



**Ballarat Diocese
Social Justice Commission**

**Report of Meeting
Saturday, 25 March 2023**

The Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission met on Saturday 25 March 2023.

Present were Anthea Hinchey (Chair), Bishop Paul Bird, Sue Searls, Dr Susan Crowe (Executive Member), Michael Ryan (St Vincent de Paul representative).

Apologies were received by Jim Ryan, Felicity Liston, Sr. Helen Nolen, Jillian Hogbin.

Anthea and Bishop Paul lead the prayer and reflection. The first section was based on the reflection of Miriam-Rose Ungarmurr, *Dadirri* – Inner deep listening and quiet still awareness. This was followed by reflection on the recent announcement of the wording for the upcoming referendum about a Voice to Parliament. The second part of the prayer and reflection looked at the role of Synod in the Church as a consultative approach that included all the Church.

The Commission received up-dates on Diocesan Parish and Schools progress regarding *Laudato Si*, Earthcare. It was noted that Earthcare now falls under the umbrella of Caritas.

Jillian sent a written report on how Project Compassion is going this Lent. She wrote of the launching Mass and some of the fundraising activities schools were engaged in.

Sue told us that there will be Palm Sunday walk for Refugees in Ballarat. It will start at View Point, Lake Wendouree, at 2:00 on Sunday 2 April. She explained that Ballarat Rural Australians for Refugees will be leading it.

The Commission is already thinking of ways to promote this year's Bishops Social Justice statement.

Michael spoke about a Christmas event coordinated by the Church of Christ that combined the resources of all Churches social support networks including Vinnies. It was a fun afternoon for needy people to come together, be involved with games and collect a Christmas Hamper. Michael felt this was a great initiative and should be continued.

After the meeting concluded we went down to the Archive office to look at the wonderful displays there that are open for the community to see.