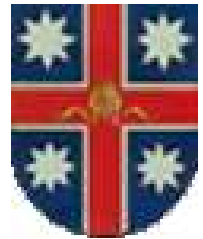


*The Right Reverend William James Ray
Diocese of North Queensland*



Ad Clerum - 29th April 2008

Dear Colleagues in Ministry

Emails:

I realise there have been a number of emails concerning Zimbabwe, forwarded to parishes in recent days. The plight of the people in Zimbabwe is heart breaking. Please continue to pray for all who have and are suffering. Having just celebrated Anzac Day we continue to pray for the peace of the world and work of the United Nations and others in seeking bring peace.

Bishop John Lewis:

Bishop John is publishing a book based on his Masters thesis. He is seeking photographs of those who were ordained by him. If you are able to help out that will be great. My PA has the email and postal address.

Some people have already asked when the book will be available. It is my understanding that it will be about September. I will let you know as soon as I am informed.

Bishop John will marry Mrs. Joyce Bleby on the 08.08.08. Several people have asked about a wedding gift. The Diocese is forwarding a voucher.

Ordination:

Mrs. Delfina Trail will be made deacon on Sunday 4th May at 11.30 a.m. at St. Helen's Home Hill. Delfina and her family have moved to Rockhampton and I have already received many positive comments about Delfina's ministry. The Reverend Claire Dewar from Rockhampton Diocese is conducting the retreat and I will be preaching.

I thank Fr. Dway and the people of the Burdekin for all the preparation they are putting into this act of worship.

The Reverends Ray and Ann Fishwick:

Ray and Ann will conclude their ministry at Innisfail on 1st June, before retiring to Geraldton in Western Australia.

Both Ray and Ann were ordained in this Diocese. Their ministry has been very much appreciated at Charters Towers, Weipa and Innisfail. Before I came to the Diocese I had heard that Fr. Ray was the right person at the right time in Innisfail following Cyclone Larry. Since my arrival, I know the truth of that comment. Also, Ann and Ray have made a positive contribution to the life of the Diocese.

We thank God that Ann's health continues to improve and we assure both Ann and Ray of our continued prayers for the future and wish them well in their retirement.

Proserpine:

At the time of writing, Proserpine is being prayerfully considered.

The National Bishop's Conference:

Bishop James and I attended the Conference in Newcastle. Unfortunately Bishop Saibo had a fall just before the Conference and was not well enough to travel.

I thought the conference was inspiring. Our Primate is an excellent chair and leader. One whole day was spent examining our leadership style as a bishop. I found this very helpful and I am passing it on to Fr. Ian as I undertake my review. (See below) There were two speakers who discussed the matter of bishop and clergy self care. I will be addressing this matter in my Presidential Address to Synod.

Considerable time was spent on the consecration of women as bishops within the Anglican Church of Australia. As a new bishop I was very impressed with the caring and sensitive way this matter was handled. A protocol was developed to which all bishops of the Australian Church agreed. While this development delights some, it does distress others. I urge us all to be sensitive and caring of each other's theological views.

I have been asked will this matter come before our Synod. (Also see below). The answer is no, as the Province of Queensland intends to work as a Province on this matter. A Provincial Synod will be held in March next year.

Cursillo:

I ask for your prayers for the Team of Womens and Mens 11 as they prepare for the Cursillos in July. I thank the two teams for their ministry. Please pray for someone you believe will benefit from the Cursillo weekend. Now is the time to identify candidates. Now is the time to consider being a sponsor.

Getting our finances in order:

First of all I want to thank Ms Ann Gledhill and her team for the excellent work they have and are doing. The 2007 accounts are nearly complete and the auditors have started. The other day the auditors said we are so far ahead of last year that you can not compare the two years.

I mentioned before that some members of the General Synod Audit team will be visiting the Diocese. This will take place on 12 and 13 of May. As many of us have said it will be great to have another pair of eyes to look over our accounts.

We are taking the advice of General Synod and establishing an audit committee. The members of this committee will not be active Anglicans or involved with the Diocese in any way. The intention of this team is to make sure we do not get into a position like what we have been in over the last two years.

Several people have asked me what will happen if in the "wash up" if we do not have a lot of money in the coffers. My reply was we have our faith in Christ, the Scriptures, and being Anglican we have the Prayer Book and we have a hymn or song book. Let us go forward singing the Lord's tune with confidence and joy.

Synod:

I thank the Synod Arrangements Committee for their work. This Synod will be a busy one. It is my prayer that it will be a lively, loving and caring Synod. There is much to discuss and debate, our financial situation being one.

Mr. Wayne Brighton will be preaching at the Synod service and leading the Synod (providing leave is granted!) in a session on affirming our ministry and reaching out in faith to bring people to faith. Wayne was the Research Officer for General Synod and is now working with Church Army.

I am breaking with tradition this year and forwarding my Presidential Address a couple of weeks before Synod. I hope and pray that this will give members of Synod time to read, ponder, reflect and come with questions and ideas. I will speak briefly to the address with the aid of powerpoint.

An addendum to the Presidential Address will be a four part study on Stewardship. I have mentioned before that I believe this is an area that requires a revisit. My concern is that some people are giving to a budget and not to God. We are called to give in thanksgiving to God for the blessings of life, not what we think God might need!

It is my prayer that Synod will be exciting, challenging, productive and that the Kingdom of God will grow.

Review:

I thank Fr. Ian McAlister for facilitating my review. Some have asked why a review. Well under our Canons, clergy are to be reviewed. It is my understanding that this clause has been in our Canons for some time. Let us honour the Canon.

Even though I was reviewed regularly in my Parish appointments, I felt it only right that I am reviewed in my current context. After twelve months, it will be good to hear how people feel about our ministry together. I need to hear whether ministry needs are being met. I need to hear whether I am providing effective spiritual and diocesan leadership. We all have habits that are best broken. Earlier the better some would say!

Anyone can provide feedback and please forward it to Fr. Ian.

Retreat:

I have just heard from Bishop Godfrey that there are still some vacancies for the retreat in May. If you require further information please contact Julie Keys (my PA).

Administration of Holy Communion:

The Admission of Children to Holy Communion is another topic that I will address in my Presidential Address.

In my last Parish we had an adult baptism. Following the service two very regular parishioners asked could they be baptized. I was surprised because they were regular communicants. Our denomination has been examining the matter of inviting unbaptised people to Holy Communion. I certainly plan to explore this issue. In the meantime I ask clergy to use the following wording when issuing the invitation to receive Communion.

“An invitation to receive Holy Communion is extended to all baptised and communicant members of other churches professing the Apostolic faith.”

Family Matters and Leave:

This coming Friday Robin's PhD will be conferred in a ceremony when the nursing students she taught through the length of their course at La Trobe University, graduate. We will be flying down on Tuesday and I will be returning on Saturday. So I will be on leave for few days. Robin and I are looking forward to seeing our grandson Ryan (and his parents as well).

Several people have asked about Jamie. He is still waiting to hear when he will transfer to the Navy.

Some have asked when I am taking holidays now that I have been in the Diocese for twelve months. Robin and I will be staying in the U.K. following Lambeth, touring and meeting relatives. So I will be taking the month of August off. Archdeacon Wright will administer the Diocese in July and August.

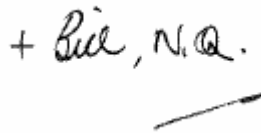
I thank the Archdeacon for his kindness as he usually travels overseas at this time.

Finally:

Please be assured of my prayers.

Wishing you God's richest blessing.

Yours in Christ,

+ Bill, N.Q.


The Right Reverend William (Bill) Ray
Bishop of North Queensland