

South Australian Council of Churches Inc

Affiliated with the National Council of Churches in Australia



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Port Pirie Diocesan Assembly 2017

Reflections

More than two hundred and twenty people gathered in Port Pirie on 4-5 April 2017 for Port Pirie [Roman Catholic] 21st Diocesan Assembly. The focus was on *Building Bridges of Peace (500 years since the Reformation)*, mindful of Strategic Direction No 7 of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan – Ecumenical and Inter-Faith Relationships.

The Assembly included the presence and active participation of people from several other traditions, and a session was dedicated to a panel conversation when leaders from six different churches described the distinctive features of their Church, what it is that gives it its identity in relation to other Churches and how their Church expresses its mission in today's world.

It is not often that an entire Assembly/Synod is given over to Christian unity, and I was delighted to be invited to be part of the gathering, as a speaker and as a facilitator. There are many stories to be told from the Assembly, and I was reminded of the words of Bishop John Stead, from the neighbouring [Anglican] Diocese of Willochra, who said at SACC AGM November 2016, "Ecumenism happens naturally in rural areas due to dependence on others. Could this need for the other, this dependence, be learned by those in metro areas?"

I invite you to have a read of the Order of Service, which was held in the Cathedral at the end of the first day, together with the Homily by Bishop Greg O'Kelly at that Service.

I hope you will feel inspired and encouraged in relation to the many more bridges of peace that we can build together as we make our unity in Christ more visible.

Geraldine Hawkes
Ecumenical Facilitator
SA Council of Churches

6 April 2017

Members of South Australian Council of Churches

Anglican Church of Australia - Dioceses of Adelaide, and of Willochra; Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide and Catholic Diocese of Port Pirie; Churches of Christ in SA/NT; Coptic Orthodox Church - Diocese of Melbourne and Affiliated Regions; Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia - District of SA/NT; Lutheran Church of Australia - SA/NT District; Religious Society of Friends SA/NT Regional Meeting; Romanian Orthodox Episcopate of Australia/New Zealand - SA Parish; Salvation Army SA Division; St Urael Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church in SA Inc; Uniting Church in SA

SA Council of Churches: nurturing and nourishing the understanding, spiritual growth and practice of ecumenism across the Churches of South Australia