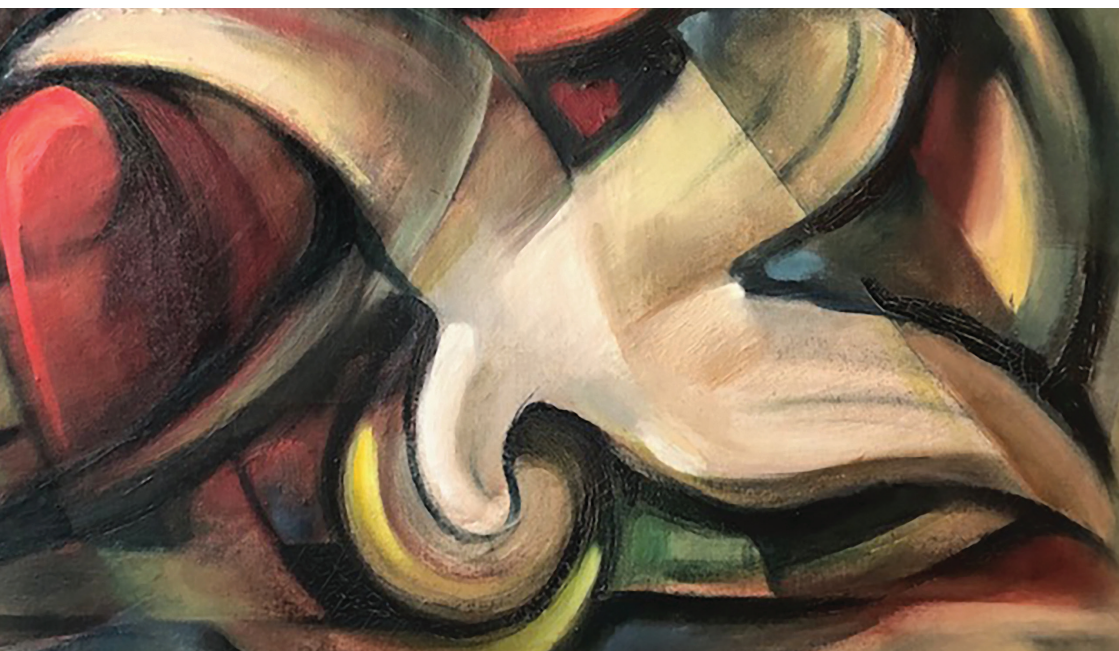




Plenary Council  
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

# A Prayer for the Plenary Council Journey



CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
BROKEN BAY



# Introduction

In preparation for the Fifth Plenary Council of the Church in Australia, we as a community of the Church in Broken Bay have participated in a journey of listening, discussing and discerning what it means to belong to the wider Catholic Church in Australia at this moment in our history, and tried to discern what God is asking of us for his Church now and into the future<sup>[1]</sup>. This journey of evaluating the “joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties<sup>[2]</sup>” of our experience of the Church within a genuine spirit of discernment has allowed us to more clearly “listen to what the Spirit is saying.”

As our Plenary Council delegates prepare to participate in the upcoming Assemblies representing the voice of Broken Bay, let us be united in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to continue to reveal in them and in us how we can move forward as a Church that is missionary and evangelising; inclusive, participatory and synodal; prayerful and Eucharistic; humble, healing and merciful; a joyful, hope-filled and servant community; and open to conversion. As members of the Church, we offer the promise and the hope of the Good News of Jesus Christ, whom we proclaim to be the Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6). Only by walking in the footsteps of the Good Shepherd can we be faithful to this mission.<sup>[3]</sup>

This prayer guide, prepared by Evangelisation Broken Bay, hopes to encourage you, your parish, school and/or community to pray for the Plenary Council – the process, the people and the outcome. Through this prayer, may your relationship with Jesus also deepen as you seek to hear and respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in order that you may proclaim with confidence; “I no longer live, for it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal2:20).

<sup>[1]</sup>Continuing the Journey: Instrumentum Laboris, 2021, n.2.

<sup>[2]</sup>Vatican Council II, Gaudium et Spes n.1

<sup>[3]</sup>Continuing the Journey: Instrumentum Laboris, 2021, n.7



## Opening Prayer (5 mins)

### + Sign of the Cross

Gracious and loving God, we give thanks for our nation, Australia, blessed with great natural beauty, an abundance of resources, peace and prosperity. May these worldly blessings be joined by an ever-increasing faith, hope and love for You and Your Holy Catholic Church.

As we continue together on our Plenary Council journey, we place before You our hopes and dreams for the Church in Australia, and ask Your guidance as we seek to discern Your will for our community of the Church of Broken Bay.

Help us to turn again to Jesus, our Lord and brother, in order that we may be a Church centred ever more fully on Christ and His Gospel. Be with us as we seek to make Jesus known, loved and imitated, and draw all people into a personal encounter with the incarnate, crucified and risen Lord, who renews all things with the abundance of life.

Christ gifted the Church with the Holy Spirit. Help us to learn to be attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit rather than our own human thinking, that we may hear clearly what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church in Australia at this time.

Give us a renewed fervour to evangelise, to bring the Good News of Jesus into all areas of our society, that it may influence and transform all who hear it. We pray that the seed of the living Gospel be effectively sown in the soil of the Australian people and culture.

May the Plenary Council assemblies be marked with attentive listening, collegial collaboration, effective discernment, and encouraging outcomes for the faithful of our nation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord,

Amen.

## Reflection: **Mary Star of the Sea** (15 mins)



*Mary Star of the Sea, an icon by Michael Galovic*

Take some time to reflect on this icon of Mary Star of the Sea, the patroness of our Diocese of Broken Bay.

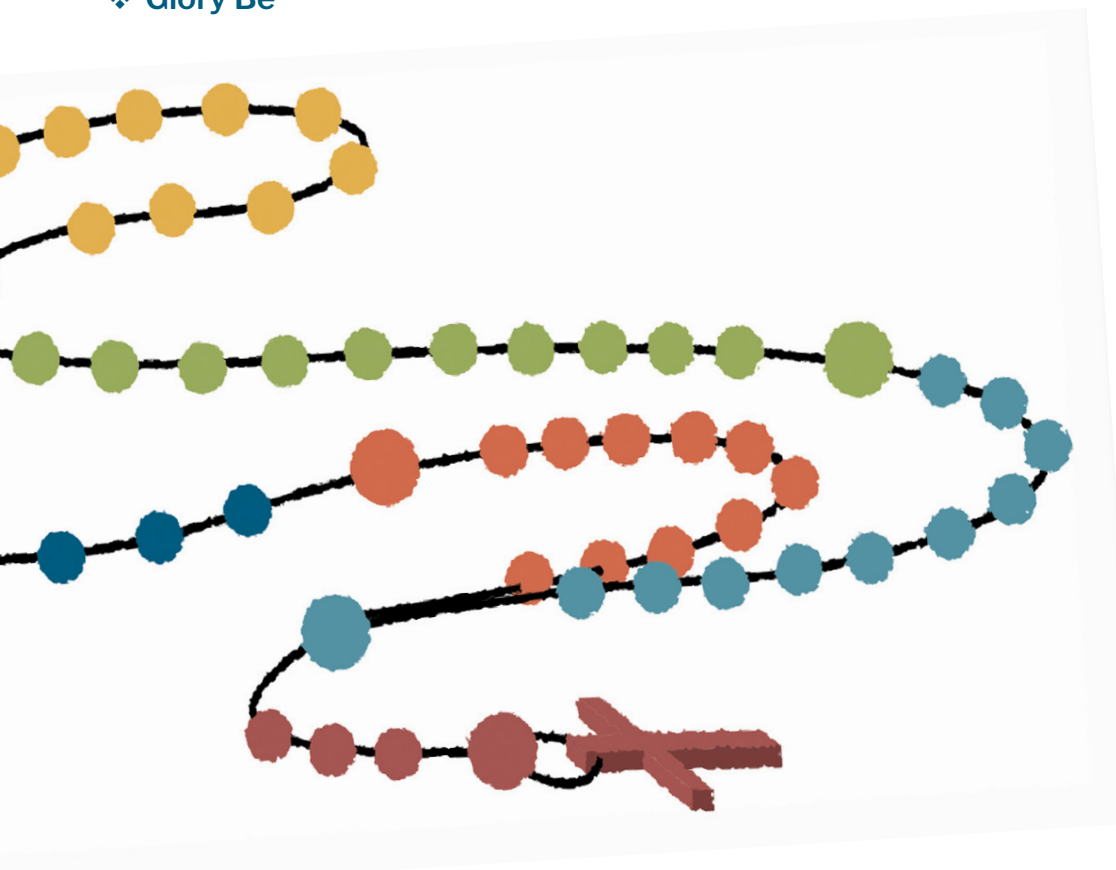
**What is the Holy Spirit saying to you as you reflect on and pray with the different aspects of this icon?**

If praying in a small group, you may wish to share some thoughts.

## The Third Glorious Mystery of the Rosary: The Descent of the Holy Spirit (5 mins)

As we meditate on how the Holy Spirit descended on Mary and the Apostles at Pentecost, we ask that this same Spirit descend – in a new way – on the community of the Church of the Diocese of Broken Bay as well as all the aspects of the Plenary Council. We ask also for the intercession of our Blessed Mother, that she who was the spouse of the Holy Spirit, may open our hearts more fully to the promptings of the Spirit.

- ❖ Our Father
- ❖ Hail Mary x 10
- ❖ Glory Be



# Prayers for the Plenary Council Journey (5 mins)

For all the Bishops of Australia, that they continuously look towards Jesus Christ in their leadership and subsequently, be rewarded with a spirit-filled unfolding of the Plenary Council sessions that bring about an abundance of graces to all the faithful of our country.

**Bless our Bishops, O Lord.**

For the Plenary Delegates, that their discussions, thoughts and actions be completely inspired by the Holy Spirit, leading to authentic discernment of the questions at hand, and to fruitful outcomes for the Church in Australia.

**Bless the Plenary Delegates, O Lord.**

For all Parish and Community Representatives who have led engagement with the Plenary Council at the local level, that they may receive a renewed fervour for the Good News of Jesus Christ and for assisting others in encountering Him.

**Bless our communities and representatives, O Lord.**

For all Australian Catholics whose hearts long for a renewed Church that lives out more intentionally Christ's mission of evangelisation, that the outcomes of the Plenary Council will fill all with hope and enthusiasm.

**Bless your people, O Lord.**

For an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Plenary Council Sessions, that the Spirit will flood each participant and every discussion so that all the deliberations may result in an inspired outcome that reflects the heart of God.

**Pour out your Holy Spirit, O Lord.**

## Scripture Reflection (15 mins)

### A reading from the Gospel of Matthew:

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Matthew 28:16-20

- ❖ Read the Gospel passage twice, with a pause in between readings.
- ❖ Reflect for a few minutes on what you are hearing in the passage at this time.
- ❖ You may wish to share some thoughts with others.



# Intercessions for the Plenary Outcomes

(5 mins)

## ***R* We pray**

For a humble, healing and merciful Church, that heals the wounds of humanity. ***R***

For an inclusive, participatory and synodal Church, that nurtures and engages the gifts of all the faithful. ***R***

For a prayerful and Eucharistic Church, that fosters a real encounter with the person of Jesus. ***R***

For a missionary and evangelising Church, where the saving message of Jesus Christ is proclaimed to all we meet. ***R***

For a Church open to conversion, renewal and reform, that through the Holy Spirit we may find new ways of being Church today. ***R***

For a Church that is a joyful, hope-filled and servant community, that we may uphold the dignity of every human being, especially those most vulnerable in our community. ***R***

For an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Plenary Council Journey. ***R***

## **Quiet Reflection** (5 mins)

Which of these petitions is resonating most deeply with you today during this prayer time?

Bring this particular petition to the Lord, and pray that the Holy Spirit will open up new avenues of possibility within this area.

If you are praying in a group, you may wish to speak these prayers aloud.

## Closing Prayer (5 mins)

Loving God, we pray for the Diocese of Broken Bay and our journey towards the Plenary Council.

Hear our prayers that we may continue to place the person of Jesus Christ and His message of Good News at the heart of all we do; and that the Holy Spirit will lead us in the way of discipleship. We pray that we will build together a culture of vocation for all the baptised; and that we may be united as one in the Body of Christ, visible through our love and harmony. We pray for the promotion of an authentic Catholic education for human flourishing; and that we strive to place the poor at the heart of the Church, emphasising justice and mercy in all that we do and say.

Pour out Your graces upon our community of the Church of Broken Bay as well as our brothers and sisters throughout Australia.

## We pray the Plenary Council Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit of Pentecost.  
Come, Holy Spirit of the great South Land.  
O God, bless and unite all your people in Australia  
and guide us on the pilgrim way of the Plenary Council.  
Give us the grace to see your face in one another  
and to recognise Jesus, our companion on the road.  
Give us the courage to tell our stories  
and to speak boldly of your truth.  
Give us ears to listen humbly to each other  
and a discerning heart to hear what you are saying.  
Lead your Church into a hope-filled future,  
that we may live the joy of the Gospel.  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
bread for the journey from age to age.  
Amen.



**St Mary of the Cross, model of Australian discipleship, pray for us as we seek to follow in your footsteps and find new ways to share the joy of the Gospel with all Australians.**

**Mary, Mother of the Church, Help of Christians and Star of the Sea, accompany us with your prayers and presence as we continue on our Plenary Council journey.**





**Plenary Council**  
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