

## ASSEMBLY PRAYER 2009

God of all people,  
send us your Holy Spirit  
as we prepare to gather for our Assembly.

We ask that all we imagine,  
hope for and do  
as we approach Assembly 2009  
is in harmony with your plans  
for the diocese.

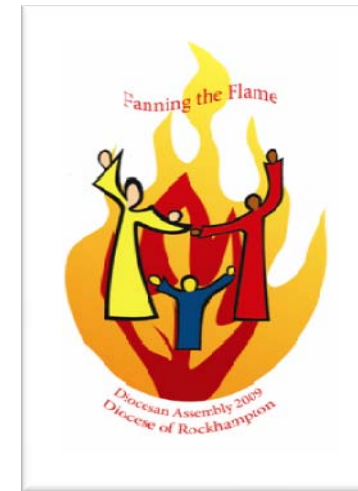
Direct us and guide us  
and give us the courage  
to speak and act in your name.

Amen



Diocesan Assembly Task Group  
Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton

September 2008



# FANNING THE FLAME

DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON  
ASSEMBLY 2009  
21 – 24 SEPTEMBER

Aug - Oct  
2008

Parish Consultation Phase Resource

This booklet is to assist parishes in their preparations for the  
2009 Diocesan Assembly.

# Fanning the Flame

Diocesan Assembly 2009

## BACKGROUND

The Year of Evangelisation was launched on the first Sunday of Advent, at the end of 2006. Over the following liturgical year, various activities throughout the diocese were concentrated on the theme. Prayer was the initial focus with Bishop Brian Heenan inviting everyone in the diocese to pray the Diocesan Prayer for Evangelisation (or a prayer of one's own choice) at midday.

In 2008, Stewardship is brought to the fore in the diocese. Prayer at midday continues with the Diocesan Stewardship Prayer. Stewardship is not something new, but a way of life described in Scripture. It is to truly recognise that each and every single one of God's people has been entrusted with different gifts, and that we are called to use these gifts to bring forth the kingdom of God

With this appreciation of Stewardship in mind, Bishop Brian wishes to hold a Diocesan Assembly in 2009, for the Diocese of Rockhampton. The purpose of the assembly is to give the people of God from around the diocese the opportunity to get together, attend lectures and workshops and discuss issues that concern the diocese, all in an atmosphere of faith, fun and friendship.

## GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE ASSEMBLY

Often, as much as, if not more, is gained along the journey of getting to our destination, as it does when we reach it. The Assembly is not meant to be just a one-off, 4 day event; something that people can come to if they 'feel like it'. It is hoped that it is an assembly which people from around the diocese will own, and that they regard their personal and parish's preparations for it, as their personal journey towards the next milestone in our journey as a diocese, to God.

All are invited to prepare, both individually and as a parish, in the 12 months leading up to the general assembly. The deeper the reflection of strengths, hopes and needs, that individuals and parishes partake in preparing for the general assembly, the higher the quality of the input can provided for the it.

## WITNESSING TOGETHER TO THE GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM (Mission)

*I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (Jn 13:34-35)*

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matt 28:19)*

*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. (1 Peter 4:10)*

### POINTS PREVIOUSLY RAISED

- We need to be a “people of mission not maintenance”
- We are not so good at standing up for our identity as Catholics
- There are many opportunities exist to witness ecumenically

### SOME FURTHER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- The Church's mission is to be missionary. What does that mean to me/ my community?
- Am I a person of mission or of maintenance?
- Are we a community of mission not maintenance?
- How do we nurture the ordinary in living the Good news?
- How can I/we continue to do something beautiful for God?
- How do I live the great Commission “Go...make disciples of all nations?”
- How can we make being Catholic, a real option to those seeking something deeper?

What are the key issues in terms of Mission that need to be addressed at the diocesan assembly?

## THROUGH PERSONAL FAITH IN JESUS (Spirituality)

*When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi, where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see." (John 1:38-39)*

*Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matt 14:28-30)*

*"So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world." (John 4:40-42)*

### POINTS PREVIOUSLY RAISED

- God is not in people's lives in the same way as before
- Whilst people hunger for something deeper, many don't think they will find it in the institutional church

### SOME FURTHER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What does the word spirituality mean to me?
- What does personal faith in Jesus really mean to me?
- Where do I see God in the world?
- How do I/we foster prayer within my/our community?
- How do I/we encourage a continually deepening search for God?

What are the key issues in terms of Spirituality that need to be addressed at the diocesan assembly?

## THE 2009 ASSEMBLY

The assembly will unfold in three stages.

- Parish Consultation
- Personal/Parish Formation
- General Assembly

It is important that parishes get adequate support and that information flows in a smooth and timely manner between the parish and the Diocesan Assembly Task Group. As such, each parish is asked to appoint a "2009 Assembly Co-ordinator" (preferably a member of the Parish Pastoral Council). The role of the Coordinator is to

- organise the Parish Consultation and Personal/Parish Formation phases
- be the contact person in the parish with whom the Assembly Task Group will liaise, collating and forwarding information gathered from the parish to the Assembly Task Group
- raise awareness of the Assembly in the parish by keeping parishioners informed through the prominent display of posters, distribution of reflection materials, timely inserts in parish bulletins etc.

## THE PROCESS

### Parish Consultation

In 2007 Bishop Brian attended regional gatherings around the diocese, speaking to the people, hearing your stories, reaffirming your strengths and what you are already doing, and hearing from you, what you think he/the diocese could do, to assist you.

The Parish Consultation stage involves further discussion of these points raised last year and forms the starting point for the 2009 Diocesan Assembly preparations. The points are presented in this booklet under the sections of our Diocesan Vision Statement not only because they sit fairly well there, but because the Vision Statement expresses what we as a diocese, under the leadership of Bishop Brian, strive to become.

Whilst the aim of the Parish Consultation Phase is to gain further information on issues previously raised, there is no prescribed method in which parishes should conduct this phase. Parishes may choose to ask for individual reflections, organise small group discussions/brain storming sessions within the parish or a gathering after Mass, etc.

It is however, hoped that not just the regular worshipping community be consulted, but that responses are also sought from wider perspectives such as those from the school, religious orders, agencies, etc.

The “Some Further Discussion Questions” are provided only to start the conversation, and individuals and parishes are invited to probe further into the topics, as well as raise other issues they believe are important but not covered in this booklet.

The centrefold is a suggested format to submit responses back to the Assembly Task Group. Please feel free to photocopy additional copies of this as required.

**All responses must be returned to the Diocesan Assembly Task Group by Friday 26 October 2008.**

The responses will provide valuable input for task group when they meet at the end of October to discuss how best to address the various issues at the Assembly.

## Personal/Parish Formation

Parishes are asked to continue preparing for the Assembly after the Parish Consultation phase. *Called to Gather* resource sheets which further expand on the points raised in the *Parish Consultation* phase will be made available for formation, reflection and further group discussion.

## General Assembly

Everyone is invited to the assembly which will be held from Monday 21 through Thursday 24 September 2009. Among the items on the agenda for the assembly are lectures, workshops, discussion groups, all in an atmosphere of friendship and fun.

Outcomes from the Assembly will be collated, and some action plans drawn up. The aim is that this document will be published approximately 2 months after the completion of the Assembly.

## WE LIVE OUT THE CALL OF BAPTISM (Liturgy)

*“I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” (Matt 3:11)*

*“... he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened ... “Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” (Lk 24:30-32)*

*“We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence...” (Rom 12: 6-8)*

### POINTS PREVIOUSLY RAISED

- Responding to our baptismal call
  - Pre-evangelisation: the problem is deeper than the need for education
  - Men need to be better represented in parish life
- Difficult for parents to prepare their children for the Sacraments when they themselves have little catechetical grounding.
- Liturgical & Sacramental life of the Church in today’s environment

### SOME FURTHER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What am I doing to live out my baptismal call?
- How can we continue to nurture families who are preparing their children for the Sacraments?
- What does the Eucharist mean to me?  
How does my community celebrate Eucharist?
- The Diocese is faced with fewer priests. How will/can my community continue to worship together?

What are the key issues in terms of the Liturgy and Sacraments that need to be addressed at the diocesan assembly?

## AS A COMMUNITY OF BELIEVERS (Community)

*“Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” (Matt 18:19-20)*

*“For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.” (Rom 12:4-5)*

### POINTS PREVIOUSLY RAISED

- Sense of community, welcome & belonging could be strengthened
- Being able to recognise that families are the building blocks of the community
- Encourage youth participation by strengthening the link between parish and school

### SOME FURTHER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Who are people/groups that make up my parish and wider community?
- What are some of the roles of the parish community?
- How is family life supported in the community?  
How can this be strengthened?
- How could ties within the parish community, school (and/or other groups) be strengthened?
- What pain might there be that is preventing individuals/groups from being part of community?  
How could we address these hurts?

What are the key issues in terms of Community that need to be addressed at the diocesan assembly?

## TIMELINE

16/17 Aug 08	Gathering of Parish Pastoral Council members The Cathedral College, Rockhampton
	Launch of the “Parish Consultation Phase Resource”
Aug - Oct	Parish Consultation Phase
<b>26 Oct</b>	<b>Response Sheets to be submitted back to the Diocesan Assembly Task Group</b>
29 Oct	Diocesan Assembly Task Force determines the focus of the assembly
Nov 08 – Feb 09	Personal/Parish Formation and preparation using the “Called to Gather” and other resources
Mar – Apr	Lenten program
May – Aug	Continued Personal/Parish Formation and preparation using the “Called to Gather” resource sheets
<b>21-24 Sep 09</b>	<b>Diocesan (General) Assembly</b> St Brendan’s College, Yeppoon
Nov/Dec 09	Report on outcomes published

# DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY 2009

## PARISH CONSULTATION PHASE RESPONSE SHEETS (AUGUST – OCTOBER 2008)

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Topic title: \_\_\_\_\_

Thoughts/comments on points raised during the 2007 regional gatherings (or new ones raised)

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Key issues you believe need to be addressed at the diocesan assembly

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Other Comments

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Please return completed forms to:

**Diocesan Assembly Task Group**

c/o Karen Page

PO Box 524

Rockhampton QLD 4700

**by Friday, 26 October 2008**

\* Please photocopy this page and submit as your comments/reflections on many topics as you wish