

## **ACBC General Statements 1999**

### **30 August 1999**

Theme for the National Catholic Family Gathering is "Evangelisation through the Family"

### **18 August 1999**

Catholic Bishops launch book on Women in the Catholic Church in Australia

### **13 July 1999**

An Invitation to the Media to Attend a Book Launch - 18th August 1999

### **5 July 1999**

A National Program, "Moving On" assisting young people who are moving away from home is launched

### **29 June 1999**

Australian Catholic woman appointed as Vatican representative on Peak Ecumenical Body

### **21 June 1999**

Australian among finalists in the Vatican's International Religious Drama Competition

### **16 April 1999**

Letter from the Australian Bishops to the Catholic People of Australia

### **13 April 1999**

Women's participation in the church

### **April 1999**

Statement of Policy : The Examination of Theological Orthodoxy

**30 AUGUST 1999**

**Theme for the National Catholic Family Gathering is "Evangelisation through the Family"**

The theme for the National Catholic Family Gathering being held 28-30 April 2000 is "Evangelisation Through the Family" - to affirm families in the belief that they are one of the major avenues through which the world is evangelised.

Planning for the National Catholic Family Gathering, "Family, Dare to Dream" is well underway following a meeting of the Family Working Group, established by the Bishops' Committee for the Family and for Life, which met in Melbourne on Sunday 22 August.

The Working Group has also decided to introduce a program of parish consultation so as to allow participation by all interested people even though they may not be able to physically attend the National Gathering. The parish consultation will also allow parishes the opportunity to commission their delegates as they go to the Gathering.

Programs for youth and younger children will be a major feature of the three day meeting in April.

Mr Brian Mills has been appointed Executive Director for the Gathering and has taken up duty at the Cardinal Knox Centre in Melbourne in an office kindly donated for the purpose by Archbishop Pell. Mr Mills has recently retired following a distinguished career in hospital administration.

"The Gathering is developing into an exciting event for the Australian Church in the Jubilee Year," said Mr Mills. "By applying the Jubilee theme of reconciliation to relationships in families, families will be empowered to believe that they really can be instruments of evangelisation."

Fundraising is starting in earnest, with approaches to be made in coming weeks to potential corporate sponsors. A campaign to encourage prayer support for the Gathering will also commence shortly.

A regular newsletter and web site are being established to give up-to-date information about the Gathering and details of how to register.

For further information, contact Brian Mills, Executive Director, on Tel: (03) 9926 5678, Fax: (03) 9926 5674, Email: [bmills@melbourne.catholic.org.au](mailto:bmills@melbourne.catholic.org.au).

**18 August 1999**

**Catholic Bishops launch book on Women in the Catholic Church in Australia**

<a href="#"><u>Media Release 18 August 1999</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Executive Summary</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Lady Helen Deane's Speech</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Dr Marie Macdonald's Speech</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Cardinal Clancy's Speech</u></a>	<a href="#"><u>Transcript of Q's &amp; A's Session</u></a>
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The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference will launch the book documenting the findings of the research study on the Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia at the National Press Club, Canberra, at 1pm.

The 500-page book, titled, *Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus*, reports on research carried out over three years. Commissioned by the Bishops and delegated by them to the Bishops' Committee for Justice, Development and Peace, the research was conducted with help from the Australian Catholic University and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes.

The researchers received over 2500 written submissions and listened to about 500 people at public hearings. They also used other research instruments, including targeted groups and comprehensive surveys of churchgoers, Catholic organisations and theological institutions.

"We believe this research is one of the largest of its kind in the world focusing on the issue of women and their participation in the Catholic Church", said Cardinal Clancy, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference. "I am hoping that this document will stimulate theological reflection and that it will assist pastoral planning and the promotion of dialogue on the issues raised."

"This publication, in which the researchers present raw data, not their own recommendations, is the reporting back stage of a research project we commissioned several years ago," said Cardinal Clancy. "The bishops as a collective body have not yet had an opportunity to review and discuss this document. We will be doing that in November, when we will also be receiving recommendations on follow-up to the research from an advisory committee headed by Dr Marie Macdonald."

"We cannot guarantee, of course, that every one of the hundreds of proposals made by contributors to the research can be adopted. The Bishops will have to consider whether or not a particular proposal is practical or in conformity with Church teaching. We may also find that action is already being taken on some of the ideas reported in the book," said Cardinal Clancy.

Cardinal Clancy said the Bishops were grateful to the publishers, HarperCollins, for fast-tracking the publication of *Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus* following the overwhelming response to the announcement in April that the Research Project had been completed. The book will be available from religious and other bookshops with a recommended retail price of \$29.95.

"We would also like to thank all those who contributed to and participated in the project and in a special way the research team," said Cardinal Clancy. "The Bishops have been heartened by the deep love of the Church expressed throughout the project."

The book will be launched by Lady Deane at the National Press Club at 1pm. The other speakers will be Cardinal Clancy, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and Dr Marie Macdonald, Project Coordinator, who will summarise the report's findings. The launch will be televised live around Australia by the ABC at 1pm AEST.

To arrange an interview please contact Jackie Brady on 0418) 214 752 or 02) 6201 9859.

## **Catholic Bishops launch book on Women in the Catholic Church in Australia**

### **WOMAN AND MAN: ONE IN CHRIST JESUS**

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. The Research Project on "The Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia" was undertaken for the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference by the Bishops' Committee for Justice, Development and Peace, Australian Catholic University and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes. The Project was launched by Cardinal Clancy on August 21, 1996 and the Report of the Project presented to the Plenary Meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference on April 12, 1999.
2. The overall aim of the study was to gather data on the participation of women in the Catholic Church in Australia. In order to achieve this aim, the Research Project addressed four key questions concerning various ways in which women participate in the Catholic Church in Australia, assistance and support currently offered to women to enable their participation, barriers to women's participation and ways in which women's participation could be increased. It was intended that the information obtained would provide a solid basis for theological reflection, pastoral planning and dialogue with women and women's groups.
3. The Research Project used both quantitative and qualitative research methods including contextual papers, written submissions, public hearings, a large-scale sampling of Church attenders undertaken as part of the Catholic Church Life Survey, a survey of Catholic organisations, and targeted groups involving voices which had not been heard in the written submissions and public hearings. In the written submissions, public hearings and targeted groups, responses were elicited from women and men from a variety of backgrounds and ages, those actively involved in Catholic Church structures and those who were not.
4. The project attracted an overwhelming response, significantly greater than the response to similar consultations conducted in recent times in the Catholic Church and in the broader Australian society. This in itself is a clear indication that the issue of the participation of women in the Catholic Church in Australia is crucial and controversial.
5. The research identified two broad approaches to the participation of women in the Catholic Church: one oriented towards maintaining the current participation of women, or even returning to the position of the pre-Vatican II Church, the other seeking an expanded role for women.
6. The dominant issue arising from the research was gender equality recognising the equal dignity of women and men created in the image and likeness of God. This understanding of equality did not imply the sameness of men and women, but rather their complementarity and mutuality. The Church was seen to be lagging behind the wider Australian society in recognising the changing role of women as one of the "signs of the times" and affirming the equality of women. The very limited participation of women in decision-making at present and the need to increase women's involvement in decision-making at all levels were constant and major themes. Involvement in decision-making was often linked with a call to promote opportunities for women to participate in leadership in the Church.
7. The research found that, while there is a range of views concerning women and the Church, there is virtually no disparity of views based on gender. It is concluded that the issue of the participation of women in the Church is not just a concern for women only but rather an issue for the Church as a whole.
8. Results of the Catholic Church Life Survey revealed that Church attenders have a considerably older profile than the Catholic population in general, that women outnumber men in the ratio of about three to two and that more than half of all attenders are not involved in any regular way in other parish activities, although women are more likely to be involved than men are. There is an under-representation of young people and of those who are separated or divorced.
9. The Survey found that the great majority of Church attenders have a strong sense of belonging to their parish and feel that it is adequately meeting their spiritual needs, have never felt unwelcome in the Church in recent years, and have been given sufficient assistance to complete a task when they have accepted responsibility. Respondents suggested that the best ways to increase women's participation were through prayer, increasing women's involvement in decision-making and Church administration, and reforming beliefs and practices that do not promote the equality of men and women. Three quarters said they have neither experienced nor observed barriers to women's participation in the Church but more than a quarter said they did not accept the Church's teaching on the ordination of women.



10. By contrast, the overall findings of the written submissions, public hearings and targeted groups revealed a strong sense of pain and alienation resulting from the Church's stance on women. The results of these research approaches highlighted the enormous contribution of women to all aspects of the life of the Church, except in the ordained ministry, leadership and decision-making. It was perceived that little assistance and support were received from the institutional Church to undertake anything other than ancillary and support roles. Significant barriers to the full participation of women were experienced. The fundamental barrier concerned traditions and attitudes which were seen to be inconsistent with the person and message of Jesus Christ and especially his relationship with women. The major suggestions to increase women's participation were the involvement of women in decision-making at all levels, a re-examination of the nature of ministry with exploration of the possibility of more inclusive roles for men and women, and reform of beliefs and associated practices that do not promote the equality of men and women.

11. There was much agreement, even among those with different views on the question, that there should be open discussion of the issue of women's ordination.
12. One of the greatest challenges to emerge from the research is the need to create a range of opportunities in the Church for respectful listening and dialogue concerning the experiences, needs and aspirations of women.

## **Launch of the Publication of the Report on the Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia**

### **Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus**

**Lady Helen Deane**  
**18 August 1999**

The Research Project on "The Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia" was the initiative of the Catholic Bishops of Australia. The Report of the Project was presented to the Plenary Meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference on April 12, 1999. The immediate response of the Bishops was to authorise the publication of the Report in its entirety. The publishers, HarperCollinsReligious, are to be congratulated for publishing this substantial report in the remarkably short time of four months and in such an attractive form.

It was claimed that the Catholic Church in Australia has never undertaken a larger research project on a single issue than the one that is the subject of this Report. The study on Women's Participation in the Catholic Church in Australia also generated a significantly greater response than similar consultations conducted in the broader Australian society. The huge response and widespread interest which it attracted is indicative of its importance and timeliness – and can be said to constitute in itself a message to the Church's leadership and to the rest of the community.

The women's movement is one of the most notable developments for the Churches in recent times. It has been recognised explicitly as such by a number of the Popes of this century, and in a special way by Pope John XXIII, who saw it as one of the outstanding "signs of the times", and by Pope John Paul II, who has frequently spoken and written on the matter. The Letter of Pope John Paul II to Women, issued in July 1995, has been a source of inspiration for the Research Project. I like the quotation from this letter referred to in the final paragraph of the Report:

It is thus my hope, dear sisters, that you will reflect carefully on what it means to speak of the "genius of women", not only in order to be able to see in this phrase a specific part of God's plan which needs to be accepted and appreciated, but also in order to let this genius be more fully expressed in the life of society as a whole, as well as in the life of the Church. (n. 10)

Such a reflection was precisely the catalyst for the Research Project; undertaking it in the Australian context was in response to the Pope's wishes, as frequently expressed during his pontificate.

Not only is the issue of women and the Church a compelling topic, but also I have found the Report itself to be most interesting. While it is evident that the research has been conducted in a rigorous and professional manner, one of the features of the Report is the extensive use of quotations so that main points are illustrated in the words of so many of the participants themselves: their stories, concerns and aspirations.

Another quality of the Report which makes it most readable is the use of summaries which provide a quick overview of each chapter. The final chapter presents a summary of the background of the Research Project as well as the major findings and conclusions and can be read as a stand-alone chapter. A two-page executive summary is also provided for easy reference. The use of clear, jargon-free language is another excellent feature of the work. It is a handsome volume which I would commend to any readers interested in the vital issues raised in its pages. I hope that this book will be read widely and reflected upon in the Church and in society.

It is with much pleasure that I now launch the report on "The Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia", Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus, and ask the project co-ordinator and principal author, Dr Marie Macdonald, to present some of the main findings.

### **Lady Helen Deane - Biography**

Helen Deane was born on February 13, 1935 in the Sydney suburb of Earlwood. She is the daughter of Dr Gerald Russell and Mrs Kathleen Russell, who are now both deceased.

She was educated at Kincoppal Convent in Sydney and Sydney University, where she graduated in law. After graduation, she practised as a solicitor with Freehill Hollingdale and Page.

Lady Deane's interests include thoroughbred horse breeding, gardening, cooking and the theatre.

Sir William and Lady Deane were married on January 6, 1965. They have two adult children, a son, Patrick, and a daughter, Mary.

### **Report on the Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia**

#### **Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus**

**Dr Marie Macdonald**  
**18 August 1999**

Thank you for the opportunity of presenting some of the main findings. It is important to discuss these findings in the context of the purpose of the Project and the methods of investigation.

#### **Purpose of the Research Project**

The overall aim of the study was to gather data on the participation of women in the Catholic Church in Australia. To achieve this aim, the Research Project addressed four key questions concerning various ways in which women participate in the Catholic Church in Australia, assistance and support currently offered to women to enable their participation, barriers to women's participation and ways in which women's participation could be increased.. It was intended that the information obtained would provide a solid basis for:

- theological reflection,
- pastoral planning, and
- dialogue with women and women's groups.

#### **Methods of Investigation**

Several quantitative and qualitative methods were used to shed light on the key questions:

- contextual papers on the history of women's participation in the Catholic Church in Australia and on the role of Catholic women in the ecumenical movement;
- written submissions from more than 2,500 individuals and groups;
- a large scale sample survey of 4,500 Church attenders undertaken as part of the Catholic Church Life Survey;
- public hearings in 23 centres throughout Australia involving nearly 500 people;
- fifty targeted groups whose voices had not been heard to a significant extent in other forms of data gathering; and
- a national survey of Catholic Church organisations and theological institutions.

In the written submissions, public hearings and targeted groups, responses were elicited from women and men from a variety of backgrounds and ages, those actively involved in Catholic Church structures and those who are not.

#### **Summary of Findings**

In brief, a wide spectrum of views and emotions was identified in the research, from varying levels of satisfaction with the current participation of women, to varying levels of dissatisfaction arising from perceptions that equality of role, status and opportunities for service is denied to women in the Catholic Church in Australia. In many aspects of the research, there was a polarisation of views: there were those wishing to maintain the current participation of women in the Church or even return to the position of the pre-Vatican II Church, and those seeking an expanded role for women. A diversity of views about the nature of the Church was also evident, with different models and visions of Church presented either explicitly or implicitly.

That women are integral and central to the very nature and life of the Church was highlighted in all aspects of the research. Their participation in the Catholic Church in Australia was presented as increasingly diverse and myriad. Women were described by all sectors as "the backbone of the local Church". It was strongly emphasised that it is the women who keep the Church going, especially in rural areas. The future of the Church and the participation of women were closely linked. In general, greater participation was sought for women in the Catholic Church in Australia particularly in the areas of decision-making, Church administration and leadership. In all aspects of the research, it was suggested that one way this could be achieved is by creating opportunities for theologically qualified women to make a greater contribution to the Church. In a national survey of Catholic institutions which provide theological courses, it was found that women comprised almost 74 percent of persons undertaking undergraduate studies in theology and almost 64 percent of students undertaking postgraduate theological courses.

A major finding of the Research is the pronounced contrast between the views and feelings of the Church attenders who responded to the Catholic Church Life Survey and participants in the written submissions, public hearings and targeted groups. In reflecting on this difference, it is important to recall the different audiences addressed by the various research approaches. However, it should also be noted that the different audiences are not mutually exclusive groups. For example, the involvement of many Church attenders was evident in the written submissions, public hearings and targeted groups.

The results of the Catholic Church Life Survey revealed that Church attenders have a considerably older profile than the Catholic population in general. Women outnumber men in the ratio of about three to two, and more than half of all attenders are not involved in any regular way in other parish activities, although women are more likely to be involved than men. Young people and those who are separated or divorced are under-represented.

The Survey found that the great majority of Church attenders have a strong sense of belonging to their parish and feel that it is adequately meeting their spiritual needs, have never felt unwelcome in the Church in recent years, and have been given sufficient assistance to complete a task when they have accepted responsibility. Respondents suggested that the best ways to increase women's participation were through prayer, increasing women's involvement in decision-making and Church administration, and reforming beliefs and practices that do not promote the equality of men and women. Three quarters said they have neither experienced nor observed barriers to women's participation in the Church but more than a quarter said they did not accept the Church's teaching on the ordination of women.

In contrast, the overall findings of the written submissions, public hearings and targeted groups revealed a strong sense of pain and alienation resulting from the Church's stance on women. A dichotomous relationship with the Church, characterised by such feelings as love and commitment yet anguish and alienation, was experienced by both individuals and groups. Pain, alienation and often anger resulted from a strong sense of women's marginalisation, powerlessness, and a lack of acknowledgment within the Church. The frustration yet persistence of both women and men in trying to stay in the Church despite their dissatisfaction with the Church's perceived treatment of women was evident. The frankness and sadness of those who had left the practice of the faith and of those who have considered leaving as a result of the Church's treatment of women were obvious. It was clear that many people have hope but in many cases it is faint. There was a heightened sense of frustration at the blockage of the much-needed gifts of women from service to the Church. The sense of alienation and anguish resulting from the issues concerning women and the Church was shown by all categories of individuals and groups such as the young and elderly, women and men, laity and religious, and was not characteristic of any particular group.

The results of the written submissions, public hearings and targeted groups highlighted the enormous contribution of women to all aspects of the life of the Church, except in the ordained ministry, leadership and decision-making. It was perceived that little assistance and support were received from the institutional Church to undertake anything other than ancillary and support roles. Significant barriers to the full participation of women were experienced. The fundamental barrier concerned so-called patriarchal traditions and attitudes which were seen to be inconsistent with the person and message of Jesus Christ and especially his relationship with women. It was felt that such attitudes had been reinforced by Pope John Paul II and the Vatican bureaucracy in recent times to the detriment of the teachings and spirit of the Second Vatican Council. The structures of the Church were experienced as male-dominated, hierarchical and authoritarian. The major suggestions to increase women's participation were the involvement of women in decision-making at all levels, a re-examination of the nature of ministry with exploration of the possibility of more inclusive roles for men and women, and reform of beliefs and associated practices that do not promote the equality of women and men. There was much agreement, even among those with different views on the question, that there should be open discussion of the issue of women's ordination.

## **Conclusions**

The dominant issue arising from the research was gender equality recognising the equal dignity of women and men created in the image and likeness of God. This understanding of equality did not imply the sameness of men and women, but rather their complementarity and mutuality. Women and men were seen as equal in Baptism and together to form the "Body of Christ". There was overwhelming agreement by all sectors of the Church that there should be no unjust discrimination in the Church on the basis of gender. The research found that, while there is a range of views concerning women and the Church, there is virtually no disparity of views based on gender. It is concluded that issues concerning

gender equality are not just concerns for women only but rather issues for the Church as a whole. It is true that many women are alienated from the Catholic Church. It is also true that many men are alienated. The title of the Report, *Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus*, highlights the desire for true equality of woman and man in Christ.

One of the greatest challenges to emerge from the research is the need to create a range of opportunities in the Church for respectful listening and dialogue concerning the experiences, needs and aspirations of women.

### **A Moment of Grace in the Catholic Church in Australia**

In 1963 Pope John XXIII, reflecting on the "signs of the times", identified the emergence of women asserting their right to be treated with dignity and equality as one of the major thrusts of our times (*Pacem in Terris*, n. 41). In the contemporary Church there is an urgent need to read the "signs of the times", to discern the will of God and to be open to renewal. The scope of the task and the demands of this change of consciousness are not to be underestimated. Yet, at the commencement of the third millennium, many see this challenge as a unique opportunity, a moment of grace in the Catholic Church in Australia.

It is hoped that the results of the Research Project will provide a basis for renewed theological reflection, pastoral planning and dialogue with women. The Report states that the Letter of Pope John Paul II to Women was a source of inspiration for the Research Project. The letter highlights our need to follow the example of Jesus Christ in his relationship with women and is quoted in the concluding paragraph of the Report. It says:

When it comes to setting women free from every kind of exploitation and domination, the Gospel contains an ever relevant message which goes back to the attitude of Jesus Christ himself. Transcending the established norms of his own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. In this way he honoured the dignity which women have always possessed according to God's plan and in his love. As we look to Christ at the end of this Second Millennium, it is natural to ask ourselves: how much of his message has been heard and acted upon? (n.3)

Your Eminence, on behalf of the Research Management Group, it is a great pleasure to pass on to you the published report on the participation of women in the Catholic Church in Australia, *Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus*.

### **Doctor Marie Macdonald - Biography**

Co-ordinator of the Research Project on the Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia. Dr Macdonald was involved from the beginning in the planning and conduct of the study, as an Australian Catholic University representative on the working party and the Research Management Group.

She was a senior lecturer at ACU for 11 years and the head of the Department of Religious Education (Victoria) at ACU. She resigned from that position at the end of 1997 to take up the appointment as Project Coordinator.

It is believed that Dr Macdonald was the first Catholic lay woman in Australia to become a Doctor of Theology.

Religious education and the communication of faith have been her principal areas of study and teaching. Her special interests relate to the effectiveness of student learning in religious education and the theological formation of religious educators.

Dr Macdonald has written books and monographs, has lectured and acted as a consultant on the subject of faith transmission throughout Australia and overseas, and conducts inservices for groups of priests, parents, catechists and religious educators.

### **Address by Cardinal Clancy for the Launch of "Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus" 18 August 1999**



Parallel with the developing role of women in society generally, women within the Catholic Church have been for some time claiming a more active role in the life of the Church, and a real voice in the Church's mission to the world. This claim has been based on gender equality and the implications of the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference has been mindful of this claim, which has been a subject of its on-going reflection. In 1993 its Committee for Justice, Development and Peace agreed to explore ways for responding to the issues being raised. This led ultimately to the launching, in 1996, of a national study, which included the collaboration of Australian Catholic University and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes. The fruits of that study you now have before you. The fact that it took so long is witness to the thoroughness and the professionalism that has gone into its preparation.



It should be noted that this initiative was in harmony with the mind of Pope John Paul who in March this year expressed the hope "for a renewed reflection on the dignity and the role which the woman has in the family, in civil society and in the ecclesial community".

I wish to thank and congratulate all who participated in this study, both those who managed and presided over it from beginning to end, and those women and men who from their thinking and experience responded to the questions that the survey posed. The respondents represented the whole spectrum, from those largely content with things as they are, to those (more numerous) who called for radical change. All spoke very frankly, and many were sharply critical, but most manifested a deep love for the Church. They have done a valuable service, not only for women in the Church, but for the Church as a whole.

Reluctant though I am to single out individuals, I feel I must pay special tribute to Bishop Manning, Convenor of the Research Management Group; Professor Peter Carpenter, Chairman, first of the planning group, and then of the Management group; and Dr Marie Macdonald, Project Coordinator since 1998. I am most grateful to Lady Deane for launching the Report this afternoon.

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The Report incorporates also the findings of the nation-wide survey of Church attenders undertaken as part of the Catholic Church Life Survey sponsored by the Bishops in Association with the inter-denominational National Church Life Survey.

It needs to be stressed that what we have here is the raw material - facts about the present involvement of women in the Church and about their aspirations for the future, as perceived and provided by those who took part in the surveys. It is the first phase of the total project. In the second phase the Bishops will study the Report and respond to it, both at the level of their National Conference, and at the level of individual dioceses.

It is appropriate that I offer some comments of the Report, taking care, however, not to preempt the conclusions of the Bishops following their closer study of the document. Although participants in the surveys expressed a variety of views, and numerous proposals were made as to the ways in which women might be more actively engaged in the life of the Church, I believe that the main thrust of the Report can be summed-up in three brief statements.

1. The active involvement of women in the life of the Church, and, indeed, in all aspects except for the ordained ministry, is in fact very considerable, and significantly exceeds that of lay men.
2. The roles they fill, however, are seen by many to be secondary, ancillary, and even menial, which leaves them feeling hurt, angry and alienated.
3. Women are calling for leadership roles and a real voice in the decision-making processes of the Church.

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By way of general response only, I make the following points - also three in number:

1. In arguing their case, respondents raise wider and deeper questions of a theological nature which have a direct bearing on their proposals. There is the question of Divine Revelation. What does and what does not pertain to Revelation? Authority in the Church (The Magisterium), especially in relation to questions of doctrine and morality; The Hierarchical Character of the Church, i.e. the offices of Pope and Bishops; The Ordained Ministry and its Prerogatives, e.g., the Eucharist, the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing, and the Homily; not least, The Church, its nature and constitution.

The Church was founded by Jesus Christ, and is committed among other things to preserving and passing on the truths of Revelation, some of which are concerned with the nature of the Church itself. Such truths, of course, cannot on any account be compromised. The theological factors will necessarily be primary points of reference for the Bishops when studying the Report.

2. It has also to be noted that the Catholic Church is a world-wide Church with the Pope as its visible Head. There are some questions that may be subject to possible change, but not independently of the Holy See. In no country - Australia or any other - can the Local Church act unilaterally in such matters. It can, however, contribute from its own experience and wisdom towards decisions that need to be taken at a universal level.

3. The Report more than once draws attention to the notable difference between the majority findings of the Research Project and those of the Catholic Church Life Survey. The latter were seemingly as satisfied with the existing state of affairs as the former were dissatisfied. Inclusion of the Catholic Church Life Survey data was designed to pick up on what

may would refer to as the "silent majority". It does so up to a point. This conflict of views should not be exaggerated, but it is significant, nonetheless, and needs to be given appropriated mention.

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The message that the Report delivers is clear and emphatic and is supported by a significant cross-section of Catholic women of all ages and from a variety of backgrounds whose love for, and commitment to, the Church can be taken for granted. The comments I have made are not intended to blur or obscure that reality, but rather to balance it with certain relevant factors that the Bishops will have to take into account in responding to the Report. It is a matter of deep concern to the Bishops that many women within the Church feel alienated and embittered, and all, I think, would acknowledge that ways must be found, the better to engage the wisdom, the talents and the experience that women have to offer for the undoubted enrichment of the Church and for the fulfilment of their own lives. The challenge that faces the Bishops is to seek such ways while at the same time preserving the integrity of the Church and remaining faithful to our Catholic Tradition.

The participation of women in the life of the Church is an issue - or should be an issue - in every country of the world today. As the Church Universal contends with this issue, I believe that this Report will prove to be a basic resource that none will be able to ignore.

### **Cardinal Edward Clancy AC, Archbishop of Sydney - Biography**

Australia's most senior Archbishop was elevated to the Sacred College of Cardinals by Pope John Paul II in Rome on June 28, 1988.

Born in Lithgow on December 13, 1923, he is the son of Mr and Mrs John B Clancy. He was educated at St Monica's School, Richmond and at Marist Brothers' College, Parramatta.

After studying for the priesthood at St Columba's College, Springwood, and St Patrick's College, Manly, he was ordained a priest in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, by the late Cardinal Sir Norman Gilroy, then Archbishop of Sydney, on July 23, 1949. He took up his first appointment as assistant priest in the Sydney parish of Belmore in December 1949.

Sent to study in Rome in 1951, he graduated with a Licentiate in Theology from the Pontifical Urban University and Licentiate of Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute.

Returning to the Archdiocese in 1955, he served as assistant priest at the parishes of Elizabeth Bay and Liverpool before taking up his appointment as Professor of Sacred Scripture at St Columba's College, Springwood in February 1959.

In 1961 he went abroad for further studies, obtained his Doctorate in Theology in 1965. On his return he was appointed Chaplain at Sydney University and the Catholic Centre. He then joined the professorial staff at St Patrick's College Manly.

He was appointed auxiliary bishop to Cardinal Sir James Freeman in 1973 and took charge of the Sydney Archdiocese's Outer Western Region, with headquarters at Blacktown, where he was also parish priest.

On November 24, 1978, Pope Paul II appointed Bishop Clancy, Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn. His appointment as the seventh Archbishop of Sydney was announced on February 22, 1983.

Cardinal Clancy was made a Member of the Order of Australia on January 1, 1984.

### **Transcript of Question and Answer Session :**

CHAIR: As usual we move on to a period of questions. I assume most will be directed to Cardinal Clancy but Dr MacDonald would probably answer questions of fact on the report if people have those in mind.

In any event the first question today is from Graeme Downey.

QUESTION Cardinal Clancy, the Report shows that more than twenty-five percent of those Catholics surveyed do not accept the teaching of the Church on women's ordination.

It also shows that regardless of people's points of view on the teaching that believe there should be open discussion on the subject.

The first question is do you support such open discussion?

Secondly, given that more than twenty-five percent of those surveyed do not accept the Church teaching, and given the rather negative approach to your Bishops for being lenient by the Vatican last year would you first support the withdrawal of the Eucharist to those who do not accept the Church teaching for which there is a precedent in this city, and if not, how would you and your Bishops try to reconcile yourself with those people who disagree with the Church teaching.

CARDINAL  
CLANCY:

That's rather a lengthy question. You might have to remind me of some of the items you raised.

Let me say in the first place that in designing the survey those responsible did not pose questions about women's ordination but resolved to respect the decision that Pope John Paul II had already made with regard to the ordination of women in the Church.

However it was inevitable that responders would raise that question and so it's before us whether we like it or not, but I would like to stress that all the concerns of women with regard to their position in the Church today cannot and should not be reduced to the question of the ordination of women.

[Applause]

If perim pos sibulae,(?) the Pope tomorrow, was to ordain women there are a whole range of questions raised in the report that would still have to be pursued.

Could I have your first practical question again?

QUESTION:

Would you support open discussion on the subject?

CARDINAL  
CLANCY:

No I wouldn't support open discussion on the subject.

[Applause]

After thirty years, at least thirty years of discussion which in the end started to go round and round in circles without any new arguments being raised and causing a good deal of division and animosity within the Church, Pope John Paul II decided the time had come, having listened to all the argument, to give an authoritative pronouncement on that subject which he did, and declared the matter closed as far as Catholics were concerned, and the Bishops respect that decision and consequently I do not approve of open discussion.

CHAIR:

The next question is from Nance Miller.

QUESTION:

I'd like to first of all congratulate you and the Bishops on taking this initiative.

Secondly, I would like to congratulate Dr MacDonald and the group on the completion of Phase One.

My question is how soon will Phase Two be studied at the national and diocesan levels so that action can be taken? Is there a time frame for such?

CARDINAL  
CLANCY:

Thank you very much. Study by the Bishops of this Report will begin immediately I would say. No time frame has been set. This Report has been five years in the making so I think it would be less than justice to anything or anybody for the Report of the Bishops to be rushed unduly. But certainly they would come up with their response as soon as possible. As I say, they would begin immediately and I would hope that within a matter of months that would certainly be completed but I wouldn't set a date at this point.

CHAIR:

The next question is from Maria Mosquerolo(?)

QUESTION:

Maria Mosquerolo from News Limited. I think I will risk the ire of the audience and ask about ordination of women again.

Do you see the ordination of women is inevitable keeping in mind what you did say in response to Graeme Downey's question. Do you see it as inevitable or not. If you do see it as inevitable will it pretty much have to wait until a new Pope comes along?

CARDINAL  
CLANCY:

Thank you very much. Thank you for the question. Far from seeing it inevitable, as inevitable, I would think that the finer word has been spoken by this Pope and that no future Pope will reverse it.

QUESTION:

May I ask why you are saying that, [inaudible] ...

CHAIR:

Would you ask the microphone so you can be heard.

QUESTION:

Sorry. Why would you say that no future Pope would reverse it? I mean surely the Church would be seen as a, well not stuck in the past ...

CARDINAL  
CLANCY:

No, because of the language in which the Pope made his decision. It, you know, it indicates finality. It's bordering on - as a matter of fact it was debated whether or not it was an infallible pronouncement - seriously debated, but it certainly is a very measured and a very serious decision

by the Holy Father and remembering the position that he holds in the Church as the first teacher and his word on these matters we look to as the authoritative word, and surely he was using his authority and his position in the best circumstances when he pronounced on such a subject as this. I, for those reasons, I have no doubt personally that this question will not be resolved in any other way in the future.

CHAIR: The next question here is from Geoff Orchison.

QUESTION: Cardinal Clancy, I'd just like to ask you as Leader of the Church in Australia and as a Bishop how painful have you personally felt when you've heard the hurt and the frustration that so many of your flock have expressed, and I guess how realistic and how confident do you feel that the Bishops can actually realistically answer some of the problems and some of the frustrations that have been, apart from the ordination of women, that have been expressed by the women in the Church?  
[Applause]

CARDINAL CLANCY: Thank you, thank you for raising another question. It deeply concerns every Bishop that even one person, man or woman, in the Church would feel alienated or embittered, of that you can be assured.

With regard to solving all the problems and meeting all the aspirations that women have expressed, particularly in the Report that is before you today, I wouldn't like to create or confirm any false or impossible or unrealistic expectation, nor would I wish to play down the difficulties that stand in the way of the realisation of some of the aspirations that have been articulated in that Report.

As I think, as I tried to indicate in the short speech I gave a few moment ago, there are limits to what the Bishops can do set by our catholic tradition which includes our theology and it's based, it's rooted in the word of Revelation itself so that some of the aspirations that women have enunciated simply I think will prove beyond the ability and the possibility of Bishops to realise and to meet.

In saying all of that I'm quite confident in what I say but I don't want to appear to pre-empt or anticipate what the Bishops will decide ultimately in their response to the Report.

QUESTION: Robyn McConchie from the ABC Country Hour. Can we just turn to the impact of this Report on rural women in country Australia, particularly catholic women.

The Report says that women, particularly in country areas, are the backbone of the Church. I suppose I'm a bit concerned by the differences in views that have been expressed from the Church survey and the research report that there is a reasonable possibility that the Report in fact might get buried.

Is there any chance that it could get buried and what sort of impact would you hope that this report would have on women in rural Australia, particularly catholic women in rural Australia given the importance of the Church to regional communities when they're really suffering real difficulties and given the prejudice that the Report's found that still exists amongst the Church?

COMPERE: With regard to your first question the Bishops have set about this issue of women in the Church in a very public way, and nothing could be more public surely than this, and so I think that is assurance that the Bishops are very serious in their endeavours to hear what the needs and the feelings of women are, and with that goes the assurance that they will do all that they can, all that is possible for them, to meet those needs, to give women a greater and a more effective voice in the Church and to establish means, ways, structures whereby there can be a continuing listening to and dialogue with women throughout the Church.

So I think the very public nature of what we're doing is a guarantee that the Bishops will do all that they can and that this Report won't gather dust on anybody's shelf.

With regard to women in the country I'm not sure that I understand the distinction in this context between the women in the country and women in the city. I think the Church means a great deal to catholic women wherever they are, country or city, perhaps it may be more keenly felt in the country, but if it is, I think it would be a sort of reassurance to them just as to city women. I may not have understood the full import of your question.

CHAIR: We'll come back to you Robyn. The next question is over here.

QUESTION: Debra Way from Australian Associated Press, Cardinal Clancy. In your speech you mentioned that the Church, or the Bishops will be giving full attention to the dichotomy of views that came across in the two different surveys. Obviously those views are represented today here, that there seem to be two distinct camps and two pretty militant distinct camps at that, what are some reasons that you could put forward for why there are such two distinct camps as opposed to perhaps a more wide range of views?

CARDINAL CLANCY: I think there is a wide range of views mind you. There might be two more distinct or prominent views and that sort of polarisation but I think a view should not be restricted to those. There are a whole series of views in between the two extremes.

You know we live in a time of transition, not just the Church, but the world generally, and you know in society and secular society there's a tremendous amount of debate and discussion and diversity of opinions, difference of views, tension, anger sometimes. It's not surprising that one would find it also to some extent within the Church, and one could take a positive view of that I think.

It means the Church is alive. It means the people are interested. It means that people are concerned. It means that they do have views, and that they're prepared to discuss them and debate them and debate those views and I think that out of that kind of general discussion we can expect only good to come.

CHAIR: Robyn McConchie will elaborate on rural women.

QUESTION: I think we've sort of seen a situation in country areas where many services in country areas are disappearing and just this morning we heard on the ABC's AM program the head of the ANZ Bank saying it was a political disaster to leave rural and regional Australia.

In many areas the Church is sharing parishes, they're amalgamating, not exactly amalgamating but they're sharing duties. Given the importance of services to country areas, and particularly the importance the Church plays in the lives of country women is the Catholic Church absolutely committed to regional Australia?

CARDINAL CLANCY: The Catholic Church I think is committed to regional Australia in church terms. I'm not going to commit it to all the other terms that one could think of. Yes I see the point of your question now that in city and in country, because of the shortage of priests we have to amalgamate parishes or at least put more than one parish under the pastoral care of a single priest.

Now that can be handled more easily in the city obviously because get in the car and people can be in another church, another parish within five minutes. Not so in the country, it's more difficult there. That's a difficulty that is raised by reason of the situation itself and there's no easy answer to it, and I don't think the Bishops have an easy answer to it except that we try where we can to make priests available when there is perhaps a surplus of them in any one city to make them available for the country, but there's no simple answer that the Bishops have anyhow for the shortage of priests in country or city.

CHAIR: The next question is from Anne Nugent who I can't see from here.

ANNE NUGENT: I'm here. Thank you. Anne Nugent, Editor of Ordination of Catholic Women's News, and I wanted to follow-up the question that remained unanswered that Graeme put, Graeme Downey put, and that is do you favour the exclusion from communion of those who support the ordination of women and I suppose it's only fair to point out that that was so in my case.

CARDINAL CLANCY: Do I favour the exclusion from the communion ...

ANNE NUGENT: Do you, you, favour the exclusion of people like myself who support the ordination of women, do you favour our exclusion from communion and I point out that was what happened in my case.

CARDINAL CLANCY: I see. No I do not support that exclusion.

ANNE NUGENT: And the follow-up is what's happening about it?

CARDINAL CLANCY: I beg your pardon?

ANNE NUGENT: And the follow-up is, is there any direction, is there any direction from you that that is not a legitimate or a desirable thing to happen in the Catholic Church in Australia?

CARDINAL CLANCY: No I'm not in a position to give such directions, although I'm spoken of often times as the leader of the Church in Australia, I just happen to be the President of the Bishops Conference. Every Bishop is quite independent in his own diocese and I don't have any jurisdiction over another diocese.

CHAIR: Is there another question?

QUESTION: My question is directed to Cardinal Clancy. I'm Jane Wilkes the National Coordinator of the Magdalene Foundation. I notice that the research project noted that the traditional contribution of women as wives and mothers was in fact reflected as a minority view in the Report. I was wondering if we could have your assurances that whilst our view may be a minority one that our role will be taken seriously by the Bishops?

CARDINAL CLANCY: I think that there is any amount of evidence to verify that the Bishops would give their total support to women who see their future, the present and their future as primarily wives and mothers.

QUESTION: I'm Dr Catherine Lennon from the Magdalene Foundation, and I thank you very much Cardinal for your affirmation of the importance of us in the Church in the domestic church as wives and mothers as well as in other professional parish and voluntary work.

My question is directed at how we can better support our wonderful priests and pray for more vocations, and I hope, I try in my own parish to do that but I think on a wider basis in Australia that we need to do that and to help and support our priests in their vocation.

CARDINAL CLANCY: Thank you very much. I think I can say without any hesitation that Bishops and Priests throughout the whole country deeply appreciate the support that they get from those women in their parish - wives and mothers - support that comes in many, many different ways, and while often times the priest is seen as supporting the people in the pews, rest assured that the priest himself derives tremendous support and encouragement from the people, and particularly from such as you have mentioned who faithfully throughout the years and throughout their lives devote themselves generously to home and family, and in many cases of course beyond that.

In these days one can often devote oneself adequately to home and family and still have time to devote to the wider community. But to those who give home and family primacy in their lives Bishops and Priests are deeply appreciative.

QUESTION: I'm Marie Louise Uhr, I'm National Convenor of Ordination of Catholic Women.  
[Applause]  
Cardinal, I see a certain tension or, in your answers so far, in one answer I think it was referring to Marie of the AAP, you said you were in favour of open discussion.

In another answer you said no we could not continue to discuss the ordination of catholic women. So I see a tension in that, particularly in view that most theologian and most scripture scholars have over twenty years insisted that they see no theological nor scriptural objections to women's ordination, and that theological [inaudible] still stands. I've seen no answer to it, no response to it, and no conversation with it in the theological literature which I do read.

The second problem I have is you say we have a shortage of priests. I'm sorry but we do not have a shortage of priests, Cardinal, we have a shortage of celibate male formally ordained priests, but I know many women who are priests, and the holy spirit can't be stopped.

CARDINAL CLANCY: A fairly long question. Oh yes, the first question was conflict or contradiction in my saying there should be open discussion but not with regard to ordination of clergy. I don't think there's a conflict there. I wouldn't favour open discussion as to whether or not there were three or four persons in the Blessed Trinity.

I mean there are certain questions that are clearly defined and clearly revealed and about which the Church where necessary has spoken authoritatively, and ordination of women is one such question. The Holy Father has spoken very authoritatively on that question. There are many other questions however such as have been raised in the report about which we welcome discussion.

CHAIR: Cardinal Clancy, thank you for joining us today. This past hour has - we have exhausted our time today and I'd like to thank you for joining us, accept this small trophy to mark the occasion and one also for Dr MacDonald, and Lady Deane.

We thank you all for taking part in today's debate.

The End

**13 July 1999**

## **Media Note**

Cardinal Clancy will receive and Lady Helen Deane will launch the new book

*Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus*

which presents the findings of the Research Project -  
The Participation of Women in the Catholic Church in Australia.

**Date:** 18 August 1999

**Time:** 12:00pm - 2:00pm

**Venue:** National Press Club, 16 National Circuit, Barton ACT

**Cost:** \$30.00 NPC Members, \$35.00 Subsidised guest price, \$22.00 Student Members

**Speakers:** Cardinal Edward Clancy, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, Lady Helen Deane, Governor-General's wife, Dr Marie MacDonald, Project Co-ordinator.

The Research Project was undertaken for the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference by the Bishops' Committee for Justice, Development and Peace, Australian Catholic University and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes. The book, published by Harper Collins Publishers, will retail for \$29.95.

All other inquiries to Jackie Brady on (02) 6201 9859 or (0418) 214 752

**ALL MEDIA ARE INVITED TO ATTEND**

**5 July 1999**

## **Catholic Church establishes Help Hotline for young people moving away from home**

A National Program assisting young people who are moving away from home, mainly to pursue study or work, will be launched by Cardinal Edward Clancy, on behalf of the Bishops' Committee for the Laity, today at St Scholastica's Centre in Glebe, Sydney.

The program, called Moving On, is an initiative of the Australian Network of Diocesan Youth Ministry Co-ordinators (ANDYMC) and is supported by the Bishops' Committee for the Laity.

"Moving On is a great new initiative by the Catholic Church aimed at assisting young people overcome the emotional and practical hurdles that may come with moving from the familiarity of home to a new city or town," said Cardinal Clancy, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference. "It is our aim to provide every school leaver in Australia with a Moving On business card which displays a freecall 1300 number as well as an internet address. We hope that the young people will carry it around in their wallet or purse in case they need it one day."

The phone number will provide the first contact between the young person and the youth ministry office nearest to them. General information about the new city or town and even some tips about moving away from home will be compiled by the Youth Ministry offices at the local level and assembled into Moving On kits. These can simply be forwarded to the young person seeking the information. If more specialist care or advice is required then arrangements can be made for a consultation or simply someone to talk to.

"We will be trying to maintain the relationship we have already established with young people in the education system after they have entered into the 'real' world," said Cardinal Clancy. "The content of the kits will vary around Australia, but basically they will have information such as, maps, bus timetables, a simple cookbook, location of local health facilities, local mass times, and tenant rights and responsibilities information. It will also include a detailed list containing tips and a checklist for leaving home - simple things like remembering to obtain a personal medicare card."

The Moving On business cards will be distributed to all students leaving the Catholic Education system in Australia.

**The Moving On hotline number is: 1300 361 175, and  
the email address is [movingon@catholic.org.au](mailto:movingon@catholic.org.au)**

The Launch will be held at St Scholastica's Centre, St Scholastica's Convent, Glebe.

Please enter via the Convent entrance on Arcadia Road, Glebe, Sydney.

CONTACT: Jackie Brady on 0418-214 752 for further information or to arrange an interview.



29 June 1999

### **Australian Catholic woman appointed as Vatican representative on Peak Ecumenical Body**

**The Executive Secretary of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-faith Relations, Miss Denise Sullivan, has been appointed as a Vatican member of the Joint Working Group established between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches (WCC) from 1999-2005.**

Due to the fact the Roman Catholic Church is not a member of the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Joint Working Group (JWG) was established back in 1965 to serve as the peak body for relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the WCC. Currently, 28 members make up the JWG, half from the WCC and the other 14 from the Roman Catholic Church.

Miss Sullivan learnt of her appointment to the Joint Working Group from the President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, Cardinal Edward Idris Cassidy.

"I think it should be a really fascinating experience serving on the Joint Working Group," said Miss Sullivan. "I hope my participation in the JWG can contribute to a greater understanding in Australia of the work of the WCC and its relation to the Catholic Church."

Miss Sullivan studied Arts at the University of Queensland and is a qualified librarian. She gained a Bachelor of Theology from the Melbourne College of Divinity and was awarded the inaugural President's Prize for Outstanding Performance in Theological Studies from Yarra Theological Union. Miss Sullivan, a member of the International Grail movement, lectures in the School of Religion and Philosophy at the Signadou (Canberra) Campus of the Australian Catholic University. She is an executive member of the National Council of Churches in Australia and is Executive Secretary of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations.

As part of her commitment to the JWG, Miss Sullivan will be required to attend a meeting once a year, generally in Europe, for at least five full working days each time.

**To arrange an interview please contact: Denise Sullivan on 02) 6247 2742**

**21 JUNE 1999**

### **Australian among finalists in the Vatican's International Religious Drama Competition**

An Australian woman, Miss Dorothy M. Clayton from North Sydney, is one of nine finalists selected in the International Competition of Religious Drama, one of the cultural initiatives aimed at celebrating the Great Jubilee Year 2000.

The Competition is sponsored by the Pontifical Commission for the Cultural Heritage of the Church and the Artistic-Cultural Commission of the Great Jubilee Year 2000.

Miss Clayton's play is called, "The Secret Rebellion" and covers some of the events in the life of James Stuart, the last Catholic King of England and Scotland.

In her letter submitting the play to the Pontifical Commission Miss Clayton says, "The Statement about James that 'he achieved neither standing nor justice after his death' is borne out by the fact that official English history, as taught in Catholic schools, paints him in very derogatory colours; that eminent university professors stress his 'stupidity' for preferring his religion to the throne of a great nation, and that even recent picture books for small children hold he up to ridicule....This play is a small gesture towards encouraging a re-appraisal of King James II the Catholic and the true motives behind the 'Glorious Revolution of 1688' which left a legacy that is felt to this day, especially in the struggle in Northern Ireland."

Miss Clayton has had a long association with theatre and play-writing, particularly with The Genesian Theatre in Sydney. One of her earlier plays, entitled, "Bernadette" was the first religious play to be televised live in Sydney on Sunday 13th April 1958 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Our Lady's apparitions in Lourdes. Another of Miss Clayton's plays, "Portrait of a Family Man" reached the finals of the American Gabriel Award.

Mrs Clayton is delighted to be among the selected finalists who are in the running for prizes totalling 60 million lire or around \$AUS60,000. However, she did not enter the Competition for the money, she did not even know that a prize was on offer - her love of Catholic theatre was her motivation.

To arrange an interview please contact Jackie Brady on 02) 6201 9859 or 0418 214 752

**16 April 1999**

**Catholic Bishops reflect on recent trip to Rome**

**Letter from the Australian Bishops to the Catholic people of Australia**

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

1. During November and December 1998 the Australian bishops took part in three separate meetings in Rome that were significant for the Church in this country. Conflicting reports about these meetings have caused confusion, hurt and anger for many. In seeking to respond to these feelings, we believe it is important to consider all three meetings together.
2. Firstly, the Synod of Bishops for Oceania was held over a period of three weeks. The Australian bishops spoke there about matters close to their hearts and the interests of their people.
3. Secondly, every five years the diocesan bishops of Australia are required to travel to Rome, where each presents a report on the state of his diocese and meets with the Pope and various officials of the Vatican. At the end of these visits, the Pope addresses the assembled bishops. For the convenience of the Australian bishops, this year's visit was held at the same time as the Synod.
4. Thirdly, as part of the five-yearly visit of the diocesan bishops, the heads of six of the Vatican Congregations expressed the wish to meet with a representative group of the Australian bishops to discuss certain matters concerning the pastoral situation of the Church in Australia. Fifteen Australian bishops met with twelve representatives of the Vatican over a period of four days in the week before the Synod began. From these discussions a Statement of Conclusions was drawn up and signed by Vatican and Australian representatives. In presenting the document to all the Australian bishops during the last days of the Synod Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger described it as "a fair representation of the dialogue that took place during the interdicasterial meeting regarding some of the doctrinal and pastoral issues challenging the Church in Australia."
5. In his address to the Australian bishops, Pope John Paul II said, "The Church in Australia faces a complex situation which calls for careful discernment on the part of the Bishops, and a confident and committed response on the part of all Catholics." He added, "I earnestly recommend to your prayer and reflection, to your responsibility and action, the document which summarises your meetings with the various Dicasteries of the Holy See."
6. During the ordinary biannual meeting of the Australian bishops from 6th to 15th April 1999, those who were present at the meeting with the Vatican representatives were able to give a fuller report to the other bishops of all that took place in the discussions. We then discussed all three events that took place in Rome and we sought to begin the process of prayer, reflection, discernment, responsibility and action that the Pope asked of us directly and personally.
7. A synod and a five-yearly visit to Rome are both moments of appraisal, and any good appraisal will look at both positive and negative elements in an organization. At both the Synod and the meeting with the Vatican representatives the Australian bishops present consistently and forcefully indicated the great strengths of the Australian Church and the admirable dedication of clergy, religious and lay people in so many fields. Both the Synod speeches and the Statement of Conclusions contain abundant proof of this profound conviction of the Australian bishops and of its acceptance by the Vatican representatives.
8. At the same time, no appraisal stops at positive aspects if it wishes to see people grow stronger and more able in their work. Both the Australian bishops and the Vatican officials, therefore, spoke frankly of the problems they perceived. Pope John Paul, also recognising these problems, encouraged us to further reflection and action. It is right that we be periodically challenged and it is part of the role of Peter's successor to do just that.
9. By most measurable criteria such as religious affiliation, church attendance, vocations, marriage in church etc., secularisation is making great inroads in Australia. This indicates a crisis of faith. Within the Church there are different understandings of the person of Jesus Christ, the nature of the Church, the role of conscience and various moral problems, and not all understandings are in agreement with Catholic teaching. Some less than appropriate practices can at times take place at liturgical celebrations. Clergy, religious and laity are all going through a period of profound change and it should not cause wonder if tensions arise.
10. The Pope asked for "a confident and committed response on the part of all Catholics", while the Statement of Conclusions reminds bishops that they "may not tolerate error in matters of doctrine and morals or Church discipline", but also that they should strive "to correct errors, not by blunt use of authority, but through dialogue and persuasion."
11. Some groups have initiated a deliberate and intrusive surveillance of clergy and liturgical celebrations. While Catholics have a right to be heard, such tactics are not acceptable to most Australians. Instead, we encourage a constructive dialogue that builds harmony.

12. The Third Rite of Reconciliation has become the focus of a great deal of attention and debate. While the widespread use of this rite in some dioceses has been governed by the best of pastoral intentions, the Pope has personally indicated to the Australian bishops that such widespread use is not in keeping with the universal Church's understanding of the sacrament of Reconciliation. He spoke of the personal nature of sin, conversion, forgiveness and reconciliation and directed that the use of the Third Rite be kept strictly within the conditions laid down by Church law. We accept this directive.

13. The Synod and the five-yearly visit have reminded us of both strengths and weaknesses in our Church. It is now time for the prayer, reflection, discernment, responsibility and action to which the Pope calls us. We are grateful for the dedication of so many clergy, religious and laypeople in this country. With confidence, therefore, we invite your prayerful collaboration in developing strategies to respond to the issues raised at all meetings in Rome and in discerning what the Spirit is asking of the Church in Australia at the beginning of the Third Millennium of Christianity.

Edward Cardinal Clancy  
On behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Australia  
14 April 1999

To arrange an interview please contact Jackie Brady on 0418 214 752 or 02 6201 9859

**13 April 1999**

## **WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE CHURCH**

The Australian Bishops have been given a summary presentation of a 560-page research report on the participation of women in the Catholic Church in this country.

The Bishops Conference has agreed that the full text of the report, which is still in manuscript form, is to be published and released as a book later this year. It is expected to be an important resource for the Church in Australia for many years.

Titled *Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus*, the report is the result of one of the most comprehensive research projects ever undertaken by the Catholic Church in Australia. It was commissioned by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC), working through the Bishops Committee for Justice, Development and Peace (BCJDP), and was co-sponsored by the Australian Catholic University (ACU) and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes (ACLRI).

The report was presented to the plenary meeting of the Bishops Conference at the Good Shepherd Seminary, Homebush South, on Monday 12 April. An eight-member committee of researchers, called the Research Management Group (RMG), made the presentation in a two-hour session with the Bishops.

The Chairman of the Group, Professor Peter Carpenter of ACU, and the Project Coordinator, Dr Marie Macdonald, outlined the contents of the document. They and five other members of the RMG - Sister Sonia Wagner sgs, Sister Margaret Malone sga, Mr Bob Dixon, Ms Sandie Cornish and Dr Michael Costigan - were introduced to the meeting by the Group's convenor, Bishop Kevin Manning, Secretary of the BCJDP.

The many thousands of people who participated in the project included those who made written submissions, presentations at public hearings, responses to the relevant questionnaire in the 1997 Catholic Church Life Survey, contributions to the discussions by targeted groups and replies to requests for data from Catholic organisations and theological institutes.

The BCJDP has undertaken to advise in due course every participating group and individual about the publication and launch of the report.

### **Contacts:**

Bishop Kevin Manning on 0418 214 752

Dr Marie Macdonald on 02 9956 5800

## The Examination of Theological Orthodoxy

### Approved during the Plenary Meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, April 1999

The People of God have the right "to receive the Gospel message in its purity and entirety"<sup>1</sup> and the pastors of the Church have the duty and right to safeguard the integrity of faith and morals.<sup>2</sup> For Christ's faithful entrusted to their care this duty and right belongs to the Bishops, both as individuals and in particular councils or Bishops' Conferences.<sup>3</sup> In the exercise of their responsibilities the Bishops are assisted by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith<sup>4</sup> whose proper function is to promote and safeguard the doctrine on faith and morals in the whole Catholic world.<sup>5</sup>

The ministry of the diocesan Bishop as teacher in the faith community means that "among the principal duties of bishops, the preaching of the Gospel occupies an eminent place. For bishops are preachers of the faith who lead new disciples to Christ. They are authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach to the people committed to them the faith they must believe and put into practice. By the light of the Holy Spirit, they make that faith clear, bringing forth from the treasury of revelation new things and old (cf. Mt 13:52), making faith bear fruit and vigilantly warding off any errors which threaten their flock (cf. 2 Tim 4:14). (LG 25)"<sup>6</sup>

"In order that a bishop may be better able to perform his ministry of teacher and judge of faith, he would do very well to approach theologians for their assistance"<sup>7</sup>, for "among the vocations awakened by the Spirit in the Church is that of the theologian".<sup>8</sup> The role of the theologian is "to pursue in a particular way an ever deeper understanding of the Word of God found in the inspired Scriptures and handed on by the living Tradition of the Church".<sup>9</sup> The theologian fulfils this role "in communion with the Magisterium which has been charged with the responsibility of preserving the deposit of faith".<sup>10</sup>

The rich diversity of theological expressions and approaches mirrors the richness of God's revelation. "By its nature, faith appeals to reason because it reveals to man the truth of his destiny and the way to attain it. Revealed truth, to be sure, surpasses our telling. All our concepts fall short of its ultimately unfathomable grandeur (cf. Eph. 3:19). Nonetheless, revealed truth beckons reason - God's gift fashioned for the assimilation of truth - to enter into its light and thereby come to understand in a certain measure what it has believed. Theological Science responds to the invitation of truth as it seeks to understand the faith."<sup>11</sup>

Within his Church, as "the vicar and ambassador of Christ",<sup>12</sup> the diocesan bishop has the responsibility "to guard and interpret the Word of God and to make authoritative judgments as to what is or is not in conformity with it".<sup>13</sup> Hence the Bishop has the duty "to supervise the entire ministry of the Word. In an appropriate way he should see to it that all who preach the Gospel are well instructed in sacred science and are urged on by apostolic prudence and charity. In good time, he reproveth those who presume to preach doctrines foreign to the faith; and those who refuse to be corrected he deprives of the faculty of preaching or teaching".<sup>14</sup> In the exercise of this duty the Bishop is to ensure that the dignity and responsibility of all those who preach and teach in the Church is recognised and promoted.<sup>15</sup>

In fulfilling their responsibilities Bishops may avail themselves of the assistance that can be offered by the Committee for Doctrine and Morals of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.<sup>16</sup> The Apostolic See acknowledges also the contribution that competent scholars and academic institutions can make to Bishops in the fulfilment of their duties.<sup>17</sup>

Different situations can arise each of which needs to be considered in its own context and perspective and to be dealt with accordingly. The following four sections identify various circumstances in which Bishops are called upon to safeguard the integrity of faith or morals and recommend a procedure that Bishops may use in each situation.

These procedures refer to theologians who are to be "not only qualified in scientific and pedagogical expertise, but also outstanding in their integrity of doctrine and uprightness of life". (CIC cann.810:1, 818). These procedures may also be followed in the case of someone who, though not a theologian in accordance with canons 810:1 and 818, makes statements of a theological nature that raise questions of orthodoxy.

A theologian has the right to have his or her good name and academic reputation respected, and to just procedures in the resolution of any concerns about his or her orthodoxy. These procedures should protect the theologian from any spurious or ill-formed criticisms. It would also normally be inappropriate for the procedures to involve the assistance of an Expert who was known to be personally or academically in conflict with the theologian.

Whenever the question of orthodoxy is being examined, the process should be undertaken without delay and in such a way as to respect the privacy of all parties concerned. Prior to resolution of the matter, there should be no public censure of the theologian or curtailment of his or her responsibilities, unless the pastoral situation demands some action, and, in that case, it should be as discrete as possible. Should the matter come to public attention, the Bishop or superior should acknowledge that the matter is being investigated according to due process, and that the final outcome will be made public.

In cases where the theologian is a member of an institute of consecrated life or a society of apostolic life the Bishop and the competent major superior are to proceed by way of mutual consultation (CIC 678:3).

If the theologian's Ordinary is a bishop other than the Bishop initiating the examination of orthodoxy, the Bishop and the theologian's Ordinary are to proceed by way of mutual consultation.

## **A: Dialogue Between Bishops and Theologians**

It is possible that theologians, because of "the character of their research", may "encounter difficulties" with their Bishops over doctrinal matters.<sup>18</sup> In these situations the issue in need of resolution is one between the Bishop and the theologian. In such circumstances theologians "should seek their solution in trustful dialogue with the Pastors in the spirit of truth and charity which is that of the communion of the Church".<sup>19</sup>

### **Procedure for Trustful Dialogue**

#### **1. Definitions**

In this procedure the following words shall have the meanings hereby assigned to them:

"Bishop" means the diocesan bishop of the diocese in which the theologian has either a domicile or quasi-domicile or in which the statement was published;

"Committee" means the Committee for Doctrine and Morals of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference;

"Experts" means theologians with the required competence in their disciplines, chosen from the list of experts established by the Committee for Doctrine and Morals of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, after having received nominations from academic institutions and professional associations. In some instances the examination may involve matters beyond the expertise of the Committee or list of Experts. In these cases, additional Experts may need to be selected. This can be done by means of a dialogue between the Bishop, the Committee and the theologian whose statement is being examined.

"Statement" means the statement or statements on matters concerning faith or morals made by a theologian whether orally or in any written or published form or by any audio or audio/visual means of communication;

"Theologian" means a qualified theologian in accordance with the norms of canon law (CIC cann. 810:1, 818). These procedures may also be followed in the case of someone who, though not a theologian in accordance with canons 810:1 and 818, makes statements of a theological nature that raise questions of orthodoxy.

The reference to days and months in this procedure is to be understood as canonical time in accordance with CIC can. 201:2.

#### **2. Pastoral Resolution**

2.1 When the Bishop has concerns about a statement of the theologian he is to explore every reasonable measure whereby a satisfactory pastoral resolution may be found.

Only when other methods of pastoral care have failed to satisfy his concerns is the Bishop to commence the following procedure.

#### **3. Determination of Statement**

3.1 When the Bishop has concerns about a statement of the theologian, the first task is to determine exactly which statement of the theologian is the object of the Bishop's concern.

3.2 The Bishop shall inform the theologian in writing which statement is the object of his concern and that he intends to enter upon the process of trustful dialogue with the theologian.

#### **4. Determination of Meaning**

4.1 Unless it would appear to be entirely superfluous, the second task is to ensure that the exact meaning of the statement of the theologian is clearly established, in the context of the theologian's approach and methodology.

4.2 For this purpose the Bishop shall provide the theologian with adequate time to present to him in writing the exact meaning of the statement which is the object of the Bishop's concern.

4.3 The Bishop having examined the theologian's written explanation of the meaning of the statement may, if necessary, call the theologian for an interview to further clarify the meaning of the statement.

4.4 The theologian may freely choose a person whose assistance and support shall be available to him or her individually during the process. The name of the person chosen shall be made known to the Bishop and the Experts at the commencement of process.

## **5. Preliminary Advice on Orthodoxy**

5.1 When the Bishop and the theologian are satisfied that the theologian's statement and its meaning have been clearly established, if concern still exists, the Bishop selects either Procedure A as outlined in 5.2-5.5 which works through the Committee or Procedure B outlined in 5.6-5.11 in which the Bishop himself conducts the procedure.

### **Procedure A - Matter referred to Committee**

5.2 If the Bishop chooses to refer the matter to the Committee, the Committee, after dialogue with the theologian, shall designate two or more Experts who are to "examine the text in question, give their opinions and evaluate whether it is conformity with the doctrine of the Church".

5.3 The Experts shall give their opinions and evaluation in writing, setting out the reasons why the theologian's statement is or is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church.

5.4 If the Experts consider that the theologian's statement is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church, they shall make recommendations as to what steps could be taken to address the matter in question.

5.5 The Experts are to respond to the Committee in writing within three (3) months of receipt of its request.

5.6 The Committee, having examined the opinions and evaluation of the Experts, shall if it deems necessary or expedient add its own observations and conclusions on the matter.

5.7 The Committee shall forward its report consisting of the opinions and evaluation of the Experts and its own observations and conclusions on the matter, if any, to the Bishop in writing within four (4) months of receipt of his request.

### **Procedure B - Matter referred to Experts**

5.8 If the Bishop chooses to refer the matter to Experts he himself, after dialogue with the theologian, designates two or more Experts who are to "examine the text in question, give their opinions and evaluate whether it is conformity with the doctrine of the Church".<sup>20</sup>

5.9 The Experts shall give their opinions and evaluation in writing, setting out the reasons why the theologian's statement is or is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church.

5.10 If the Experts consider that the theologian's statement is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church, they shall make recommendations as to what steps could be taken to address the matter in question.

5.11 The Experts are to provide their report to the Bishop in writing within three (3) months of receipt of his request.

## **6. Decision of the Bishop and Report to the Theologian**

6.1 Having examined the report either of the Committee or of the Experts the Bishop judges whether "doctrinal errors or dangerous opinions have been found in the text, ... specifically identifying these in the light of the different categories of truth-propositions found in the *professio fidei*".<sup>21</sup>

6.2 Within twenty (20) days of receipt of such report the Bishop makes his "authoritative judgment"<sup>22</sup> on the orthodoxy of the theologian's statement and informs the theologian of his decision in writing.

6.3

(i) If the Bishop judges the theologian's statement is in conformity with the teaching of the Church, he informs the theologian that such is his judgement and that his concerns in regard to the theologian's statement have been satisfactorily resolved

(ii) If the Bishop judges that the theologian's statement is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church, the Bishop informs the theologian that such is his judgement and forwards to the theologian a copy of the report he received from either the Committee or the Experts and invites the theologian to respond in writing within three (3) months.

(iii) If the clarifications presented by the theologian to the Bishop do not satisfactorily resolve his concerns, the Bishop again consults with either the Committee or the Experts and then makes his "authoritative judgment"<sup>23</sup> on the orthodoxy of the theologian's statement and informs the theologian of his decision in writing.

6.4 If the theologian refuses to accept the decision of the Bishop referred to in 5.3 (iii), the Bishop may initiate in accordance with the norms of canon law an administrative or judicial procedure.



## **B: Referrals from the Apostolic See to Bishops**

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith "can always intervene and, as a rule, does so when the influence of the influence of a publication exceeds the boundaries of an individual episcopal conference or when the danger to the faith is particularly grave". 24

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in accordance with Article 7 of its Regulations for Doctrinal Examination, can entrust a case to a Bishop. In these circumstances the Bishop brings the doctrinal problems considered to be present in a theologian's statement to the author's attention. The Bishop is "invited to deepen the study of the question and to ask the author to provide the needed clarifications for submission to the judgement of the Congregation". 25

When the Bishop receives such a request from the Apostolic See it is recommended that he use, *mutatis mutandis*, the Procedure for Trustful Dialogue.

## **C: Doctrinal Examinations by the Holy See**

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in accordance with its Regulations for Doctrinal Examination, involves a Bishop in its ordinary procedure of examination 26 and its examination in cases of urgency. 27

In the ordinary procedure of examination the Bishop has a particular role. In order to fulfil his responsibilities as stated in Articles 12 and 17, it is recommended that the Bishop discuss the erroneous or dangerous propositions of the theologian with both the Committee and the Experts referred to in the Procedure for Trustful Dialogue.

In the doctrinal examination in cases of urgency, the Bishop is required, in accordance with Article 27, to meet with the theologian who has published erroneous and dangerous statements and if necessary to forward his own opinion on the matter to the Congregation. In the formulation of his own opinion, it is recommended that the Bishop avail himself of the assistance of both the Committee and the Experts referred to in the Procedure for Trustful Dialogue.

## **D: Complaints Regarding Orthodoxy**

Situations can arise in which members of the Church allege a statement of a theologian is contrary to the teaching of the Church. When the Bishop receives such complaints he must recognise that "theology and the Magisterium fulfil two vital roles in the Church" and that they "are of diverse natures and missions and cannot be confused". 28 In some circumstances the tensions which arise from such aspects of the life of the community can "degenerate into divisions". 29 In such cases the Bishop's "authority, which transcends particular positions and oppositions, must unite all in the integrity of the Gospel which is the "word of reconciliation" (cf. 2 Cor 5:18-20)". 30

### **Procedure to Resolve Complaints Regarding Orthodoxy**

#### **1. Definitions**

In this procedure the following words shall have the meanings hereby assigned to them:

"Bishop" means the diocesan bishop of the diocese in which the theologian has either a domicile or quasi-domicile or in which the statement was published;

"Committee" means the Committee for Doctrine and Morals of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference;

The reference to days and months in this procedure is to be understood as canonical time in accordance with CIC can. 201:2.

"Complainant" means any member of Christ's faithful who has either domicile or quasi-domicile or was actually present in the diocese of the Bishop when the statement was made by the theologian;

"Complaint" means an allegation made in writing to the Bishop claiming that the statement of the theologian is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church;

"Experts" means theologians with the required competence in their disciplines, chosen from the list of experts established by the Committee for Doctrine and Morals of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, after having received nominations from academic institutions and professional associations. In some instances the examination may involve matters beyond the expertise of the Committee or list of Experts. In these cases, additional Experts may need to be selected. This can be done by means of a dialogue between the Bishop, the Committee and the theologian whose statement is being examined.

"Statement" means the statement or statements on matters concerning faith or morals made by the theologian whether orally or in any written or published form or by any audio or audio/visual means of communication;

"Theologian" means a qualified theologian in accordance with the norms of canon law (CIC cann. 810:1, 818). These procedures may also be followed in the case of someone who, though not a theologian in accordance with canons 810:1 and 818, makes statements of a theological nature that raise questions of orthodoxy.

## **2. Pastoral Resolution**

2.1 If the Bishop receives a complaint he is to explore every reasonable measure whereby a satisfactory pastoral resolution may be found.

2.2 Only when other methods of pastoral care have failed to resolve the complaint is the Bishop to commence the following procedure.

## **3. The Complaint**

3.1 The Bishop shall not accept any complaint unless it is made in writing and signed by the complainant.

3.2 The complaint shall contain the following:

- (a) the name of the complainant;
- (b) the name of the theologian;
- (c) the details of the statement made by the theologian;
- (d) the circumstances in which the statement was made;
- (e) the reasons why, in the opinion of the complainant, the statement is not in conformity with the Church's teaching.

3.3 If the statement of the theologian is available in any published form or on any audio or audio/visual means of communication, it shall be sufficient for the purposes of 3.2(c) that the complainant produce such material for presentation to the Bishop. Opinions expressed by theologians in private communications (e.g. telephone conversations) may not form the basis of a legitimate complaint.

3.4 If the Bishop judges the complaint is without foundation he informs the complainant in writing that such is the case and that he will take no further action.

In all other cases the Bishop:

- (a) acknowledges in writing to the complainant receipt of the complaint;
- (b) informs the theologian in writing of the complaint, and encloses a copy of the published material (cf. 3.3) or a copy of the complaint, including all the details listed under 3.2.
- (c) instructs the theologian that under no circumstances shall the theologian approach the complainant about the complaint.
- (d) instructs the complainant that he or she are not to take any further action against the theologian, until the process has been completed.

## **4. Referral to the Committee or to Experts**

4.1 The Bishop in dealing with the complaint may choose to avail himself of the assistance of either the Committee or Experts.

4.2 At the same time as writing to the complainant and to the theologian the Bishop shall forward to either the Committee or the Experts the complaint and a copy of his letters to the complainant and the theologian as required by 3.4(a) and 3.4(b)-(c).

4.3 The Committee or the Experts shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint from the Bishop within ten (10) days of such receipt.

4.4 If the Bishop chooses to refer the complaint to the Committee the Committee itself, after dialogue with the theologian, shall select two or more Experts.

4.5 If the Bishop chooses to refer the complaint to Experts he himself, after dialogue with the theologian, is to select two or more Experts.

## **5. Determination of Statement**

5.1 Unless it is otherwise evident, the first task of the Experts is to determine exactly the theologian's statement which is being called into question by the complainant.

5.2 If necessary the Experts may by personal interview or through any other means seek from the complainant clarification of any aspects of the complaint made.

5.3 The Experts shall request the theologian to state in writing whether or not the statement as presented by the complainant is correct. If within the time limit fixed by the Experts, the theologian does not agree with the statement as presented by the complainant, the Experts shall call the complainant and the theologian to a joint meeting in order to determine exactly the statement which is alleged to be not in conformity with the teaching of the Church.

5.4 Should it be necessary for the Experts to call any other persons for an interview to assist in the determination of the exact statement of the theologian, the names of any such persons shall be made known to both the complainant and the theologian.

## **6. Determination of Meaning**

6.1 Unless it would appear to be entirely superfluous, the Experts shall ensure that the exact meaning of the statement of the theologian is clearly established, in the context of the theologian's approach and methodology.

6.2 For this purpose the Experts shall provide the theologian with adequate time to present in writing to them the exact meaning of the statement against which a complaint has been made.

6.3 The Experts having examined the theologian's written explanation of the meaning of the statement may, if necessary, call the theologian for an interview.

6.4 The theologian and the complainant may freely choose a person whose assistance and support shall be available to them individually during the process. The names of the two persons chosen shall be made known to the Bishop and the Experts at the commencement of the process.

## **7. Preliminary Opinion on Orthodoxy**

7.1 When the Experts are satisfied that the theologian's statement and its meaning have been clearly established, the Experts "examine the text in question, give their opinions and evaluate whether it is in conformity with the doctrine of the Church".<sup>31</sup>

7.2 The Experts shall give their opinions and evaluation in writing, setting out at least in summary form the reasons why the theologian's statement is or is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church.

7.3 If the Experts consider that the theologian's statement is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church, they shall make recommendations as to what steps could be taken to address the matter in question.

## **8. Report to the Bishop**

Procedure A - Complaint referred to the Committee

8.1 The Experts shall present to the Committee a written report containing the following:

- (1) the theologian's statement and its meaning which has been investigated by them;
- (2) their opinions and evaluation as to whether or not the statement is in conformity with the teaching of the Church;
- (3) their recommendations, if any.

8.2 The Committee, having examined the report of the Experts, shall if it deems necessary or expedient add its own observations and conclusions on the matter.

8.3 The Committee shall present its report to the Bishop within three (3) months of receipt of the complaint.

Procedure B - Complaint referred to Experts

8.4 The Experts shall present to the Bishop a written report containing the following:

- (1) the theologian's statement and its meaning which has been investigated by them;

- (2) their opinions and evaluation as to whether or not the statement is in conformity with the teaching of the Church;
- (3) their recommendations, if any.

8.5 The report shall be signed by each of the Experts.

8.6 The Experts shall present their report to the Bishop within three (3) months of receipt of the complaint.

## 9. Decision of the Bishop and Report to the Theologian

9.1 The Bishop, having examined the report of either the Experts or the Committee shall within (10) days of receipt of such report make his "authoritative judgement"<sup>32</sup> on the orthodoxy of the theologian's statement.

9.2 (i) If the Bishop decides that the statement is in conformity with the teaching of the Church, he shall inform in writing both the complainant and the theologian of his decision and that the matter is now concluded.

(ii) If the Bishop decides that the theologian's statement is not in conformity with the teaching of the Church, he shall inform in writing both the complainant and the theologian of his decision and that the matter is to be subject to further investigation.

In this situation it is recommended that the Bishop follow the process stated in n.6.3 (ii) and (iii) of the Procedure for Trustful Dialogue.

1 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Regulations for Doctrinal Examination (June 29, 1997) Article 1

2 cf. *ibid.*, Article 2; CIC can. 823:1

3 cf. *ibid.*, CIC can. 823:2

4 cf. John Paul II Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* (June 28, 1988) Article 50

5 cf. *ibid.*, Article 48

6 Sacred Congregation for Bishops *Directorium de pastoralis ministerio Episcoporum* (22 February 1973) n.55

7 *ibid.*, n.63

8 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *Instruction on the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian Donum veritatis* (May 24, 1990) n.6

9 *ibid.*, *ibid.*,

11 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *Instruction on the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian Donum veritatis* (May 24, 1990) n.6

12 Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* n.27

13 *Donum veritatis* n.19; CIC can. 823:1

14 *Directorium* n.65

15 cf. *ibid.*,

16 cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *Letter to Presidents of Episcopal Conferences* (November 23, 1990)

17 cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith *Instruction on Some Aspects of the Use of the Instruments of Social Communication in Promoting the Doctrine of the Faith* (March 30, 1992) n.5 (2)

18 *Donum veritatis* n.40

19 *ibid.*,

20 cf. *Regulations for Doctrinal Examination* Article 9

21 *ibid.*, Article 13

22 *Donum veritatis* n.19

23 *ibid.*, n. 19

24 *Regulations for Doctrinal Examination* Article

25 *ibid.*, Article 7

26 cf. *ibid.*, Articles 8-22

27 cf. *ibid.*, Articles 23-27

28 *Donum veritatis* n.40

29 *ibid.*,

30 *ibid.*,

31 cf. *Regulations for Doctrinal Examination* Article 9

32 *Donum veritatis* n.19