

APPENDIX B

SYNOD PROCEDURES

A diocesan synod is an assembly of selected priests and other Christian faithful of a particular Church which offers assistance to the diocesan Bishop for the good of the entire diocesan community (Canon 460).

On Saturday 22 May 2021 and Saturday 20 November 2021, the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle will be holding Sessions Two and Three of the Diocesan Synod Assembly. The Synod Members¹, although from various parishes and communities throughout the Diocese, gather as members of the Church of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle working for the good of the *entire* diocesan community.

During the process leading to Sessions Two and Three of the Synod Assembly, open and free discussion has taken place within the diocesan community on the papers for discussion. Most Synod Members have been part of that process and will gather at the Synod Assembly to discern what action should be taken concerning the proposals contained in the papers.

The following procedures have been drawn up in an effort to facilitate this discernment and ensure that all Synod Members have equal opportunity to participate in it. These procedures are based on those used by the 1992/93 Diocesan Synod in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

PRESIDENCY

1. The Bishop presides over the Synod Assembly. He may delegate the Vicar General to fulfil this office at individual Sessions of the Synod Assembly. He will also appoint the Facilitator/s to oversee the Synod Assembly.
2. The Bishop, in accordance with Canon 466, is the sole legislator in the Diocesan Synod: he alone can give the Synod's decisions the force of the local law. Therefore, its decisions are presented to him for approval and he alone signs the synodal declarations and decrees which can be published only through his authority.

FACILITATION OF THE SESSIONS OF SYNOD

3. Two facilitators will be responsible for the facilitation of agenda items of sessions of Synod. The second facilitator will remain at the main table in an advisor capacity to the one facilitating an agenda item.
4. The Facilitator has responsibility for order in the Synod Hall, directing who may speak, supervising the voting procedure, concluding the discussion etc. It is the Facilitator/s responsibility to keep the proceedings moving.
5. The Facilitator will call the Assembly to order for prayers according to the agenda and will indicate the breaks and the time for resuming after them.
6. Facilitation of agenda items of sessions of Synod will be determined by the Facilitators if there is more than one. The other remains at the main table in an advisor capacity to the one facilitating the agenda item.
7. The same Facilitator would not normally facilitate consecutive Sessions.

¹ **Synod Members** refer to those **Delegates** who have been chosen to represent the various aspects of diocesan life.

SPEAKING IN THE HALL

8. Only Synod Members may participate during the Sessions unless the Bishop directs otherwise. Members will stand at the rostrum to present their proposal (See §15).
9. The Facilitator will indicate who will speak. Time will be limited to allow as many speakers as possible. The Facilitator will give first preference to those members who have not yet spoken during the assembly and second preference to those who have not yet spoken during the current session.
10. Members will be expected to keep to the point, to develop the subject further without going over old ground and to be brief.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSALS

11. All Proposals to be put to the Synod Assembly are contained in the Synod Papers which all members will have received and studied in the week prior to the Synod Assembly.
12. Each Synod Foundation Paper will be presented to the Synod Assembly by a member of the Synod Working Party.
13. Proposals will then be put to the Synod Assembly one by one for resolution.
14. The role of the Synod Members is not to discuss the teachings of the Church, or the rationale of the work of the Synod Working Party but rather:
 - a. the merits of the proposal/recommendations
 - b. the pastoral importance of the proposal or
 - c. whether it should be accepted for implementation
15. Synod Members will bear in mind that the Synod Papers have resulted from a lengthy consultation process and the Synod Working Party's attempts to be faithful to the voices of those who have been involved with that process.
16. Prior to the Assembly, members of Synod who wish to speak to their proposal are asked to give notice of this on the form provided.
17. Speakers, when called by the Facilitator, will identify themselves and their parish, agency or organisation.
18. Each speaker is allowed a maximum of 2 minutes. A warning bell will sound at 90 seconds and another will indicate when a speaker's time has expired.
19. Each proposal will be presented either by the proposer or by the Facilitators.
20. Any member of Synod who introduces matters not contained in the papers under discussion will be ruled out of order.
21. The Facilitator/s will seek the mind of the Synod Members on each proposal by voting procedures.
22. Synod Members will decide whether the proposal will be recommended for:
 - adoption (green)
 - rejection (red)
23. A Theological and Canonical Consultancy Panel will be on hand to answer immediate theological or canonical questions should they arise. As advisors to the Synod they are unable to participate in the voting process.
24. A final vote for each Synod Foundation Paper will be taken in answer to the question:

As disciples of Christ will this Foundational Paper (incorporating minor modifications), lead us to be a Christ-centred Church?

- adoption (green)
- rejection (red)

ADMINISTRATION

25. The Synod Moderator shall be responsible for all aspects of the running of the Synod: Secretariat, Technology, Liturgy, Hospitality and Security.
26. All involved with the Synod Assembly will be registered as being Synod Members, Observers, Synod Participants, Interested People, Administration, Wardens, Secretariat, Liturgy, Hospitality, etc.

ADMISSION TO THE SYNOD HALL/HUB

27. Members of Synod will have free access to the Synod Hall/Hub, but others have access only in accordance with their approved function, for example Couriers, Recorders, Secretaries, Reporters.
28. Both members of Synod and support staff have a special place of trust in the Synod Hall/Hub and they are expected to honour that trust.
29. Under the Synod Moderator a group of Wardens will be responsible for supervising entry to the Synod Hall/Hubs and environs. All are asked to cooperate with their requests.

SECRETARIAT

30. There will be two Recorders for each agenda item, who shall record in writing a summary of proceedings.
31. At the end of the Session Two the Recorders will draft the Minutes. They will submit the drafts to the Facilitator of the relevant agenda item before distributing them. Copies will be made available to the Bishop, the Recorders, the Facilitators, and the Diocesan Synod Working Party.
32. Copies of the Minutes will be distributed to the Synod Members as soon as possible.

LITURGY

33. The Synod Liturgy Group will be responsible for all the liturgical functions during the Synod Assembly. Members are asked to co-operate with them when asked to read and otherwise participate in the prayer life of the Synod Assembly.

HOSPITALITY

34. A Hospitality Group/s is responsible for accommodation, all Synod meals, transport arrangements where necessary and first aid. Morning and afternoon tea and lunch will be available for all members and Support Staff.

CONCLUSION

35. Our Synod Assembly is not just a business Assembly, but an experience of our Diocesan Church gathered to be of assistance to our Pastor. We have come from different directions, different backgrounds, with different hopes and aspirations, but we are united by the prayer of our brothers and sisters of our diocese who are not there. Their prayer is that the Holy Spirit will be with us so that we will make God's thoughts our own and God's desires for our Diocesan Church a reality.