

Overview

BACKGROUND –

Late last year following the awarding of the Coaldrake Medals, Bishop Peter convened a group to come together as a Diocesan Working Group for an initial 18-month term. Our task was to firstly consider ways to increase and develop Parish relationships with ABM, possibly with the use of ideas such as Friends of ABM and direct relationships with mission agencies. Then we needed to create ways to move forward with these initiatives, promoting ABM, ABM ethos and ABM projects.

The group was formed with about 8 committed people Fr Gary Harman, Judy Wotton, Fr Greg Colby, Jennifer Benson, Howard Benson, Colin Brownhill, Fiona Tinney as the Communication person and myself as Chair.

We meet Bi Monthly and have spent the last 6 months focusing on what we feel is needed to encourage a stronger reengagement between ABM and the diocese, and looking at ways to do that.

It became apparent quickly in the conversation that the most important issues were around education and PR. There appeared to be a lack of knowledge and understanding around ABM for both Parishioners and Clergy so that has become our main initiative. There are 3 main areas within that framework that we primarily focused on –

Speakers & Presentations –

1. Organising relevant speakers to attend large Diocesan Gatherings such as Clergy Conferences and Synod.
2. Looking at ways to provide speakers to Parishes on a regular and ongoing basis.

Promotion & Distribution –

1. Obtaining good promotional literature, signage etc to be used in the Parishes
2. Looking at ways to effectively utilize current ABM marketing so that it is relevant to a broader target market. Digital Technology is a wonderful medium which works well but we also need to consider the many Parishioners who are not regular users of Digital Technology.

Partnerships & Connections -

1. Build partnership and connections with Diocesan Schools and agencies
2. Look at ways to connect ABM with other external Community Groups.

We are only a small group and for all of us balancing other commitments with the Working Group is often difficult but with the support of Bishop Peter, the assistance of a ABM staff & the wonderful enthusiasm of our small team we seem to be gaining ground.