

PROCLAIM
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For the first time the Archdiocese of Brisbane, in collaboration with the ACBC's National Centre for Evangelisation, will host PROCLAIM 2018. This national conference will engage parishes and faith communities in a conversation focusing on five key areas: Leadership, Culture Change, Young People, Belonging and Evangelisation. The theme of this year's Conference is "Make your home in me" (Jn 15:4)

PROCLAIM 2018 will run across three days from 12-14 July, 2018 at The Edmund Rice Performing Arts Centre (St Laurence's College, South Brisbane). More information and event program can be found [here](#).

"Proclaim 2018 will inspire Catholics to explore new ways of contemplating the face of Christ in community and so empower them to set out on the new paths of mission which the Holy Spirit is tracing for us at this crucial time" - Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge.

Conference speakers include Cardinal John Dew (Archdiocese of Wellington, New Zealand), Ron Huntley (Divine Renovation – Canada), Ms Lana Turvey-Collins (Plenary Council 2020 Facilitator), Karolina Gunsser (Community Leader - Citipointe Church), Mons Enrique Fiqueredo SJ (Cambodia) and host of PROCLAIM 2018 Archbishop Mark Coleridge (Archdiocese of Brisbane). PROCLAIM 2018 will also be joined by over thirty experienced presenters from across Australia to lead the Facilitated Conversation Sessions.

Noeline Hogan from the Birchip Parish wrote the following on Proclaim 2016:

Although Proclaim 2014 was a huge learning curve for me I got so much more from the 2016 event. In 2014 the presenters were inspiring but to get answers they wanted you to buy their book (which I did just last week!). This year Cardinal Wuerl (Washington Diocese) and Dr Susan Timoney were more forthcoming with ideas:

- *The Parish is not an outdated institution because it has the flexibility that allows evangelisation;*
- *What do Catholics bring to our society....what would the world be like without us reinforcing the traditions of our church. Thou shalt not kill, love one another and other traditions;*
- *Cardinal Wuerl described a "Cultural Tsunami" taking over our world. Divorce, diminished recognition of our faith;*
- *The parish should be an inviting community, go out, listen, encounter. Use courage, be bold. It's our turn to bring the good news to others;*
- *"I don't have to go to church to have faith". As Catholics we come together to share sacraments, get nourished as a Parish Community, give each other comfort and support;*
- *The Catholic school community is not necessarily a part of the church community;*
- *Dr Susan Timoney questions whether we have too many churchy words. They can be overwhelming and perplexing to lay people;*
- *Social media should be encouraged. A Parish Facebook page is a way of hooking people up;*
- *Your belief is often looked upon with a certain respect by onlookers;*
- *You can accomplish anything if it doesn't matter who gets the credit.*



Communication

What are we attempting to do, what is the goal?

Consultation

Listen; Feedback; Hearing back.

Collaboration

Work together in a coherent manner

Cardinal Wuerl told the story of a huge media campaign called, "The light is on for you." They advertised on buses, radio, etc., that Reconciliation would be held in the church every Wednesday evening during Lent - the light will be on for you. By the end of Lent they could barely keep up with all the faithful coming to confession. Yet these people weren't Mass goers. It all starts with the invitation!

- *Dr Susan Timoney says parishes should be inviting and welcoming through worship, education, service.*
- *Is there something that draws people back to our Parish, not just weddings, baptisms, sacraments?*
- *Jesus was always on the move. He didn't wait for people to come to him. He was always evangelising.*
- *When you leave the conference and someone asks you what you did on the weekend, don't just say you went to some church thing. Don't be anonymous!*
- *We are the evangelisers in our homes and neighbourhoods. The Priest can't always be there.*
- *Does your local supermarket reflect the same people in the pews?*
- *What signs of welcome would I see if I came to your Parish? What is on your pin up board? Is it welcoming?*
- *Unlock the doors. Locked churches are not welcoming!*
- *Do the Mass times suit? There is a moving focus to Sunday evening Masses.*
- *Dr Daniel Ang says we need a vision and a strategy otherwise we are just 'adding on' to an already busy Parish.*
- *The heart of evangelism is one person telling another person how Jesus has changed their life.*
- *Marguerite Martin says Sacraments are not academic exercises. Everyone is allowed to do their Sacraments regardless of intellectual ability.*
- *At Baptism there are no conditions attached to how parents will exercise their responsibility to educate their child in faith.*
- *How do we keep them coming to Mass after the sacraments?*
- *What is your Parish good and bad at?*

Proclaim 2016 was all about being inclusive and welcoming. We do the inviting, the Holy Spirit does the calling. Music has an important role in the Mass, it needs to be engaging. Our outreach is focused on Parish Ministry. Don't just speak the words, live the words. How do we invite the people back to the church? Conversation? Make no apologies, desire to share it!

Plans for the future of the Birchip Parish are already underway.

The Ballarat Diocesan Foundation provided sponsorship for people to attend the 2016 Conference and is doing the same for the 2018 Conference as well. Applications were received in February 2018, which addressed the selection criteria and the following people were awarded the sponsorship:

Sr Tirsia Bale, Horsham Parish
Thomas Thekkumury, Diocesan Pastoral Council
Ann-Maree Convery, Cororooke Parish
Jess Salazar, Ballarat Cathedral Parish
Sandra Dillon, Wendouree Parish
Jamin Howman, Portland Parish

There is still plenty of time to register for fantastic early bird rates and group discounts for anyone interested in attending this Conference. Register [here](#).