



THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA, Inc

ABN 13865977277,

319 Auburn Road, Hawthorn, 3122, Victoria, Australia

Dear members and friends of The Christian Community in Australia and New Zealand,

All of us have experienced the impact of responses to the corona virus pandemic, individually in our personal lives and in our congregations. Together we have kept alive the impulse for our Sacraments and our Community life even when we haven't been permitted to gather at our altars, we have had to be innovative and find new ways of being together in prayer and contemplation. We have relied on internet communications through regular emails and have been online using the zoom platform for talks and conferences and committee and council meetings and study groups. Some people have even written letters, and the phone is very handy! We rely on each other especially when we cannot meet in person, to reach out and to share our experiences in good times and bad times.

Priests in our Region have been in regular contact with each other and meeting as a synod in various ways, and we have continued working together for our Christian Community.

We continue to support ongoing priest training in our regional Pro-Seminary based in Sydney, which has lead on to the ordinations of Ioanna Panagiotopoulos (2017), Cheryl Prigg (2019), Liza Lillicrap (2021) and Lesley Waite (2021). Damien Gilroy will further his training at the North American Seminary this coming January and may be accepted for Ordination in May 2022. Lisa Devine had initially facilitated the training with Martin Samson, and has subsequently continued to carry it in conjunction with other priests in the past 4 years. We are hopeful that the courses will reconvene as travel restrictions ease and that visiting priests will again join in with Lisa to present content and prepare the way for those who are called to become priests, hopefully to work here with us as they are much needed and appreciated.

'The Priesthood of All' weekend seminars have, until recently, similarly fostered a more intensive, religious exploration for members and friends in New Zealand. Active members are so essential for our congregations, enabling the Sacraments and community events to happen, sustaining the priests, maintaining our premises and sacred places. Hartmut Borries and Cheryl Prigg will reinstate these gatherings once restrictions lift in New Zealand.

In 2022, we will celebrate the 100th year anniversary of the beginning of The Christian Community at the Goetheanum in Dornach, Switzerland through the agency of Rudolf Steiner and the leadership of Friedrich Rittelmeyer and the group of founding priests. How

shall we celebrate this? We invite you to be brainstorming what you think is possible locally, nationally, regionally and internationally – there will be an International Conference -- ‘Logos’ -- held in Dortmund, Germany, 7th – 11th October 2022 . Meet with your local or visiting priests and see what you can come up with to pass on to our Australia – New Zealand Synod which will meet in December and then recommend directions for events in our Region.

For the past 7 years or so, our regional synod has consistently focussed on translation work, specifically on the translation of the word ‘man’ in our sacraments and rituals. This particular aspect of translation work has now come to completion for us.

As you may know, the words ‘Mensch’ and ‘Menschen’ in the German language are not gender specific, but are encompassing of all human beings, and now our words accurately reflects this. It is challenging to ensure that meaning from the German version is not lost, and at last we have approval from the leading priests in the Circle of Seven to begin celebrating with our new translation from the first Sunday in Advent. We look forward to speaking the renewed translation as we enter the festival of Advent and into go on to Christmas, Epiphany and the new year, moving forward all the while seeking inspiration from the Living Word in our midst.

One of the questions that the organisers of the International Conference have been asking is ‘who will step forward to re-establish The Christian Community for the next 100 years?’

We will!

People stepping into priest training and saying ‘yes’ to Ordination, all of us celebrating and appreciating the foundation we have under our feet from the past 100 years, striving to speak the Sacraments ever more clearly -- we will be part of the Movement for Religious Renewal, each coming together, being with others, doing what we can because we are all needed and in need, and we all want to see The Christian Community thrive into the future.

With love and greetings to you all,

Cheryl Nekvapil,

Priest in Melbourne,

Lenker for Australia-New Zealand Region on behalf of the priests – Hartmut Borries, Elke Baublies, Darryl Coonan, Lisa Devine, Ioanna Panagiotopoulos, Veronika Plantener, Cheryl Prigg, Lesley Waite. And Kevin Coffey and Rosalind Pecover (silent, retired partners).

15th November 2021.