

# Blue Mountains Deanery

## Pastoral Council



### *Mountains Deanery Pastoral Council Members*

**Our Lady of the Way, Emu Plains**

Jim Potts and Kay Walker

**St Finbars, Glenbrook**

Elizabeth Rowe

**St Thomas Aquinas, Springwood**

Christopher Howard

**Our Lady of Nativity, Lawson**

Maureen Ryan and Carol Teodori

**St Mary of the Cross McKillop,**

**Upper Blue Mountains**

Matthew Brawn

**Sacred Heart, Blackheath**

Michelle Davis and Julie O'Keeffe

**Dean : Fr John Mc Sweeney**

## ***Our Story Starts Here***

Instituted in 2018 by Bishop Vincent Long, the Mountains Deanery Pastoral Council is one of six Deanery Pastoral Councils in Parramatta which have a broad role “to assist in the church’s apostolic work of evangelisation and sanctification or in the fields of charity and the rest” *Diocesan and Deanery PC handbook page 38 2.1*

Achieving our mission depends on communication and cooperation between the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the other Deanery Pastoral Councils as well as the parishes within each deanery. There are a maximum two lay people who are members of each of the parishes within Mountains deanery. By collaborating and sharing our individual and parish talents and strengths, the Mountains Deanery PC have worked together to help fulfil the challenge of mission in many unique ways.

Each deanery councillor’s identity is not just as representative of our home parish but we also representatives of the whole Mountains Deanery *Diocesan and Deanery Pc handbook page 39 4.3 iii*



***The first Mountains Deanery PC 2018***

# Our Story Continues

Our first task for our Deanery PC was to facilitate the **Australian Plenary Pastoral Council** Listening and Dialogue Groups within our deanery



Our Deanery PC members supported all the parishes in the Blue Mountains to have both deanery wide parish **Listening and Dialogue meetings** as well as individual parish meetings. Our deanery made a sizeable contribution as some of the 222,000 participants and to the 17,457 submissions to the Australian Plenary Council.

Most of the parishes within the deanery had more than one **food drive** for refugees and asylum seekers who were particularly affected by the lockdowns during the Covid pandemic.

In 2022, we are worked with enthusiasm to hold a gathering:

## **BLUE MOUNTAINS CATHOLICS TAKE ACTION .**

This gathering gave over 90 Catholics an opportunity to listen, to share talents and ideas with other parishioners from all over the deanery





## **The Future of Our Story**

It was just in early 2022 that our council realised that there was another consultation of the people of the Church, **a synod on Synodality**, this time planned by Pope Francis.



Pope Francis asked us all to speak to him directly and had set up the process for doing so. He wanted to hear of our joys in being in the Church along with our hurts and disappointments and how we might move to the Church community that we desire.

So, the Mountains Deanery Pastoral Council met and after listening and discerning we sent our Deanery Response directly to Rome.

## **The next chapter of our Story**

We have plans, over the next year, to follow up on our **BLUE MOUNTAINS CATHOLICS TAKE ACTION** initiatives through some social action in association with Catholic Care, some ecological action and faith Formation with a special emphasis on Sacramental theology. Our ministry is supported and connected to both the Diocese and the different parishes within our deanery. So, there are other initiatives that each parish could organise and then may also invite the other deanery parishes to join in or to adapt for their own parish.

**Lawson Parish** has included information in their bulletin (provided by Parramatta Diocese) about the last two Australian Bishops Social Justice Statements regarding

- our Catholic attitudes and actions to the world's ecological crisis and poverty crisis" ***Cry of the Earth Cry of the Poor***" 2021-22
- guidance of attitudes and support to the victims of domestic violence ***"Respect: Confronting Violence and Abuse"*** 2022-23