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Bishop of Broken Bay

Message for BBNeighbourhoods
22 June 2021

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Last week I had the great joy of being with the priests and deacons of Broken Bay for our annual Clergy Conference. It was the first time that I have been able to do this since I was appointed as Bishop of the diocese in October 2019. I found our time together to be enriching and formative, not only at the human level, but also at the level of leadership and service for which we have been anointed by the Holy Spirit.

Ordained ministry is always for the good of the community of the Church, for the pastoral care of God's holy people, for the mission and the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and for the salvation of souls. Saint Paul reminds us that the extraordinary nature of our ministry is bigger than any one of us when he says to the community at Corinth, "But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us" ([2 Cor 4:7](#)). The great Paul is helpful for keeping our feet on the ground because he measures life and ministry not by human standards, opinions, or ideologies, but by the Lord Himself. Jesus Christ is the paradigm.

During our time together at the Clergy Conference, we spoke about initial formation as well as the ongoing formation that is needed for effective, fruitful, and lasting ministry. Our Plenary Council agenda, that has just been made public, also refers to formation for clergy. While that is good, I wonder if we as the local Church of Broken Bay, might also consider formation at every stage of Christian life?

To be formed for the work of proclaiming the Gospel and the mission to evangelise the world takes a lifetime. It is equally important for children and adults; men and women; single and married; lay and ordained members of the Church. What areas of formation might we pursue in our community? What are the human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral needs that will require our attention and how might we enable every person to draw on our rich tradition?

These are but a few areas of formation that I offer for your thought and prayer this week. I am confident that others will emerge and be called forth. My hope is that this kind of genuine discernment will animate our community for discipleship in Jesus Christ.

Blessings on your discernment and on the week ahead.

+Anthony