



CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
BROKEN BAY



**Pastoral  
Discernment**  
**North Shore**

# Small Group Conversation Summary



As we journey forward together we are invited to consider:

## How is God calling the people of the North Shore to journey forward together as pilgrim and missionary people of God?

### Welcome

Thank you for participating in the consultation phase of the Pastoral Discernment, North Shore project.

This **Small Group Conversation Summary** booklet has been developed to provide each small group with a space to record the small group listening and dialogue conversation.

In this, the consultation phase of the project, you are invited to give God thanks for the way in which the Spirit is at work in the life of the local Church, and to consider new possibilities for both its growth and the future of the region.

The practice of **Conversation in the Spirit** integrates active listening, intentional speaking, moments of silence, and respect for each participant's input. It can transform the way we listen to the Spirit moving in and through the group as we pray and discern together.

During the pastoral discernment listening and dialogue rounds you are invited to reflect, respond, and review the circumstances, opportunities, and challenges that may be considered to ensure that a sustainable and thriving ecclesial community exists for the North Shore region of the Diocese.

Journeying forward together requires us to discern, as a community, our context through connection, prayer, reflection, sharing with one another and seeking God's direction.

All are welcome to participate in the discernment consultation, and we invite the Holy Spirit to guide us as we begin this journey.

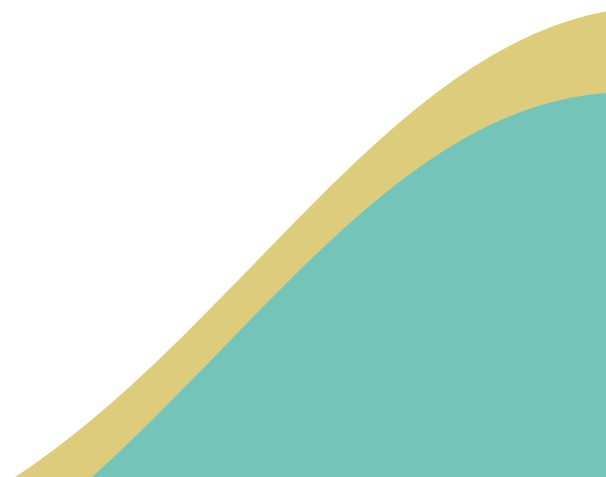
Each small group is invited to nominate a '**Table Facilitator**' (see Appendix 1) and a '**Table Scribe**' (see Appendix 2) who, once everyone has finished speaking, will work with the group to complete this summary report.

**When completing your small group summary report;**

- It is recommended that the group's response be captured in a **short summary**.
- You are asked to include **5 to 7 key points** that capture the important parts of the discussion.
- Your response should **reflect the diversity of views and opinions expressed, both positive and negative**. It should be faithful to the people's voices and to whatever emerged from their reflection rather than a series of generalised or doctrinally correct statements.
- **Views should not be excluded** simply because they were expressed by a small minority of participants.
- Overall, the response should **capture what the Holy Spirit** has inspired the group to discern.
- Allow approximately 20 minutes to complete the report.

Once the report has been completed, submit your small group conversation summary response to your community **Consultation Facilitator**, who will collate and synthesise all responses that have been received from each small group, into a **Community Summary Report**.

Once the Community Summary Report is finalised, your community is invited to then submit a Pastoral Discernment Submission for Bishop Anthony's discernment and consideration.



## APPENDIX 1

### Role of the Table Facilitator

- Make everyone at the table feel welcome, explain the methodology of the approach being taken (Conversation in the Spirit), travel with the group and guide them, and allow people to be vulnerable and share their views and opinions.
- Invite everyone at the table to participate in the discussion.
- Keep an eye on time. Redirect if necessary to keep everyone on topic.
- People may choose not to say anything – that's ok – your role as facilitator is to invite people to speak.
- Create the opportunity to listen to the Holy Spirit.
- Encourage dialogue and listening at the table.
- Create an environment of openness where people feel comfortable in sharing.
- Observe times of silence and prompt and remind those at your table of prayerful silence between rounds. Time for silence in between rounds allows time to listen to any interior movements in one's heart and spirit.
- Be mindful that this process is NOT a place for;
  - Debating, defending or arguing
  - Correcting others,
  - Feeling obliged to teach others, even if well-intended
  - Advancing an agenda
  - A search for the 'one right answer'

## APPENDIX 2

### Role of the Table Scribe

- **During the three rounds** of Conversation in the Spirit the Table Scribe takes notes of what everyone is saying to use as the collective notes of what was shared amongst the group.
- **Following the three rounds** of Conversation in the Spirit the Table Scribe works with the Table Facilitator, and all those at the table, to synthesise the fruits of the conversation and completes the **SMALL GROUP CONVERSATION SUMMARY**.
- **At the conclusion of the three rounds** of conversation, time will be allocated for writing the summary report during the session.
- The Table Scribe then submits the **Small Group Conversation Summary** to the Community Consultation Facilitator. The **Consultation Facilitator** will collate and synthesise the responses that have been received from all the small groups into a summary Parish/School/Community report and prepare a Pastoral Discernment Submission for Bishop Anthony's discernment and consideration.

## Small Group Conversation Summary Report

Name of person completing this summary report.

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List the names of each participant in your small group conversation.

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Notes.

**Question 1:** The data highlights a clear and significant decline in participation in the pastoral and sacramental life of our communities. How does this shift impact our sense of identity and mission within our local communities? What resourcing initiatives or areas of mission should be considered to address this decline in Catholic identification in the North Shore Deanery?

Our group summary.

Provide five to seven key points that captures the important parts of the discussion.

Provide a summary of **convergences**; discussion that reflected your groups shared opinion/s amongst your group.

Provide a summary of **divergences**; discussion that reflected a difference of opinion/s amongst your group.

Please list below further questions for consideration or questions that require further clarification that arose during your small group conversation.

Notes.



**Question 2:** What pastoral synergies exist across our North Shore Deanery? How might clusters of parish communities collaborate more effectively? What may be possible across our cluster of parishes in our Deanery?

Our group summary.

Provide five to seven key points that captures the important parts of the discussion.

Provide a summary of **convergences**; discussion that reflected your groups shared opinion/s amongst your group.

Provide a summary of **divergences**; discussion that reflected a difference of opinion/s amongst your group.

Please list below further questions for consideration or questions that require further clarification that arose during your small group conversation.

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**Question 3:** What do you consider to be the most pressing issues for people living in the North Shore Deanery and how best might parish communities respond to these?

Our group summary.

Provide five to seven key points that captures the important parts of the discussion.

Provide a summary of **convergences**; discussion that reflected your groups shared opinion/s amongst your group.

Provide a summary of **divergences**; discussion that reflected a difference of opinion/s amongst your group.

Please list below further questions for consideration or questions that require further clarification that arose during your small group conversation.

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**Question 4:** The data highlights an increasing demand and stress on community members due to high living costs and housing distress. How can the Church's pastoral mission be adapted to address these challenges? What specific pastoral initiatives can the Church implement to support individuals and families facing financial hardship? What areas for outreach may need to be thought through and considered?

Our group summary.

Provide five to seven key points that captures the important parts of the discussion.

Provide a summary of **convergences**; discussion that reflected your groups shared opinion/s amongst your group.

Provide a summary of **divergences**; discussion that reflected a difference of opinion/s amongst your group.

Please list below further questions for consideration or questions that require further clarification that arose during your small group conversation.

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**Question 5:** How does the current grouping of Catholic Communities on the North Shore facilitate or limit; mission, ministry, worship, liturgy, and catechesis? What may need to be considered or reviewed to enhance and strengthen Catholic Communities on the North Shore?

Our group summary.

Provide five to seven key points that captures the important parts of the discussion.

Provide a summary of **convergences**; discussion that reflected your groups shared opinion/s amongst your group.

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