast Show.*)





## COVID SAFE UPDATE

### STAGE 3 FOR EASING OF RESTRICTIONS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

Because Queensland has had such a positive health response to the gradual easing of COVID restrictions, we have been able to begin our social recovery and ease those restrictions earlier than the Government initially expected.

The Administrator issued a directive on 10 July to all parishes to complete their **COVID Safe Plans**. This applies to every congregation/church service in the Diocese. All plans for COVID Safe Church Services were to be submitted to the Safe Ministry Coordinator by 17 July! **THIS IS IMPORTANT.**

#### Other Events/Activities/Groups in July

The deadline to complete a COVID Safe Implementation Plan for every other planned church activity as you come out of lockdown eg Bible Studies, play groups, meetings, Soup Kitchens, Bargain Shops, etc is 31 July 2020

#### Events/Activities/Groups from August

From 1 August, Parishes have been asked to complete a **COVID Safe Plan** for each activity (new or old) as they re-commence. So, if you have a Parish Fete planned for November, then submit your COVID Safe Plan **before** the event. It will be added to your Parish File and together form a COVID Safe Plan for every Parish Activity.

#### Building Numbers + Increased Attendance

Venues <200m<sup>2</sup> - 1 person/2m<sup>2</sup>, max 50 people.

Venues >200m<sup>2</sup> - 1 person/4m<sup>2</sup>, max 100 people.

People from the same household can sit together without social distancing.

Outdoor Services - max 100, socially distanced.

#### Wedding/Funeral Exception

Max 100 attendees regardless of building size.

#### Singing in Church

Singing is now permitted during services, with the same distancing requirements as listed above, based on your building/church size.

#### Key Public Health Rules Continue

- Flu-like Symptoms = *stay at home, get tested*
- Physical Distancing = *to the extent possible*
- Hand Hygiene = *wash hands thoroughly and/or use alcohol-based sanitiser*
- Respiratory Hygiene = *cough/sneeze into elbow*
- Tracking, Tracing, Rapid Response = *must keep attendee contact lists for 56 days/event*
- Frequent Environmental Cleaning = *must clean between events/usage*

#### Other Considerations:

- **Holy Communion** = *no common cup; must be contactless; Priests must use disposable gloves; vestment best practice is 'bare below the elbow'*
- **Holy water** = *not permitted*
- **Greeting of the Peace** = *not permitted*
- **Distributing Any Book** = *not permitted (unless cleaned after every use)*
- **Offertory** = *must be contactless/online*
- **Disposable Bulletin/Service Sheet** = *allowed*
- **Correct Signage** = *must be displayed*
- **Serving Food** = *allowed ONLY if there is a COVID Safe Plan which is compliant with the Retail Food Services Industry.*

All of the necessary information is found on the [Diocesan Webpage](#).

Also, here is the

- [Places of Worship Factsheet](#)

Or contact Rev Jen Hercott, our Safe Ministry Coordinator at:

- [safeministry@anglicanchurchcq.org.au](mailto:safeministry@anglicanchurchcq.org.au)

**Remember**

**WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER**



# CHANCELLOR MARGO RETIRES

Mrs Margo Purcell announced her resignation from the position of Diocesan Chancellor at the history-making ZOOM meeting of Synod held on Saturday 18th July 2020. This announcement brought to an end, 14 years of Margo's unstinting hard work and very wise counsel for the benefit of this Diocese.



## What does a Chancellor do?

It is a lot more than dressing up in academic gown, wigs and other important looking regalia when processing into the Cathedral for special services! (Margo, not being a lover of pomp and ceremony, never went beyond an academic gown handed down from a previous registrar.) The Chancellor is the Bishop's legal advisor with regard to all aspects of modern law but also dealing with Canon Law - the law of the church. The origins of Canon Law predates the establishment of the Westminster system of government in medieval times.

Margo was appointed Deputy Chancellor by Bishop Godfrey Fryar in 2006. At that time the Chancellor was Judge Grant Britton who was finding it difficult to find time to fulfil the role of Chancellor because of the demands of his job in the District Court. Grant, always referred to as 'The Judge' by Margo, retired from the Court in December 2012 and then from the position of Chancellor in October 2013.

Margo used the years as Deputy Chancellor to learn as much as she could about Canon Law from The Judge, so that when Bishop Godfrey appointed her as his Chancellor she was well equipped to handle the role. Bishop David appointed Margo as his Chancellor immediately after his installation as 12th Bishop of Rockhampton. Bronwyn & Godfrey and Jan & David relished Margo's and Jim's warm and generous hospitality on their journeys to and from the west. Those stopovers with Margo & Jim were marvellous therapy for the weary travellers.

As Chancellor, Margo drafted amendments to the Canons of this Diocese and then had to steer the legislation through Synod. Also, there was frequently a slew of Canons from General Synod to be presented for inclusion in our Adopting & Assenting Canon that had to be explained and formally considered by synod members. To a large extent that is the public face of the Chancellor, but the work goes much deeper than that.





The Bishops Margo served relied on her great knowledge of law and wise counsel. Margo seemed to always find time to answer a phone call when the Bishop needed confidential and important legal advice or just general good counsel. There were also many hours spent on the road travelling to Diocesan meetings and then home again. All this on top of an extremely busy legal practice. Margo's workload on behalf of this Diocese was immense.

Margo also represented this Diocese at sessions of General Synod. There were a few General Synod members who looked down on this person who, in their eyes, had two strikes against her; 1. she was a woman and 2. 'just' a country lawyer. Margo soon showed them that they were no match for her intellect, knowledge, wisdom, Christian conviction and courage. She saw the worst as well as the best in the General Synod membership.

Margo also served on numerous Diocesan committees, the Bishopric Election Board, and is a Director of Anglican Representative (National Redress Scheme) Limited - a company specially established to represent the Anglican Church of Australia in the National Redress Scheme.

The Bishop-Elect will have a difficult job to find a Chancellor when he takes up his office. It might be just as well that he has extensive legal knowledge and experience but the need for a wise Chancellor will still be there.

### Background

Margo returned to full-time legal practice in 1998 after raising four children. She and Jim are the principals of Purcell & Associates, Solicitors in Emerald. She predominately works in the areas of commercial law, estates and property law with a particular interest in resource law and succession matters. Margo holds a Masters in Environmental Law & Local Government (Macquarie Uni, NSW 1998) and is a member of the Queensland Law Society and the Central District Law Association. She is also a Director of Rural Health Management Services Pty Ltd and a Board Member of CQ Rural Health.

But, more importantly she is wife, mother and grandmother and it is time she stepped back from the role of Chancellor to spend more time with her beloved family.



Go well Margo; as Bishop David would say. May the Lord bless you and keep you now and always.

Canon David Rees

# HOPE IN SUFFERING

It is extraordinary to think that so much could have happened in one year! Bushfires, a pandemic, and global political instability have been just a few of the challenges that humanity has had to face. These have not been merely abstract problems. Hardship and suffering have come to even the most prosperous societies in ways that we have not experienced for decades. 2020 has been a reminder that the soft cushion of materialism on which much of our world rests is not impervious to occasional sharp stings.

But stoic observation of suffering only gets us so far. Is there a purpose or reason for the hard times we are facing? What sort of world is it where we have become afraid even to go outside? And where is our Lord of love and care during times like these? There are some important things for us all to remember during times like these.

The suffering of our world is an intrusion on God's good creation. The order that was intended to show the divine glory has been corrupted by the presence of sin, and so humanity is placed in a hard and toilsome relationship with the world in which we live (Gen 3:17-19) as well as with each other (Ps 42:10). Therefore, we do not experience the peace and rest initially intended for us.

The great promise of Scripture, however, is that the God we serve has not remained separated from the suffering of his creation but has instead joined with it in order to bring freedom and redemption. The promise of Isaiah 53 was of a servant of Israel who would enter into the condition of God's people, bearing the full weight of suffering, in order that he might justify and bless many who come to him. The incarnation of the eternal Son in the man Jesus brought this to fulfilment, as he not only knew of but fully embraced the path of suffering laid before him (Matt 16:21).

His resurrection from the dead was the sign that the power of suffering was broken and would no longer reign.

Thus, the Christian is reoriented towards suffering in this life from despair to hope. In Romans 8:18–25 the apostle Paul sets out clearly that whatever our present trials and difficulties it is nothing compared to the glorious future that lies before us. More than this, as the creation has been suffering through the Fall those who are adopted as "sons" are the sign that freedom is coming (v.19). While we will not be freed from suffering in the present age, either the general suffering of creation or the specific suffering of those belonging to Christ, our hope in the redemption that awaits us is a sign to all that liberation is at hand. So then by the Spirit we are blessed with a patience from God that the world does not possess until the redemption is revealed (vv.24–25).



While we may never know the purposes of God behind the trials of life we face, we can be assured that divine love has transformed us and our future. We serve a God who has borne the suffering of this world and remains united to it in order that we might be brought safe to the other side and into that glorious peace for which we were created.

Rev Luke Collings  
Moranbah and Clermont



# HOW BIG IS YOUR HEART?

Currently, across Central Queensland there are nearly 2000 children in care. Sadly, there is currently a shortage of approved **Foster Carers**. This shortage is causing significant stress for children, families, carers, and professional staff.

Most **Foster and Kinship Carers** are stretched beyond capacity. This is leading to children being moved from household to household, with no sense of a stable home. This results in further trauma and isolation for the children.

Children are only removed from their family when all other wider family options have been exhausted. In their most traumatised state, these little ones are often sitting in offices waiting until staff are able to source a bed for a night. They are scared and sad. This is where Foster Carers step in to provide a safe home.

Foster and Kinship Carers open their hearts and their homes to children and young people who are unable to live at home with their own families because of abuse or neglect. More Foster and Kinship Carers are needed throughout Central Queensland.

Almost anyone who wants to make a difference in a child's life, can become a Foster Carer. Foster Carers come from all walks of life. *The main criteria is that you can provide a safe and caring home for a young person.* Anyone who has a place in their hearts for a child who needs love and understanding is capable of becoming a Foster Carer. AnglicareCQ will provide the training and support you need. It is a special job that needs people with a generous heart.

If you or somebody you know could open their hearts and their home for a child in need, please contact the AnglicareCQ – Foster Care Team.

***You just need to be you  
and have the passion  
to make a difference in a child's life.***



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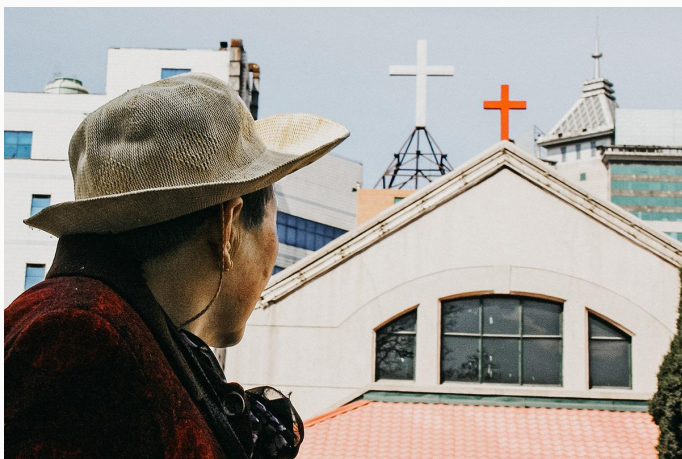
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# WHAT WILL THE CHURCH BE LEFT WITH?

*Mike Gore, from Open Doors Australia writes...*

We all know of, and have experienced, the huge impact COVID-19 has had on our lives and the lives of those around us. As Christians in Australia we have had to adapt what church looks like, how we evangelise, how we serve, and how we worship. Through the work I do with Open Doors Australia, I've seen authorities restrict Christians in Asia from accessing medical treatment and supplies based on their faith. Across the Middle East I've seen the enforcement of quarantine laws that have forced Christians back into the homes of those who persecute them, often their family members. In countries like Iran, I've heard stories of Christian doctors and nurses being forced to run COVID-19 clinics with no PPE as their governments believe that *Christians are expendable*.

But in this time, I've also seen people driven into a deeper and more trust-filled relationship with God. Isolation has served as an intense focusing tool as it strips away so many of the comforts we experience in life and has allowed us to see that when all we have left is Jesus, Jesus is all we need. Even though this period of isolation has felt claustrophobic and oppressive, what if this isolation is actually a hand on the back from the Lord, pushing us into a more beautiful, focused relationship with Him?



A Chinese woman looking toward her closed church.

COVID-19 has brought the Church to places it has never been before. At the height of persecution [in China] in the 50s and the 60s, the church was dispersed, and forced into homes – much like we're experiencing now.

In the words of a Chinese Pastor *"before persecution came, we practised our faith and our love for God in the church – and almost nowhere else, but when persecution came it dispersed the church, and we practised faith in our homes, and because of that – everywhere else."* Scattering has brought the church to places it has never been before.

As I watched Australian churches respond to the pandemic, and the effect it had on their congregations, I saw some actions originating out of fear and control; people were worried as they question the meaning of the pandemic and how they could keep their church together. However, recently, I have seen churches become more accepting of our current situation, and some churches have decreased their focus on content as they increased their focus on connection.

The persecuted church has taught us valuable lessons in their response to COVID-19. We've heard from a Pastor of an underground church in the epicentre of Wuhan, who reminded us that the *love of Jesus cannot be quarantined*. Another underground Pastor told us that when the 'church' is forced into homes, people have been waking up as pastors of their own families, learning to share the gospel in their own home. We've seen the gospel reach cities, suburbs and neighbourhoods that never previously had a 'church' but now find themselves with a 'house church'.

## Fight For Unity

What we've learned from the persecuted church is that when the church is forced into homes, the battleground shouldn't be around the best deliverable content – the battleground is *personal connection*.



# OpenDoors®

SERVING PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS WORLDWIDE

Stripping back all the distractions of culture, and the things we find our identity in – whether it is church, work or socialising – we’ve realised that even when they are gone, we’re still okay.

One of the risks is that we will look back on this time in history and see a decline in the number of regular church-attending Christians. For others, their routine will be forever interrupted by the change in church setting and they won’t go back to the building as often.

We will also see a broadening of the gospel as people become used to receiving information online – but from a variety of sources.

But I believe we will also see a reduction of denominational lines and the parochialism and division that sometimes exists between denominations. I’m hoping we’ll see a far more unified Church arise from this pandemic.

I have personally learnt so many lessons during the coronavirus pandemic, both about my own faith and the areas in my life where I have let culture guide me more than Christ. This has included the areas of refinement and growth that have left me spiritually stronger and with a deeper sense of identity in Christ rather than my social status.

Isolation has amplified the small things in life and taught me to be more thankful for the simple things in life; clean air, a bed, the ability to go for walks each day, the beauty of nature outside my front door and the power of personal connection with my wife and kids. When faith is brought out of our church, it enters the rest of the world.

That’s one of the most beautiful realities of what we’re experiencing now; faith has become a part of our household.

## Weekly Podcast

The Open Doors LIVE Podcast is an all in-one devotional. Each month 4 different episodes are released – a story to inspire, a sermon that unpacks scripture, a lesson from the persecuted church and a conversation with a special guest.

Convenient listening for anyone trying to figure out how to follow Jesus in today’s world.

[opendoors.org.au](http://opendoors.org.au)

COVID-19 has not been the noose around our necks so many believed it would be. It has been a hand on the back from the Lord stripping away all the distractions in life and allowing us to find peace, safety, assurance and comfort in the face of uncertainty. Let us use this opportunity to grow the Church as we see God working throughout this pandemic.

Mike Gore



A Christian family gather in their home, Syria

Mike Gore is the CEO of Open Doors Australia & New Zealand and has been with the ministry for over 10 years. Mike lives in Sydney with his wife and two daughters. He has travelled extensively to meet persecuted Christians in the field – from being chased by secret police, to smuggling Bibles to Muslim background believers in restricted countries.

Mike believes the persecuted church are the perfect mentors to our faith. Their stories have the ability to radically transform our personal faith and the spiritual temperature of our country.

A thought leader in business and ministry, Mike also has a passion for building people and organisations. He loves mentoring and coaching people and teams to reach their full potential and see their ideas come to life.



# NEW FAMILIES MINISTER

The Anglican Parish of Keppel is now home to the newest Bush Church Aid (BCA) ministry location and Field Staff who will serve there.



Philip & Jessica van't Spyker together with their children Jasper, Tabitha, Otto and Corin have relocated to Yeppoon to serve predominately in the parish but also throughout the Diocese of Central Queensland. Philip was inducted into the role of Families Minister at St James the Fisherman on Wednesday 15 July 2020.

The van't Spykers have served in Anglican Churches in NSW and more recently in church ministry in Ipswich. Over the past 18 months Philip had been working as a funeral director. They are excited about being freed up to return to full-time ministry.

"We want to share Jesus with families in Yeppoon and help the Church disciple youth and kids across Central Queensland," says Philip.

Please pray:

- as does the Apostle Paul in Colossians, that God would open doors for the message of the gospel so that we might proclaim the mystery of Christ.
- that we might have great wisdom as to the best way to care for the people under our care.



# KAREEN'S KITCHEN

Hi again, Kareen here, back for another yummy recipe. This month, I thought you might like a **family favourite biscuit**. This goes great with a cuppa or fits perfectly in a lunch box. Our son David made them for his Italian teacher at his old school who then took them back to Italy! I hope you enjoy them too.

## VENETIAN BISCUITS

*Makes approximately 40*

### Ingredients

#### The Biscuit

- 125g soft butter
- splash of vanilla
- 165g castor sugar
- 1 egg
- 300g self raising flour
- 40g coconut
- 40g dried currant

#### The Icing

- 150g icing sugar
- 2 teaspoons butter
- splash of milk

### Method

1. Preheat oven 180°C and line a cookie sheet
2. Cream the butter, sugar, egg and vanilla together
3. Add the flour and mix with a wooden spoon
4. Add the coconut and currants and combine
5. Roll into tablespoon sized balls and flatten on the tray
6. Bake for 12 minutes
7. While baking, prepare the icing by mixing icing sugar and butter till crumbly, then adding the milk to make a paste that resembles melted chocolate
8. Allow the cookies to cool slightly, then spread with the icing
9. The icing will set as the cookies cool completely

Bon Appetit! Or should I say Buon Appetito!



## KIDS' CORNER





As most of our Safe Ministry Parish Contacts would know, we currently utilise a spreadsheet to manage the increasingly complex area of Safe Ministry. The spreadsheet has served us well but has become complicated and difficult to use. We have heard the cries of our Ministers, Administrators and Safe Ministry Contacts, and are excited to announce that Diocesan Council has approved the purchase and roll out of Elvanto Church management software across the Diocese.

Elvanto will not only will assist with Safe Ministry data storage, management and reporting, but will also will simplify end of year data collection and enable real time data reporting on a Diocesan and local level.

Elvanto is a dynamic, all-in-one solution for church management and administration.

It is packed full of features, easy to use and totally secure, and it will revolutionise the way we do administration across the Diocese.

### **PLEASE DO NOT PANIC!!!**

Firstly, there is no cost to the Parishes - the Diocese has budgeted for this database and it's implementation. Secondly, there will be support for those who want to be active with Elvanto; and for those who don't want to use the database, the Diocese will continue to enter your Safe Ministry information for you and send you a report by email like we do now.

*So what is next?*

We are currently working on the high level Diocese onboarding, from there we will ask each parish to provide their parish roll. So, sit back and relax and we will be in contact shortly.

Rev Jen Hercott

Safe Ministry Coordinator

## **VALE REV JOHN SYMONS**

**23 DECEMBER 1942 – 21 MARCH 2020 AGED 77 YEARS**

The Rev John Symons may be known only to a few in our Diocese, but he began his full-time ministry at Middlemount as the Parish Evangelist from 1981-82.

John Graduated from the Church Army College of Evangelism in December 1980 and was commissioned as a Church Army Evangelist. After their 2 years at Middlemount John, Dianne and their 5 boys moved to Campbelltown NSW to work as an assistant in the parish for the new lower-social economic area of Claymore, commonly known in those days as the 'Rabbit Warren'. It was here that I first met and worked with John and the family while a student at the C.A. College.

John and the family moved to W.A. in 1986 and in 1987 he was ordained Deacon and then Priested in the Diocese of North West Australia taking up the post of Rector of Kununurra/Wyndham. This was a BCA position which he held for 4 years. John then went on to serve in the BCA position of the Central Mallee (Bendigo diocese) followed by Tongala (Bendigo Diocese) where I again encountered John as I worked in a neighbouring parish. In his final years of paid ministry John worked in the parish of Lower Macleay (Grafton Diocese) before retiring in 2010, where upon he and Dianne moved to Perth to be nearer their adult boys and their families.

John is survived by Dianne, their sons Martin, Paul, Craig, Christopher & Aaron, and their families.

Rev Capt Graeme Liersch, Longreach



## SPECIAL SYNOD WRAP

When Diocesan Council passed a motion earlier in the year, to request the Administrator to hold a sitting of a Special Synod, to be held via Zoom, in July, I must confess, my first thoughts are best kept to myself!

To my knowledge, a Special Sitting of Synod, has not happened in this Diocese before - I am happy to be corrected. Not only was this to be the first Synod that I have ever organised and run, but it was to be held using Zoom! Not even our Canberra politicians have been brave/stupid enough to try this!

However, given the vast distances across our Diocese and how it takes a huge amount of time and commitment from Synod Members just to be present, and not to mention the annual huge expense, I have for some time thought that perhaps we ought to let modern technology better serve our needs and the cause of the gospel! Convincing everyone of its potential was the issue. Then along came the virus...

Of course, meeting together in person is better in many ways: the fellowship; the 'chance' conversations; the new friendships or renewing of old ones. Yet, our recent experience of a virtual Synod has shown that we can use modern technology to better serve our church, when needed.



**... Because there  
are some  
questions that  
can not be  
answered by  
Google!**



At this Special Zoom Synod I had the pleasure of announcing our new Bishop-Elect, and we all got to hear from him from WA.

However, this was not the main reason for meeting. Our Diocese is in a very serious financial situation. The sins of the past are still being paid for. The cost of Redress, PIPA Claims, Insurance hikes and our dwindling congregations means that we are running out of time to turn things around.

Hence this Special Session of Synod was called to bring Synod Members up to date with reports from the Administrator, Chancellor and Registrar, to hear Legal Advice and to be made aware of the Roadmap to Recovery for the Diocese.

Anyone can access a copy of my Administrator's 'State of the Diocese' Report from our Diocesan Website.

Ven Tom Henderson-Brooks  
Diocesan Administrator  
Bishop's Commissary

We heartily thank  
this month's contributors  
and welcome your  
contributions.

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