

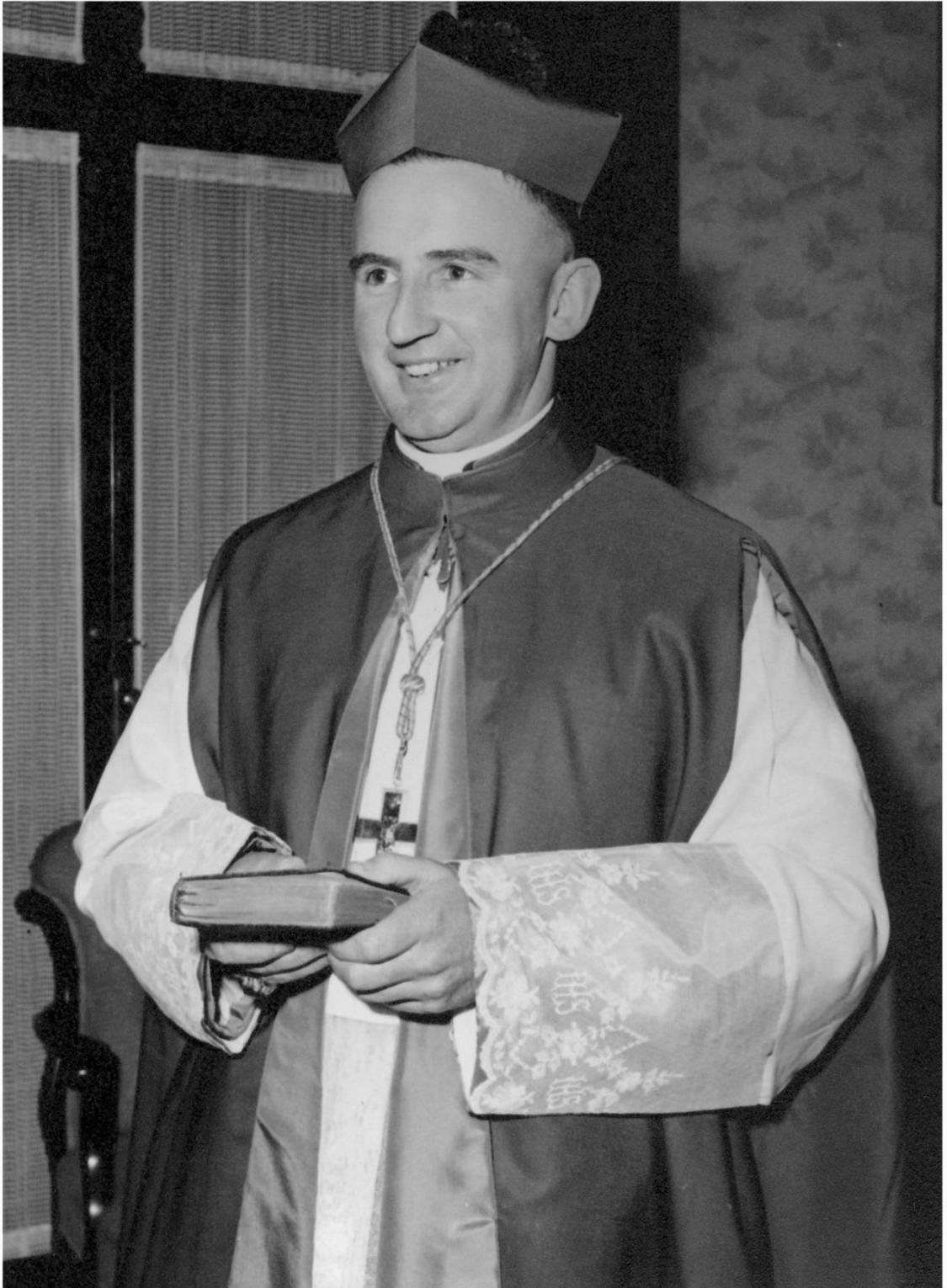
JAMES WILLIAM GLEESON
ARCHBISHOP OF ADELAIDE

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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James Gleeson on the day of his episcopal ordination, 21 May 1957

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABM	Asian Bishops' Meeting
ACAA	Adelaide Catholic Archdiocesan Archives
ACC	Australian Council of Churches
ACR	Australian Catholic Relief
ADB	Australian Dictionary of Biography
AEC	Australian Episcopal Conference
ALP	Australian Labor Party
APY	Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands
ARCIC	Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission
AS	<i>Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Oecumenici Vaticani II</i>
AWD	Action for World Development
CCC	Confraternity of Christian Doctrine
CCRF	Catholic Church Relief Fund
CEO	Catholic Education Office
COR	Catholic Overseas Relief
CROPP	Catholic Research Office for Pastoral Planning
DLP	Democratic Labor Party
DPC	Diocesan Pastoral Council
DPR	Diocesan Pastoral Renewal
DPRP	Diocesan Pastoral Renewal Programme
FABC	Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences
FFHC	Freedom from Hunger Campaign
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IBVM	Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary
KOSS	Keep Our State Schools Secular

LALC	Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee
LCL	Liberal and Country League
MOW	Movement for the Ordination of Women
NCC	National Civic Council
NICS	Newman Institute of Christian Studies
OPEC	Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PRO	Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's Pastoral Research Office
RSJ	Sister of St Joseph
RSM	Sister of Mercy
SACCS	South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools
SACEPR	South Australian Council for Educational Planning and Research
SHC	Sacred Heart College
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WATAC	Women and the Australian Church
WHO	Women and Holy Orders
WLM	Women's Liberation Movement

ABSTRACT

James William Gleeson was the Roman Catholic archbishop of Adelaide in 1971-1985. Prior to this he was the auxiliary bishop for Matthew Beovich in 1957-64 and the coadjutor archbishop with the right to succeed Beovich in 1964-71. This thesis explores and critically examines his life from his early years until and including his time as the emeritus archbishop of Adelaide in 1985-2000.

Although the Catholic Church was challenged by the Enlightenment and battered and changed by the French Revolution, Gleeson lived for forty-two years in a Church that had been formed principally by the Council of Trent (1545-63). Its influence was evidenced by the longevity of the Missal of Pope Pius V (1566-72) promulgated in 1570, which remained in use in the Latin Church until the Second Vatican Council. Gleeson was prepared for priestly ordination in a seminary whose method of training had its origins in the Council of Trent. During the nineteenth century, Roman authorities tightened seminary programmes, resulting in their becoming vehicles for ultramontanism and promoters of a ‘church turning inward’.¹

Gleeson was a bishop before, during and following the Second Vatican Council which was a hinge moment in the history of the Church. ‘Tradition-caked attitudes’ were set aside and the Council presented a new paradigm of the Church, freed from rigid definitions and scholastic (juridical) subtleties.

Understanding Gleeson’s early years prior to the Second Vatican Council makes possible an understanding of the magnitude of the reform and updating mandated by the Council. The Council’s sixteen documents laid down new requirements for the thinking

¹ Walsh, K J, *Yesterday’s Seminary: a history of St Patrick’s Manly*, (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1998), 16-18.

and conduct of bishops, priests and lay people. Gleeson was committed to embedding the new style of Catholicism in the archdiocese of Adelaide.

After tracing Gleeson's early life and priestly ministry prior to his episcopal ordination, the thesis charts his contribution to the Second Vatican Council and his promotion of what he termed a 'Council Conscience'. He was especially concerned for the reform of the liturgy and for the laity to be able to exercise the ministries proper to them. The Council described episcopal governance of the Church as 'collegial', that is, exercised in union with all other bishops and the pope. In the performance of their pastoral office, bishops were urged to consult the laity and give them a role in decision making.² Gleeson cooperated with the bishops of Asia and Oceania and in his own diocese enabled priests, religious and laity to be heard and to share in the making of decisions. His contribution to ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue, and pastoral renewal, is considered. Responding to the Council's increased emphasis on the Church's social teaching, he worked for social justice in Australia and the world, deeming it an essential component of preaching the Christian gospel.

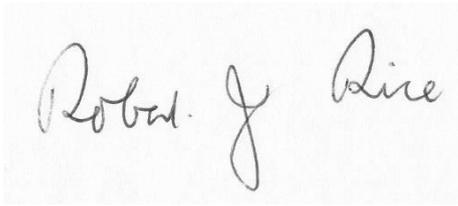
There have been few studies of the ways that Australian bishops responded to and implemented the decisions of the Second Vatican Council. This thesis therefore contributes to filling this gap. It also examines the internal workings of the Catholic Church in a major Australian diocese during a period of significant religious, social, and political change. In so doing it is in harmony with the vision of the theologian Massimo Faggioli who described 'Church History as...an intellectual discipline providing a "public service" to the world of knowledge'³

² The Second Vatican Council does not use the noun collegiality but uses collegial fifteen times in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church and the Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church.

³ Massimo Faggioli, 'Vatican II: the history and narratives', *Theological Studies*, vol 73, no 4 (2012), 767.

STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert J. Rice". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Robert J Rice

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The constant support and encouragement of my principal supervisor, Dr Josephine Laffin, and the associate supervisor, Dr David Hilliard, were critical in my completing the thesis on James William Gleeson. In the final days, Dr Jenny Hein provided fresh ideas and insights that enriched the project.

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I am grateful to those who accepted my invitation to be interviewed. Of special mention in this regard was James Gleeson's brother Raphael (Ray), who provided considerable information regarding Gleeson's early years and also made available the rich store of documents and newspaper clippings he had gathered.

Marie Shevlin was employed in the Church Office for forty years. During that time she progressed from the status of office assistant to secretary of the Church Office and the archbishop. She was a valuable source of information and advice.

In the formatting of the thesis I am indebted to James Kho who was ever prepared to come and assist me when help was required.

INTRODUCTION

Aim of thesis

James William Gleeson was a Catholic bishop at a pivotal time in the life of the Catholic Church. The Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) in 1962-65 was a hinge event that heralded a new vision of the Church in itself and in its relations with the world.¹ According to the theologian Joseph A Komonchak: ‘Vatican II has rightly been described as the most important event in the history of the Roman Catholic Church since the Protestant Reformation.’² Gleeson’s ministry as a bishop in 1957-2000 straddled this event. Moreover, Vatican II took place during the ‘remembered sixties’ from about 1964 to 1972, that is, a time of political, social and religious upheavals in Australia and the Western world.³

Up to, and including his early years as a bishop, Gleeson was a member of a Church profoundly influenced by the Council of Trent that was previously known as the Council of the Counter-Reformation. This term is not widely used today and has been replaced by ‘Catholic Reformation’. The former designation suggested that the Catholic movement for reform came only as a reaction to Protestantism whereas there were movements in the Church for reform before the advent of Luther.⁴ Gleeson attended three sessions of Vatican II, the ‘*Aggiornamento* (renewal) Council’. Pope Paul VI, during the final session of the council, noted: ‘From now on *aggiornamento* will signify for us a wisely undertaken quest for a deeper understanding of the spirit of the Council and the faithful application of the norms it has happily and prayerfully provided.’⁵

¹ Both terms, Second Vatican Council and Vatican II are used in the thesis.

² Giuseppe Alberigo; Jean-Pierre Jossua; Joseph A Komonchak; eds, *The Reception of Vatican II*, translated by Matthew J O’Connell (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1987), Foreword vii.

³ For the “remembered sixties”, see David Hilliard, ‘The Religious Crisis of the 1960s: The experience of the Australian Churches’, *Journal of Religious History*, vol 21, no 2, (June 1997), 210.

⁴ Robert M Andrews, ‘Luther’s Reformation and Sixteenth-Century Catholic Reform: broadening a traditional narrative’, *Australian Catholic Record*, (ACR) vol 94, no 4 (2017), 429-32

⁵ Walter M Abbott, ed, *The Documents of Vatican II* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966). ‘Introduction by Lawrence Cardinal Shehan’, XVIII..

This thesis traces and critically appraises Gleeson's life from his early years until his death in 2000. It has a particular focus on his contribution to the Second Vatican Council and its implementation in the Archdiocese of Adelaide.⁶ There is a great deal of literature on the Council itself and on competing interpretations of it, most notably, whether the Council can best be understood in continuity with the Catholic tradition or as a rupture in the history of Catholicism.⁷ As Massimo Faggioli complains, too often these conflicting narratives are based more on ideology than history. It is important to tell the stories of the bishops and theologians who actually took part in the Council.⁸

Gleeson was trained in a seminary, an institution established by the Council of Trent at its third session (1562-63). Following the Council, seminary life took different forms in various nations. Then in the nineteenth century, Rome began to advocate a stricter format for seminary life. According to the historian Kevin Walsh, 'the Tridentine training institution as reinterpreted in the nineteenth century symbolised a church turning inwards'.⁹ The Second Vatican Council 'signalled the Catholic Church's movement from a Church of cultural confinement, particularly of the European variety, to a genuine world Church.'¹⁰ More than 2600 bishops from all parts of the world attended, many from the 'new churches' in Asia and Africa. Other Christian churches accepted the invitation to send observers

⁶ Both terms, diocese and archdiocese are used in the thesis to describe the 'one particular church [Adelaide] in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and active'.

⁷ The most comprehensive study of the Council is the five-volume history of Vatican II edited by Giuseppe Alberigo, *History of Vatican II*, English version edited by Joseph A Komonchak (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995-2006). See also John O'Malley, *What happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2008) and Massimo Faggioli, *Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning* (New York: Paulist Press, 2008).

⁸ Massimo Faggioli, 'Vatican II: The History and the Narratives', *Theological Studies*, vol 73, no4 (2012), 749-767.

⁹ K J Walsh, *Yesterday's Seminary: a history of St Patrick's Manly* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1998), 16-18.

¹⁰ Richard P McBrien, *Catholicism* (Minneapolis: Winston Press: 1981), 659.

Pope John XXIII, in his opening speech to the Council, spoke of *aggiornamento* as the Church ‘bringing herself up to date where required’.¹¹ The Abbot of Downside, Dom Christopher Butler, a significant voice at the Second Vatican Council, said: ‘Of course, any institution that lives and means to play an active, not to say aggressive, part in the mainstream of human history must from time to time, and even continuously, be making minor adaptations to its ever changing environment.’¹² Butler viewed the pre-conciliar Church as being, ‘Like a stratified rock to the geologist, she was a fascinating object for the historian, not to say the antiquarian. She trailed clouds of glory from a past growing ever more remote and irrelevant – like the three crowns of the papal tiara.’¹³ The Roman Curia, the bureaucracy assisting the pope, was willing to carry out surface adaptations in the life and administration of the Church but many of the Council fathers sought more, ‘*Aggiornamento* in depth’. They viewed this as a pastoral necessity. The task of receiving and appropriating the Council was a task for the local churches in their culture. By this manner of acting ‘the Christian life will be adapted to the mentality and character of each culture, and local traditions together with the special qualities of each national family, illumed by the light of the Gospel, will be taken up into a Catholic unity’.¹⁴ John O’Malley claims that taken together, *aggiornamento*, development, and ressourcement were the dynamics of the Council. Development and its close equivalents, like evolution and progress, ‘inserted change into an unfolding continuity’.¹⁵ Ressourcement, a neologism, ‘advocated skipping over what was currently in place to retrieve from the past something more appropriate or more authentic’.¹⁶

¹¹ Abbott, ed. *The Documents of Vatican II*, ‘Pope John’s Opening Speech to the Council’ 712.

¹² B C Butler, *Searchings* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1974), ‘The Aggiornamento of Vatican II’, 255. In December 1966, Abbot Butler became Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster.

¹³ Butler, *Searchings*, 258-59.

¹⁴ Vatican II’s Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity (*Ad Gentes Divinitus*), par 22.

¹⁵ John W O’Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2008), 300.

¹⁶ O’Malley, *What Happened*, 300-301.

Change however, was problematic: how could the Church claim to have preserved intact the content of revelation if change occurred? Application of the historical method, an awareness of the historical conditioning of human endeavour to Church teaching, caused bitter debate at Vatican II. The Church claimed that human beings had received a message long ago, and that it had been handed down the centuries by other human beings. But this meant that the message ‘entered the historical process, and thus it to some extent became subject of change’.¹⁷ This led to the question of the development of doctrine which the American Jesuit theologian John Courtney Murray saw as ‘the issue underlying all issues’ at the Council.¹⁸ The classic treatment of the development issue came from John Henry Cardinal Newman.¹⁹

The Second Vatican Council used a style, a way of presenting itself, that ‘at first glance as well as most profoundly sets it apart from all other councils’.²⁰ The principal literary form used by the Council of Nicaea (325AD) was the canon, a short ordinance that often entailed punishment for failure to comply. Many subsequent councils employed the canon: Trent issued some 130 doctrinal canons, the Roman Synod of 1960, the ‘dress rehearsal’ for Vatican II, issued 755 canons. The Council which ended five years later issued none.²¹ The style of previous councils had been ‘judicial and legislative’ whereas the Council bishops ‘consistently and repeatedly described the council as pastoral in nature’.²²

¹⁷O’Malley, *What Happened*, 299.

¹⁸O’Malley, ‘Trent and Vatican II: two styles of Church’, in Bulman, Raymond F, and Parrella Frederick J, eds, *From Trent to Vatican II: historical and theological investigations* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 316.

¹⁹John Henry Cardinal Newman, *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 1989).

²⁰O’Malley, *What Happened*, 305.

²¹O’Malley, *What Happened*, 306.

²²O’Malley, *What happened*, 305.

During his lifetime Gleeson lived in a Church that changed its style from the ‘judicial and legislative’ to an orientation to the art of winning consensus and of uniting people to work for the common good. The new style, expressed in a new language, promoted a new vision of Catholicism. ‘Style, sometimes misunderstood as merely an ornament of speech, an outer garment adorning a thought, is really the ultimate expression of meaning. The ‘what’ of speech and the ‘how’ of speech are inseparable.’²³ The vision of Catholicism proposed by the Council, compared with that which preceded it, was ground-breaking.

How Gleeson, as a bishop, responded to the civic and ecclesial challenges of the 1960s is an important focus of this thesis. In what ways did he promote the receiving of Vatican II in the Adelaide archdiocese? How did he embrace and progress the new style of Church? What was his response to the cultural revolution in sexual mores in the West? Did his response differ from that of other bishops of the era? Some bishops were unable to accept the changes required by the Council. The French prelate Marcel Lefebvre (1905-91) attended Vatican II where he refused to sign some of the documents. He rejected the celebration of Mass in the vernacular, dialogue with Protestants, Muslims and Jews, and the concept of religious freedom. He formed the schismatic Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX) in 1970. His vehement rejection of the Council led ultimately to his excommunication.²⁴ Cardinal Gilroy, the first Australian-born archbishop of Sydney, did little to encourage study or discussion of the Council. He was ‘prompt in implementing the letter, but sometimes not the spirit, of the reforms of that time.’²⁵ His policy appeared to be an aversion to the introduction of new ideas ‘for fear of disturbing the faithful and introducing a possible element of doubt’.²⁶

²³O’Malley, *What Happened*, 306.

²⁴*Obituary*, New York Times, 26 March 1991. Accessed 23 December 2016.

²⁵Patrick O’Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community: an Australian history*, third revised edition, (Sydney: New South Wales University Press, 1992), 367.

²⁶Graham Williams, *Cardinal Sir Norman Gilroy* (Sydney: Alella Books, 1971), 60.

Gleeson was a coadjutor archbishop when, on 25 July 1968, Pope Paul VI issued the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* which stated that natural law, as constantly interpreted by the Church, required every marriage act to 'remain open to the transmission of life'. This encyclical came at a time when a 'war of cultures' was being waged in the Western world, part of which was a 'cultural revolution in sexual mores'.²⁷ As the historian Diarmaid MacCulloch observed, the encyclical 'provoked the greatest internal challenge to papal authority in the Western Church's history since Martin Luther's protests over the theology of salvation'.²⁸ There was widespread rejection of the encyclical and many bishops' conferences issued statements stating that a person's conscience was the final court of appeal and that some might, without fault, reject the teaching. As a priest in parish ministry at the time, the author learned that Catholic people, in considerable numbers, rejected the birth control teaching. How Gleeson coped with the crisis resulting from the *Humanae Vitae* encyclical and the 'culture wars' in the society of which the Church was a part, and by what means, will be considered.

There has not been much research into the lives of the Australian bishops who exercised their ministry before, during, and immediately after Vatican II so this thesis adds to the understanding of this important era in the life of the Church. As only the second in- depth study of one of the eleven diocesan bishops who governed the diocese/archdiocese of Adelaide between 1842 and 2017, this thesis also contributes to a wider understanding of the Church in Adelaide and the world, 'the theatre of human history'.²⁹

²⁷ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity: the first three thousand years* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), 972.

²⁸ MacCulloch, 972

²⁹ Vatican II's, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*), par 2. Josephine Laffin's, *Matthew Beovich: a biography* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2008) was the first study of a bishop of the Adelaide Archdiocese.

Value of research on Catholic bishops

The study of Catholic bishops is worthwhile because they are leaders of a significant community in society. Prior to Vatican II, they shaped their dioceses without real dialogue with clergy, religious, or laity. The Church had little to do with other church communities, believing that ‘error had no rights’, and fearful of ‘indifferentism’, the belief that all religions were equal. The world was viewed as a danger to the faith. Following the Council, bishops were called on to formally consult the clergy. Women and men religious, and the laity, were encouraged to be leaders in the Church community, and ecumenism, the quest for Christian unity, became an essential part of Catholic life. The Church was to manifest its ‘respectful affection for the whole human family, to which it belongs’, by entering into dialogue with it.³⁰

This paradigm change called for a determined and lengthy learning process for all concerned. Thomas Patrick Boland, who wrote the biography of the archbishop of Brisbane, *James Duhig*, noted in the preface that as a lecturer in Australian Church history he had been ‘disturbed to see a major constituent of our story, the Christian contribution, ignored. He added that as a reader of political history he had been ‘irritated by the stereotype of the Roman Catholic bishop – usually a politician’s caricature of Daniel Mannix’.³¹

The number of biographies of Catholic bishops demonstrates that they are fitting subjects for scholarly research and writing. Neil Byrne’s *Robert Dunne 1830-1917: archbishop of Brisbane*; T P Boland’s *Thomas Carr: archbishop of Melbourne*, (1839-

³⁰ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 3.

³¹ T P Boland, *James Duhig* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1986), xiii.

1917); and Philip Ayres' *Prince of the Church: Patrick Francis Moran, 1830-1911*, provided an insight into the character and conduct of three nineteenth-century bishops.³² Christopher Dowd's *Faith, Ireland and Empire: the life of Patrick Joseph Clune CSSR 1864-1935 archbishop of Perth, Western Australia*, explored episcopal government of a diocese in the first three decades of the twentieth-century.³³ Studies of twentieth-century Catholic bishops in Australia and New Zealand who experienced the Second Vatican Council, as Gleeson did, are important as they were required to deal with massive changes in the Church and civic community during the 'remembered sixties'. Nicholas Reid produced *James Michael Liston: a life (1881-1976)*, and *The Life and Work of Reginald John Delargey Cardinal (1914-79)*.³⁴ Liston was the only New Zealand bishop not to attend the Second Vatican Council and Delargey, his auxiliary, was one of only two New Zealand bishops to attend all four sessions. Later Delargey visited Gleeson to gain ideas on the adult apostolate which he said 'have taken on interesting forms in South Australia'.³⁵ John Luttrell published a major biography of Cardinal Gilroy, *Norman Thomas Gilroy: an obedient life*.³⁶ The life of the archbishop of Liverpool, Derek Worlock (1920-1996), closely paralleled that of Gleeson. Both were born in the same year, were present at the Second Vatican Council (Worlock as secretary to the English bishops) and both vigorously promoted its vision; both were plagued with health concerns. John Furnival and Ann Knowles authored *Archbishop Derek Worlock: his personal journey*.³⁷

³²Neil Byrne, *Robert Dunn 1983-1917: archbishop of Brisbane* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1991); T P Boland, *Thomas Carr: archbishop of Melbourne* (Brisbane: University of Queensland Press, 1997); Philip Ayres, *Prince of the Church: Patrick Francis Moran, 1830-1911* (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2007).

³³Dowd, *Faith, Ireland and Empire: the life of Patrick Joseph Clune CSSR 1864-1935 archbishop of Perth, Western Australia* (Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 2014).

³⁴Nicholas Reid, *James Michael Liston: a life* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2006); *The Life and Work of Reginald John Delargey Cardinal* (Auckland: Catholic Diocese of Auckland, 2008).

³⁵Reid, *The Life and Work of Reginald John Delargey*, 134.

³⁶John Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy: an obedient life* (Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 2017).

³⁷John Furnival and Ann Knowles, *Archbishop Derek Worlock: his personal journey* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1998). See also the *Independent* Obituary <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-the-most-rev-derek-worlock-1318052.html>>. Accessed 4 April 2016

Ten biographies of Daniel Mannix, archbishop of Melbourne in 1917-63, indicate his importance as a Church and civic figure. James Griffin's, *Daniel Mannix: beyond the myths* was the ninth biographical work on Mannix.³⁸ It was deemed necessary by the author because some of the previous eight 'were uncritical or even adulatory, sustaining a mythical image of Mannix as a cultural and political hero'.³⁹ Brenda Niall produced the tenth Mannix biography in 2015.⁴⁰ The work of John P Maguire, *Prologue: a history of the Catholic Church as seen from Townsville 1963-1983*, dealt mainly with the period from 1930 when Townsville became a separate diocese and the three bishops who ruled the diocese until 1983.⁴¹ Josephine Laffin wrote *Matthew Beovich: a biography*, concerned with the first Australian-born archbishop of Adelaide, who was Gleeson's predecessor.⁴² The Brisbane Archdiocesan Archives, as part of the archdiocesan sesquicentenary celebrations, produced a collection of essays: *Good Shepherds 1859-2009: the Catholic bishops of Brisbane*.⁴³

The need to approach biographies with a critical eye is well illustrated in some of the works dealing with Mannix. The tone of Walter A Ebsworth's biography is in keeping with his words in the epilogue, 'if ever the cause of his canonisation were mooted, Catholic Australia would rise and applaud this well-merited tribute to the greatest man Australia has known'.⁴⁴ At the other end of the spectrum is the biography by Griffin that is 'a much more detailed and forensic examination of Mannix's actions and speeches'.⁴⁵

³⁸James Griffin, *Daniel Mannix: beyond the myths* (Melbourne: Garratt Publishing, 2012).

³⁹Review by Bruce Duncan of *Daniel Mannix: beyond the myths*. *Australasian Catholic Record* (ACR), vol 90, no 3 (2013), 375.

⁴⁰Brenda Niall, *Mannix* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2015).

⁴¹John P Maguire, *Prologue: a history of the Catholic Church as seen from Townsville 1863-1983* (Toowoomba: Church Archivists' Society, 1990).

⁴²Josephine Laffin, *Matthew Beovich: a biography* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2008).

⁴³*Good Shepherds 1859-2009: the Catholic Bishops of Brisbane* (Brisbane: Brisbane Archdiocesan Archives, 2009).

⁴⁴Walter A. Ebsworth, *Archbishop Mannix* (Melbourne: H H Stephenson, 1977), 437.

⁴⁵Review by Bruce Duncan of 'Daniel Mannix: beyond the myths', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 90, no 3 (2013), 375.

Griffin's entry on Mannix in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography* was contentious and was later described by Archbishop George Pell (cardinal in 2003) as 'hostile and partisan' and a 'serious flaw in that prestigious series'.⁴⁶ Patrick O'Farrell, in reviewing *James Duhig*, noted that the work had received a warm welcome from the secular and religious press but added that it was possible to read the book as a 'deeply shocking revelation of ambition, posturing, and exploitation of the protections and opportunities of high and holy office'.⁴⁷

These biographies highlight the fact that bishops are people of influence in their church. They also show that episcopal authority has been exercised in different ways at different times. This study of James Gleeson will be neither a hagiography nor a hatchet job but will endeavor to set him in his historical context, appreciate his strengths, acknowledge his weaknesses and evaluate his contribution to the diocese/archdiocese of Adelaide and the wider church.

Auxiliary bishop, coadjutor archbishop, archbishop

James William Gleeson was the youngest Catholic bishop in Australia when, in 1957, at the age of thirty-seven, he was appointed auxiliary bishop to Matthew Beovich, archbishop of Adelaide. In 1964 he became coadjutor archbishop with the right to succeed Beovich. He was the Archbishop of Adelaide in 1971-1985. Both Beovich and Gleeson attended the Second Vatican Council.

⁴⁶Michael Gilchrist, *Daniel Mannix: wit and wisdom* (Melbourne: Freedom Publishing Company, 2004), forward by Pell, iii.

⁴⁷Review by Patrick O'Farrell of 'James Duhig', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 64, no 2 (1987), 212.

Gleeson was formed and eventually ministered in a Catholic community that could be deemed to have commenced in 1842 when the Roman authorities established a hierarchy in Australia, the first to be erected in a British possession since the Reformation. Francis Murphy was appointed to the see of Adelaide and was the first bishop in the colony. The first Church of England bishop, Augustus Short, arrived in 1847. To understand the life of Gleeson it is helpful to know the story of the Catholic community in South Australia. Fortunately there have been sufficient historical works to provide a guide. Gleeson himself contributed an article to the *Australasian Catholic Record* (ACR) dealing with the Catholic Church in Adelaide when he was a priest, and bishop.⁴⁸ Sr Margaret Press produced two volumes recounting the history of the Adelaide diocese from 1836 to 1962 and a further work on the Adelaide seminary for the celebration of its golden jubilee in 1992.⁴⁹ Her history of the Church in Adelaide was not coterminous with the life of Gleeson but sets him in context. Press has not written a monograph but a general history, recording the contributions of bishops, clergy, religious, and laity.

⁴⁸James William Gleeson, 'The Church in Adelaide during my Years as a Priest and Bishop', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 65, no 3 (1988), 292-302.

⁴⁹Margaret Press, *From Our Broken Toil: South Australian Catholics 1836- 1905* (Adelaide: Archdiocese of Adelaide, 1986); *Colour and Shadow: South Australian Catholics 1906-1962* (Adelaide: Archdiocese of Adelaide, 1991); *St Francis Xavier Seminary: the first fifty years 1942- 1992* (Adelaide: St Francis Xavier's Seminary, 1992).

David Shinnick, a layman employed by the archdiocese from 1965 to 1995, was involved in the development and functioning of the lay apostolate. He self-published *Journey into Justice: a journey through the lay apostolate into promoting justice 1951-1981, with a vision and some guidelines for the future*.⁵⁰ He also self-published a three-volume work, *Memoirs of David John Shinnick*, and authored *From the Paddocks: the comprehensive story of the Catholic parish of St Marys, South Australia*.⁵¹ Shinnick has donated to the Adelaide Catholic Archdiocesan Archives (ACAA) thirteen volumes of his ‘Collected Works’, containing documents and papers related to his various tasks in the archdiocese. A series of articles by the author, published in the *Australasian Catholic Record*, treat the theology and practice of the first ten Adelaide bishops/ archbishops. Three of the articles, especially relevant to the present project, deal with Gleeson and also Beovich, Gleeson’s patron and mentor.⁵²

⁵⁰David Shinnick, *Journey into Justice: a journey through the lay apostolate into promoting justice 1951-1981, with a vision and some guidelines for the future* (Adelaide: D Shinnick, 1982).

⁵¹*Memoirs of David John Shinnick* 1930 to 2000, 3 vols;

—vol 1, 1930 to 1970 ‘Youthful Yearnings and Beyond’ (Adelaide: Author, 2000).

—vol 2, 1971 to 1982 ‘Betwixt the Sacred and the Secular’, (Adelaide: Author, 2001).

—vol 3, 1983 to 2000 ‘Called before I Was Born’ (Adelaide: Author, 2001).

—*From the Paddocks: the comprehensive story of the Catholic parish of St Marys South Australia 1952-2012* (Adelaide: St Bernadette’s Christian Life Community, 2013).

—‘Parish Pastoral Councils: what of their future?’ *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 73, no 4 (1996), 439-47.

⁵²Robert J Rice, ‘Some reflections on the contributions of Matthew Beovich and James Gleeson to the Second Vatican Council’, *ACR*, vol 78, no1 (2001), 46- 61.

—Matthew Beovich, eighth bishop of Adelaide and first Australian born occupant of the see’, *ACR*, vol 88, no 1 (2011), 43-61.

—‘James William Gleeson, the ninth bishop of Adelaide (sixth archbishop): some aspects of his theology and practice’, *ACR*, vol 89, no 1 (2012), 69-87.

Catholic bishops claim to be the successors of the apostles and therefore leaders of a religious community. The apostle to the gentiles, St Paul, exhorted his converts to ‘follow me as I follow Christ’ (1 Corinthians 11:1). Hence the spirituality of a bishop is an essential part of his being and should permeate any episcopal biography. The word spirituality – derived from the Latin adjective *spiritualis*, a translation of the Greek *pneumatikos*, used by St Paul in 1 Corinthians 2: 14-15 – has been defined by Philip Sheldrake as ‘the way our fundamental values, lifestyles, and spiritual practices, reflect particular understandings of God, human identity, and the material world, as the context for human transformation’.⁵³ Katharine Massam’s *Sacred Threads: Catholic spirituality in Australia 1922-1962* was a pioneering study of spirituality and its expression among Catholics up to the time of the Second Vatican Council.⁵⁴ Against this background, Gleeson’s prayer and devotional life will be considered. In a postscript to his review of *James Duhig*, O’Farrell noted and agreed with the article by Ross Fitzgerald in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (17 January 1987) that claimed there was not much evidence of profound spirituality or even of the ‘true believer’ in James the Builder.⁵⁵ Such could not be said of Gleeson.

⁵³ Philip Sheldrake, *A Brief History of Spirituality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 2

⁵⁴ Katharine Massam, *Sacred Threads: Catholic Spirituality in Australia 1922-1962* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 1996).

⁵⁵ Patrick O’Farrell, Review of *James Duhig* by T P Boland, *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 64, no 2 (1987), 212- 17.

Methodology

Abundant resources are available in the Adelaide Catholic Archdiocesan Archives (ACAA), to which the author has been granted access, which record the life and work of Gleeson. These include Series 128, Archbishop James Gleeson-Pastoral Letters, Homilies and Talks; Series 129, Archbishop James Gleeson-Personal Papers. Further references to Gleeson are in other series and boxes in the archives and so are listed in the bibliography. The author was not granted access to the secret archives: only the bishop possesses a key.⁵⁶ The South Australian Catholic weekly, the *Southern Cross*, provides extensive reports on the activity and teaching of Gleeson. Members of Gleeson's family and relations are still available to be interviewed, especially his brother Raphael (Ray). Archbishop Leonard Faulkner, who succeeded Gleeson was a valuable source of information.

The author, who was ordained in 1956, was a priest of the archdiocese for the whole period of Gleeson's episcopacy. So this thesis is in many ways the observations of an eyewitness. I enjoyed a warm relationship with Gleeson most of the time. There was a temporary cooling of the relationship when the archbishop asked me to consider moving to another parish. When I declined the offer, Gleeson insisted that I move. Eventually normal relations resumed. I am aware of the weaknesses of the 'lived history' methodology: the fallibility of memory and a tendency to nostalgia. But there are strengths. Robert Orsi, one of the foremost practitioners of the 'lived history' approach, said: 'Our lives and our stories are not simply implicated in our work: they are among the media through which we scholars of religion encounter and engage the religious world of others'.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Code of Canon Law (1983), Canons 489 and 490.

⁵⁷ Robert A Orsi, *Between Heaven and Earth: the religious worlds people make and the scholars who study them* (Princeton, N J: Princeton University Press), 2005, 3

Thesis structure

The thesis generally treats the life of James William Gleeson chronologically. Chapter 1 considers Gleeson's maturation in his family, civic community, schools and seminary. He was born into a family that was devoutly Catholic in a small country community where religion was very important. His primary education was completed in a state government school and his secondary education in Catholic schools. During this period of his life he contributed to the welfare of the family by working on the family farm. Significantly, the Gleeson family, in their rural community, mixed freely with Lutherans and others who were not Catholics. The fact that Gleeson was not brought up in a 'ghetto' must have contributed to his later support of ecumenism. This was not encouraged at the seminary he attended in Victoria. While esteemed at the time, his seminary training was later shown to have been inadequate.

Chapter 2 looks at how these influences affected the first twelve years of his ministry (1945-57). Gleeson conducted his early ministry in accordance with the ecclesiology he had been taught; the Catholic Church was the one true church and others Christian communities were heretical or schismatic.

Chapter 3 explores Gleeson's work as an auxiliary bishop and coadjutor archbishop (1957-71). During this period, due to the Second Vatican Council, Gleeson's ecclesiology and theology changed significantly.

Chapter 4 examines Gleeson's contribution to Vatican II and the early years of its implementation in the Adelaide archdiocese. Gleeson came to the Council totally unaware of the advancements in theology coming out of Europe. However, he voted

for all documents passed during his presence at three sessions. Back in Adelaide he worked to promote a 'Council Conscience' in the members of the archdiocese. He enthusiastically embraced and promoted the new vision of the Church.

Chapter 5 analyses Gleeson's involvement in dialogue with other Christians and other faiths and how this modified his ecclesiology and philosophy of life. Gleeson, as a priest, had refused to give permission for a Catholic student to sing in a choir that at times performed at services in Protestant churches. As a result of the Council he was devoted to dialogue with other Christian denominations and non-Christian religions.

Chapter 6 probes Gleeson's view of the importance of Catholic schools, his concern for the faith of Catholic children outside the Catholic school system, and his contribution to the struggle for state funding for independent schools. Gleeson was steadfast in his commitment to Catholic schools. He viewed them as the optimum means of handing on the faith to children. He held fast to this view in the face of major changes that included the decline in the number of religious teachers in the schools, and a lesser percentage of Catholic children enrolling in the schools.

Chapter 7 delves into Gleeson's implementation of his conviction that the Church must be involved in any debates touching the rights and welfare of individuals or the community. His concerns were wide-ranging and transcended the division of 'left' and 'right'.

Chapter 8 surveys Gleeson's contribution to the welfare of the developing world and refugees. Gleeson was concerned with educating citizens in Australia and the developed

world about the plight of those in the developing countries, and especially those to the North of Australia. He saw aid as the immediate need of these people but assisting their development as the ultimate goal.

Chapter 9 assesses Gleeson's leadership of the archdiocese of Adelaide. The Second Vatican Council reiterated that bishops are obliged to sanctify, teach and govern the 'People of God' committed to their care. This is a demanding vocation, especially in a large diocese.

Chapter 10 evaluates Gleeson's claim that the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal (1983-88) was the 'most important initiative and legacy' of his time as Archbishop of Adelaide. Renewal became a catchword following Vatican II. Gleeson was a promotor of renewal in various areas but saw the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal as his premier effort.

Chapter 11 scrutinises the people and groups who were involved with, and influenced, Gleeson during his years as a bishop. Gleeson worked cooperatively with both individuals and groups. Influenced by Vatican II he endeavoured, with considerable success, to consult widely and listen to advice.

Chapter 12 covers the longest period of Gleeson's ministry, his time as Emeritus Archbishop of Adelaide (1985-2000). Gleeson continued, as far as his health allowed, to contribute to the pastoral care and work of the diocese. The spirituality that governed his life is reviewed and also the final farewell and subsequent offered condolences. He was a man of steadfast faith and fidelity to the Church.

Gleeson was a modest person, not comfortable about parading his achievements.

Following his retirement, he was invited to contribute an article to the *Australasian Catholic Record* about his time as a bishop. He chose to focus on his predecessor and mentor, Archbishop Matthew Beovich, whom he mentioned by name twenty-six times.

When Josephine Laffin asked Gleeson if she could research his life, he suggested she take Archbishop Beovich as her subject as he was more interesting. Gleeson, however, was a bishop during the Vatican II hinge event, so research on his life is not only worthwhile but necessary for an appreciation of the Church in this period.

Chapter 1

THE FORMATIVE YEARS

James William Gleeson was born at Nurse O'Brien's Hospital, Balaklava, a town in the mid-north of South Australia, on 24 December 1920.¹ The son of John Joseph Gleeson and Margaret Mary O'Connell, he was the third born of six children – the elder brother of Thomas, John and Raphael (Ray), and the younger brother of Mary. The first-born child, also Mary, born in Balaklava on 6 May 1918, died one hour after birth. She was baptised during her short life. Gleeson was baptised by Fr T P Davis at St Andrew's Church, Balaklava, on 29 December 1920 and on 12 November 1933 was confirmed by the Coadjutor Archbishop of Adelaide, Andrew Killian, at St Aloysius' Church, Sevenhill.²

Development in a devout Catholic family

Both the Gleeson and O'Connell families had Irish ancestry. James and Honora Burke, the paternal great-grandparents of the future archbishop, were married in the parish of Clonoulty-Rossmore, in the diocese of Cashel and Emly, Ireland, on 30 January 1855. Shortly after the marriage the couple came to South Australia and engaged in farming, initially at Kapunda and later further north at Caltowie and Yanyarrie. Seven children were born of the marriage. The second born and eldest son, William James, married Mary Teresa Carey at St John's Church, Kapunda, on 12 February 1884. Of the fourteen

¹ The mid-north of South Australia extends from the northern part of the Mount Lofty Ranges to the southern part of the Flinders Ranges. In the nineteenth century it was the heartland of the colony's productivity, containing some of the best agricultural and pastoral land in the state. All the towns and districts named in this section dealing with Gleeson's formative years were located in the mid-north of the state.

² Fr Davis, born in Sydney of Welsh parents in 1872, was a member of the executive committee for the Catholic Education Congress held in Adelaide in 1936. He provided three bursaries for the education of Australian-born seminarians and donated generously to St Francis Xavier's Seminary, which opened in 1942. His benefactions were funded from his hobby of philately.

children born of the marriage, John Joseph, the third-born and second son, married Margaret Mary O'Connell at Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Church, Bute, South Australia, on 30 April 1917. James William Gleeson was a child of this marriage. In 1958 Gleeson, as a bishop, spoke at the official opening of the Irish Memorial Hall in Carrington Street Adelaide. He declared the building to be a 'fitting memorial to the pioneer Irish in the State and their worthy descendants'.³ He then recalled that his paternal great-grandparents were among the pioneers of the middle of the previous century.

Details concerning the O'Connell line are not so clear or complete. James O'Connell was born about 1810 in Ennistymon, in the parish of Kilmanaheen, County Clare, Ireland. He married and of the children born of this marriage, three sons, Jeremiah, James and Michael, came to South Australia.⁴ James arrived in 1865 and married Elizabeth Hogan who had been born in South Australia in 1853. The marriage, which was celebrated on 25 May 1874 at the Catholic church in Navan, produced eleven children. Margaret Mary, a twin, born 10 December 1885, was the mother of the future archbishop.⁵

On 1 May 1917 John Joseph Gleeson entered an Agreement with Covenant to Purchase with Charles John Rattew for 313 acres (127 hectares) of farming land.⁶ Later the family purchased an additional 138 acres (56 hectares) from Johannes (Charlie) Zacher. The exact location of the 451 acre (183 hectare) farm was revealed in 1947 when Gleeson's father put his stock and plant up for auction.⁷ The farm was advertised as being 15 miles (24 kilometres) north of Balaklava, 10 miles (16 kilometres) south-

³ *Southern Cross*, Catholic weekly paper, 21 March 1958, 7.

⁴ Possibly two other children, Margaret and Matthew came to South Australia but no certain facts are known concerning them.

⁵ Family details taken from the family's own research, *The Gleeson – O'Connell Story*, Edition 5.0, March 2009. Gleeson ancestry 13, 15, 18-19, 29, 30; O'Connell ancestry 74-77. Copy in author's possession.

⁶ Lands Title Office, vol 630, fol 99.

⁷ Details of search of Lands Title Office, provided by Raphael (Ray) Gleeson. Copy in author's possession.

west of Blyth and 0.5 miles (0.8 kilometres) from the Bowillia School.⁸ The property was used for mixed farming, wheat, barley, sheep, cows and poultry. Margaret contributed to the finances of the family by holding the position of postmistress at Bowillia in 1922-47.⁹ Just how much the family struggled financially was revealed when Gleeson was interviewed on the occasion of the silver jubilee of his episcopal consecration in 1982. He expressed his gratitude to his sister Mary for deferring her nursing training by a year to enable him to commence his journey to the priesthood. Clearly the family could not afford to lose both children from the farm at the same time.¹⁰ Further evidence of this was provided in an address delivered by Gleeson to the Second National Catholic Education Conference held in Canberra in 1980. Gleeson said that he had attended a Catholic school for only the last two years of secondary education and explained why: 'Distance and poverty made it impossible for me to attend a Catholic school either as a day scholar or as a boarder.'¹¹ The eulogy at the funeral Mass for Thomas, Gleeson's brother, observed: 'We only had kerosene lamps or candles for lighting and freelights were just coming into vogue.'¹²

Gleeson and his siblings attended the Bowillia public primary school which functioned in 1888-93 and again in 1908-51. During its entire history it was staffed by women teachers. The school building was a weatherboard structure comprising one room with the dimensions 18 feet (5.4 metres) by 33 feet (10 metres). A shelter-shed was attached. The average attendance at this one-teacher school was about 13, ranging between 21 in 1910 to 6 in 1943.¹³ Gleeson, at the age of 12, obtained the Qualifying

⁸ The precise location of the farm was included in the notification of the sale, in the weekly newspaper, *The Producer*, Balaklava, 13 February 1947, 2.

⁹ Sands & McDougall's *South Australian Directory*, 1922-47.

¹⁰ *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

¹¹ Second National Catholic Education Conference, Canberra. Address by the Most Rev J W Gleeson, Archbishop of Adelaide, Tuesday, 6th May, 1980. Copy in author's possession.

¹² Tom Gleeson Eulogy, 27 January 2012. Copy in author's possession.

¹³ *Plains Producer*, Balaklava, 30 July 2008, 5; Alan Jones, *Snowtown, The First Century, 1878-1978* (Snowtown: Snowtown Centenary Committee, 1978), 113.

Certificate after completing grade seven in 1932. At that time the legal requirement was for children to remain at school until they reached 14 years of age so Gleeson remained at the school assisting the teacher with tutoring the younger pupils for the next two years. He gained the Qualifying Certificate again at the end of each of these years. After nine years of primary schooling he spent the following twelve months helping his parents on the farm. Gleeson's contribution to the farm involved demanding physical work. Initially horses were used to pull farm implements. The harvesters in the 1930s were inefficient in separating wheat from chaff and consequently the chaff had to be put through a winnower to extract additional grain. Gleeson, being the eldest son, took a major role operating the hand-driven winnower. This phase of Gleeson's early life resulted in part from his not being old enough to leave school, but also the family's decision that he was too young to leave home and the inability of the family to fund his further education.

The Gleeson family usually attended Mass at Blyth which was 16 kilometres (10 miles) distant or 21 kilometres (13 miles) by an alternate route. If the shorter journey was chosen, the family spent some time on the return journey with the Pedler family, who were Catholics. If the longer route was selected they socialised on the way home with either the Schuster or Zacher families, both of them Lutheran. Attending this Mass, which was celebrated fortnightly, required early rising, milking the cows, separating the cream from the milk with a hand-driven machine and feeding the animals. In gentle banter Gleeson used to remind his sister that she was exempted from the milking chore because she suffered from eczema.¹⁴ All this was performed at a time when it was a rule of the Catholic Church that those wishing to receive holy communion were required to fast from midnight.

¹⁴ Interview with Margaret Senyszyn, Gleeson's niece, Bellevue Heights, SA, 20 November 2015.

In his reply to a request from Katrina Senyszyn to her 'Uncle Jim' for assistance with a Home Economics project, Gleeson provided an insight into life on the farm when he was 15 years of age.¹⁵ He recalled that the children worked very hard physically; that the farm supplied most of their needs and that the only goods purchased were essential groceries; that his mother was attentive to how they sat at table and ate their meals; that the family enjoyed nutritious meals at all times and that this was achieved in a home without electricity or refrigeration.¹⁶ In later life Gleeson endured chronic back problems that required regular visits to a chiropractor. Most likely his work on the family farm as a young boy contributed to this. He aggravated the problem when he was the archbishop of Adelaide when he fractured some vertebrae while trying to move a refrigerator at his residence, 'Ennis', in the suburb of Medindie. For some months following this event he had to wear a neck brace.¹⁷ This event revealed an impetuous streak in Gleeson's nature. It appeared again when, as the emeritus archbishop, he was hospitalised when attacked by the swarm of bees he attempted to move from his house using a can of fly spray.¹⁸

Gleeson was in Corpus Christi College, Werribee, Victoria, for eight years preparing for ordination to the priesthood (1938-45) but was able to return home for the summer vacation. During these months he assisted with the harvest and carting wheat in 80-kilogram bags (176 pounds), to the nearest railway siding. The family also carted wheat on contract for neighbours. Gleeson was a skilled 'fixer' and assisted with the repair of farm equipment and general maintenance on the property. During his seminary years, which included the entire period of the Second World War, Gleeson utilised the skills he had learnt on the farm to enable the seminary to function efficiently. For a period, his contribution to this end was to rise at 5am to stoke the boilers. The students

¹⁵ Katrina Senyszyn, born 13 February 1980, was the grand-daughter of Gleeson's sister Mary.

¹⁶ Handwritten response of Gleeson to request from Katrina Senyszyn, Series 129: Archbishop James Gleeson- Personal Papers, Adelaide Catholic Archdiocesan Archives (ACAA).

¹⁷ Interview with Marie Shevlin, Gleeson's secretary, Kensington Park, SA, 18 August 2015.

¹⁸ Interview with Maureen Brett, house manager at 'Ennis', Hackney, SA, 9 June 2016.

cut down trees to provide fuel for the boilers and Gleeson purchased an old vehicle for £5 and adapted the engine to power a circular saw.¹⁹

Gleeson gave further information regarding his early life when interviewed in 1994 at the Adelaide University by Tony Ryan, archivist of the Australian College of Educators. This interview was part of a series involving ‘significant Australian educators’. Gleeson recalled how his parents struggled to maintain the farm and provide for the family as they coped with droughts and the depression of the 1930s. The Gleeson home was, he said, a ‘focal point’ of the district and his parents were ‘central figures’ in the community. When people came twice-weekly to collect their mail, his mother’s advice would be sought by those who had a sick child in the family. Farmers who had horses, animals, or machinery needing attention would consult his father. Sometimes, produce from the farm was taken by his mother to the Eudunda Farmers store at Balaklava and bartered for goods the family needed. Neighbours took turns in slaughtering a sheep and sharing portions.²⁰ In written answers to questions from school children, to be read in conjunction with the oral history, Gleeson said: ‘I have been richly blessed in being a member of a loving faith filled family.’²¹ Following his retirement, Gleeson spoke on the ABC radio programme ‘Journal of Religion’. He referred to the droughts in the 1920s and the depression of the 1930s and recalled: ‘We were poor but our loving parents would not allow any selfishness within the family, with the neighbours or with the “swagmen of the roads” of those days.’²²

The Gleeson family had Irish roots, by their own admission were poor, but all members of the family contributed and so the family was always able to pay its way. John Gleeson urged all family members to ‘go with your shoes on’ and his

¹⁹ Interview with Archbishop Leonard Faulkner, Netley, SA, 27 August 2013.

²⁰ *Conversations: an oral history project of the Australian College of Educators*. ‘An interview with Bishop James W Gleeson (1920-2000)’, conducted by Tony Ryan and recorded at the University of Adelaide on 21 September 1994. Series 0166-0001 ACAA.

²¹ Series 129, ACAA.

²² *Southern Cross*, 29 August 1985, 8. Slightly edited version of the radio presentation.

recommendation was heeded as all the children possessed a strong work ethic.²³ When the body of Archbishop Gleeson was prepared for burial the family insisted that shoes be on the feet, remembering and honouring the father's constant admonition. The family was devoutly Catholic and fully committed to playing its part in the local community.

Development in a religious civic community

Gleeson, from his earliest years, lived in a community where members of different Christian denominations lived in harmony. At an ecumenical service in 1977, celebrating the centenary of the town of Balaklava, he recalled how his parents were ecumenical in outlook in many ways:

... they readily shared the joys and hopes and anxieties, the droughts and the dust storms with all around them: they boarded the teachers from the local school at Bowillia whether they were Catholics or not (the people of my age and older will recall this was often a religious problem in the district). And to show that this was not one-sided, when I left Bowillia at the beginning of 1938 to commence my formal studies for the priesthood, the farewell was arranged by a leading Lutheran neighbour.²⁴

A further indication of the mutual support that characterised the community was provided in what appeared to be a eulogy for Meta Doris Zacher (née Schuster), a Lutheran whose faith was 'the major pillar of her life in good times and in bad'.²⁵ Meta married Herb Zacher and five sons were born of the marriage. The third born, Richard, was drowned in the farm dam one month before his second birthday. The eulogy stated:

This was a great sadness for the whole family, and they would not have coped without their faith in their Lord and the support of friends, particularly their neighbours the Gleesons, who included the Catholic archbishop of Adelaide in their family.²⁶

²³ Interview with Raphael (Ray) Gleeson at Felixstow, SA, 10 March 2013.

²⁴ Speech by Gleeson at the 'Centenary Celebrations, Balaklava – Ecumenical Service – The Institute, Balaklava, Sunday 9 October 1977', Series 128: Archbishop James Gleeson-Pastoral Letters, Homilies and Talks, Series 0128-0001/4, ACAA. Also, *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

²⁵ 'Biography' [Meta Doris Zacher]. Copy provided to the author by Raphael Gleeson.

²⁶ 'Biography'

Another view of the religious milieu in which Gleeson developed was provided by an interview he gave at celebrations marking his twenty-five years as a bishop. He was asked if he would choose to be a priest if he had to make the decision in the here and now. His reply was that he hoped he would as he was ‘more convinced than ever of the importance of the ministry of priest and of the role of the priest’.²⁷ Gleeson conceded that it was more difficult for young people now to make life-long commitments and that ‘Religious values are not prominent in our society today.’²⁸ He recalled that the people amongst whom he lived were religious people for whom ‘Religion was just so important.’²⁹ This was demonstrated by the Lutheran family who arranged his farewell when he left to study for the priesthood – Victor Schuster and his sister Meta Zacher saw it as a joyful happening. Gleeson expressed the view: ‘I don’t think society today gives that kind of support for religious values.’³⁰ In the interview with Tony Ryan, mentioned above, Gleeson said that each Sunday, when services were available, Catholics, Lutherans and Methodists attended their own churches and other events in the district were arranged so as not to interfere with this.³¹ Clearly the environment in which he spent the early years of life supported his religious formation and commitment.

However, in an interview given after his retirement, Gleeson indicated that not all communities were similarly supportive. He recalled that it was a time when employment was sometimes advertised with the added words ‘Catholics need not apply’ and with great exceptions the atmosphere was ‘fiercely anti-Catholic’. The Knights of the Southern Cross, a Catholic men’s association, commenced in Sydney in 1919 and by 1925 was established in

²⁷ *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

²⁸ *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

²⁹ *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

³⁰ *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

³¹ Tony Ryan interviews Emeritus Archbishop James William Gleeson.

every state in Australia and in New Zealand.³² The Knights stood against bigotry, prejudice and unfair employment and business practices.³³ At the time of their foundation, ads for jobs in New South Wales indicated that Catholic applicants were not wanted. Some prospective employers would ask where the applicant attended school as a way of determining his or her religion. It seems that some deemed those of ‘Roman’ persuasion as not to be trusted. They had betrayed the ‘Men at the Front’ by opposing military conscription.³⁴ Similar practices obtained in South Australia but seemingly to a lesser extent. Gleeson also noted the difficulty some Catholic families encountered in the attempt to provide a better future for their children. The Catholic population, when he went to Sacred Heart College, was still battling the effects of the Depression and droughts and found it difficult to provide higher education for their children. Gleeson said that despite the obstacles, the extra efforts of the religious women and men enabled some Catholic boys and girls to receive a higher education and move up the socio-economic scale.³⁵

Development in a ‘Counter-Reformation’ Church and a Tridentine seminary

James Gleeson seems to have shown signs of interest in the priesthood from an early age. The family has preserved the memory of a visit of the inspector to the Bowillia School. When the pupils were asked what they wanted to be when they grew up, Gleeson replied, ‘I want to be a bishop of the world’.³⁶ On another occasion Gleeson’s mother found him standing on a large box in the kitchen and delivering an address. When asked what he was doing he replied, ‘I am a priest’.³⁷ Gleeson became an altar server about the age of twelve years. He learned the Latin responses and ritual actions at the convent of the Sisters of St

³² Cliff Baxter, *Reach for the Stars: 1919-2009: NSW Knights of the Southern Cross, bold men of faith, hope and charity* (Ballan, Victoria: Connor Court Publishing, 2009), 84 and 98.

³³ Baxter, *Reach for the Stars 1919-2009*, 133.

³⁴ Baxter, *Reach for the Stars 1919-2009*, 90.

³⁵ Transcript of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS), Oral History Project, Part 1 David Shinnick interviewing Emeritus Archbishop James W Gleeson DD AO CMG at his home [‘Ennis’] 22 October 1996. Adelaide Catholic Education Office Archives.

³⁶ *Advertiser*, 28 March 2000, 4.

³⁷ Written statement by Raphael (Ray) Gleeson, signed at Felixstow, SA on 30 August 2013. Statement in author’s possession.

Joseph at Clare. It was at Clare also that he made his First Communion. He recalled a sister there asking him what he wanted to be and that his response was 'a teacher'. The sister responded, 'Oh Jim, perhaps you would also like to be a priest.'³⁸ Gleeson remembered the spot on the playground where the conversation took place but not the name of the sister. From that time Gleeson's desire to be a priest never left him. Clearly the encounter was significant as he acknowledged in later life that God's call came to him through the inspiring example of parents and teachers.

His ambition was going to be difficult to attain. A secondary education was required and, as noted above, the family at the time could not afford the cost. Gleeson recalled the occasion when, with his father, he was sewing wheat bags and his father told him that if he wanted to further his education the family would do all they could to enable him to achieve his goal. Later in life Gleeson reflected on the fact that he was the first person in the district to attend secondary school and this highlighted the financial challenge the Gleeson family was prepared to accept to enable their son James to study for the priesthood. For a devoutly Catholic family, having a son ordained a priest was a profound joy.

In 1936, Sr Rita Brosnan RSJ, who died in New Zealand in 1981, helped Gleeson to find accommodation in Balaklava 'with the assistance of the wonderful Casey family'.³⁹ There he attended the Sisters of St Joseph's convent school and completed the three-year intermediate course in one year. Gleeson later recalled his gratitude to the Sisters of St Joseph and the fact that his family had not paid anything for the education they had provided. He thought the family, in lieu of school fees, would on occasions have brought farm produce such as butter and eggs to the sisters.⁴⁰ In response to a request from Sr Rita, he was then granted a scholarship to Sacred Heart

³⁸ *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

³⁹ Written statement by Raphael Gleeson in author's possession.

⁴⁰ SACCS Oral History Project, Part 1. Shinnick interviews Gleeson, 33.

College, conducted by the Marist Brothers at Somerton Park, an Adelaide suburb. In 1936, Brother Albertus, principal of the College, with the support of the parents and friends, had promoted social functions to fund scholarships for boys wishing to be priests. The following year Gleeson was one of two students to receive such a scholarship.⁴¹ The other was Leo Kearns from the Diocese of Port Augusta who was ordained with Gleeson in 1945.⁴² After only two years of secondary education, Gleeson received the Leaving Certificate, the matriculation qualification at that time, at the end of 1937 and the following year was accepted by Archbishop Andrew Killian as a student for the diocesan priesthood.

Gleeson entered a seminary, the structure of which had been laid down almost four hundred years earlier at the Council of Trent. During its third session (1562-63) it decreed that provision must be made for the adequate education and formation of candidates for the priesthood. To this end, all dioceses or regions were required to establish seminaries for this purpose. Prior to Trent there was no formalised preparation for priesthood. As seminaries were part of the response of the Catholic Church to the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, it was natural that they would be strong in defence of the Catholic faith and condemnatory of the Protestant reformers.⁴³ Seminary formation had the disadvantage of sharpening the distinction between clergy and laity by encouraging the academic and spiritual formation of priests apart from the world of the laity. At the time this was seen not as a disadvantage but a good thing. The author was formed in a seminary where no newspapers or radios were permitted and to leave the seminary

⁴¹ *Southern Cross*, 24 June 1955,1 'Appeal for Marcellin Champagnat Wing, Sacred Heart College' by Gleeson, 19 June 1955. Series 0128-0002, ACAA.

⁴² Leo Charles Kearns, at his religious profession to the Passionist Congregation, took the religious name Martin of the Sorrowful Virgin. He left the Passionist Congregation in October 1954 and went to the Wollongong diocese in NSW. He died 9 January 1991. Information supplied by Jim Yeo, Passionist archivist, 7 January 2015.

⁴³ Historians sometimes refer to the Reformation as the European Reformations to acknowledge the number of reform movements at work in the sixteenth century.

boundaries required permission. It imposed isolation from the lives of men and women in the modern world and was inappropriate for those preparing to minister to this world. This seminary system continued almost without change until Vatican II, which in October 1965 approved the Decree on the Training of Priests (*Optatam Totius*) which called for ‘adaptation and reform’ in the area of priestly training and formation.⁴⁴ Until the early 1960s ‘twentieth-century Catholicism was shaped more by the Council of Trent than by any other historically tangible event or force’.⁴⁵ It is therefore necessary to consider both the seminary training Gleeson received and also the Australian and diocesan church communities in which he grew to maturity.

Because there was no seminary in Adelaide in 1938, Gleeson commenced his priestly studies at Corpus Christi College, Werribee, Victoria. This College was a regional seminary established in 1923 by Archbishop Mannix in conjunction with the bishops of the other dioceses of Victoria (Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst) and the archbishop of Hobart: it was staffed by Irish Jesuits.⁴⁶ Mannix had purchased Werribee Park as the site for the seminary. On the property was an ‘imposing bluestone mansion’ built by Thomas Chirnside in the 1850s. In time the Chirnside family encountered financial problems and Mannix was able to purchase about 900 acres (400 hectares) of the property. This was in an isolated area about two kilometres from the small town of Werribee which was about halfway between Melbourne and Geelong. Not far from the seminary was a sewage farm which, at least at the time when Gleeson was a student, emitted unpleasant odours. The whole area was on a plain which had only one feature,

⁴⁴ Note also Pope John Paul II’s 1979 Apostolic Constitution, *Sapientia Christiana* and his 1992 Post-Synodal Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

⁴⁵ Richard P McBrien, *Catholicism* (study edition) (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1981), 635.

⁴⁶ John Molony, *Luther’s Pine* (Canberra: Pandanus Books, 2004), 108. Hobart became an archdiocese in 1888.

a small group of granite ridges known as the You Yangs. The seminary was in an isolated area with a monotonous ambience.⁴⁷

This siting of the seminary appeared inconsistent with Mannix's attitude to university studies. At his official welcome to Melbourne in 1913, he expressed his esteem for university degrees and his hope that Catholics would be well represented in the ranks of university graduates. He was gratified that his hearers appreciated that it was desirable for the clergy to have the 'stamp and the hallmark of university degrees'⁴⁸ Mannix in 1904 had arranged for some Maynooth students to sit examinations for degrees offered by the Royal University of Ireland. In 1908, subsequent to the dissolution of the Royal University, he secured formal affiliation for Maynooth with the newly established National University of Ireland.⁴⁹ When Archbishop Thomas Carr delegated responsibility to Mannix to establish a Catholic university college in Melbourne, he applied himself to the task with diligence. The result was that in 1918, Newman College was opened at a site near the University of Melbourne. It too was staffed by the Jesuits. The reasons why Mannix chose not to locate the seminary near the university, thus making it possible for the students to gain university degrees, are beyond the scope of this thesis. But the consequence was that students for the priesthood, including Gleeson, were deprived of the opportunity to gain the 'stamp and hallmark of university degrees'. Had Mannix acted in accordance with his convictions he may have caused other members of the Australian hierarchy to re-think their attitude towards universities. The Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand, held in Sydney in 1937, viewed attendance at universities as a danger to the faith of Catholic students.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Molony, *Luther's Pine*, 108-10.

⁴⁸ 'The Diocesan Seminary as an Expression of Provincial Differences in Australian Catholicism', Max Vodola, MA thesis, Monash University, 15 May 1995, 51.

⁴⁹ 'The Diocesan Seminary', 47-8.

⁵⁰ *Concilium Plenarium IV Australiae Et Novae Zelandiae*, Sydney 1937, Decrees 645-52.

For Gleeson this meant that after eight years in the seminary he left without any kind of document to indicate that he had completed eight years of study.⁵¹ In later life, as will be noted below, he gained a teacher's certificate, primary division, from the Victorian Council of Education and this was his only earned tertiary qualification.⁵² When the Gleeson Library was opened at St Francis Xavier's Seminary, Stradbroke Park, by Archbishop Leonard Faulkner on 28 June 1985, Gleeson in his address quipped that he knew more about plumbing than libraries. This may have been a throwaway remark, but it was not without a grain of truth.⁵³ The historian, Josephine Laffin, interviewed Gleeson in 1997. Gleeson said that his predecessor, Matthew Beovich, was 'so much a more learned man than I was and he always remained a student'.⁵⁴ He said that both Beovich and he had grown up in poor families but Beovich had not worked with his hands – he was 'more a man of the book' whereas 'fixing engines and things that was my life'.⁵⁵

During Gleeson's eight years as a student, the rector of the seminary was the Irish-born Jesuit, Henry Johnston, of whom the students spoke with 'awe and little

⁵¹ Students for the Catholic priesthood in Australia now have the opportunity to receive university degrees. Manly College, founded in 1889, was constituted an Ecclesiastical Faculty of Theology by the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries and Universities in 1954; in 1976 it was re-named the Catholic Institute of Sydney. The Melbourne College of Divinity was constituted in 1910 by an act of the Parliament of Victoria and became the MCD University of Divinity on 1 January 2012. The Adelaide College of Divinity came into existence in 1979 and the following year, in conjunction with the Flinders University of South Australia, offered the degree of Bachelor of Theology. Subsequently, other undergraduate and postgraduate courses became available. The Catholic Theological College withdrew from the Adelaide College of Divinity at the end of 2014.

⁵² Extracts from Public Records Office Victoria, Teacher Registration Records. These extracts include Gleeson's original application and various official letters including his application for registration which contains his assertion that as inspector of Catholic primary schools he had fulfilled the requirement for teaching experience. Documents provided by Olivia Parkinson, archivist for the Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne Congregation, and are in the author's possession.

⁵³ The author was present at the opening and noted the comment.

⁵⁴ Josephine Laffin interviews James William Gleeson at his residence 'Ennis', 8 October 1997, 4. Copy of the transcript of the interview in author's possession.

⁵⁵ Laffin interviews Gleeson, 4.

affection'.⁵⁶ A student who was ordained to the priesthood in 1946 recalled an incident that might support this assertion:

I still remember with a cold shiver my first Saturday revision in second Philosophy. Father Henry Johnston bowled me the first question to which I could find no reply, and after a silence of forty minutes called off the class saying we would try again on the Monday. That was an experience I have never been able to forget.⁵⁷

Johnston stressed the 'seriousness of the whole enterprise' of preparing for priesthood and told first-year students that they were unlikely to achieve the goal. There was no compulsion on any student to remain at the college, a point affirmed by the rector at the end of each year when he stated that 'he did not necessarily expect any of us to return the next March'.⁵⁸ The students were expected to absorb the contents of their text books as they could access the main library only with permission.⁵⁹ The regime appears to have been strict and challenging. It also appears to have been needlessly harsh.

The influence of Charles Mayne SJ, Dean of Discipline (rector 1947-58) was significant.⁶⁰ John Molony recalled that: 'The vitality of Melbourne Society on an intellectual level did not spread as far as Werribee', but Mayne endeavoured to rectify this deficiency by bringing in outside speakers, including women.⁶¹ Those who spoke of the lay apostolate and Catholic Action appear to have been the most influential. Mayne had as his primary concern the 'spiritual and mental formation of the laity so that they could properly exercise their responsibilities in their daily lives'.⁶² When Mayne was found dead at his desk in the Kew parish house on 28 November 1990, Gleeson wrote a tribute to his former teacher who had joined the staff at Corpus Christi

⁵⁶Molony, *Luther's Pine*, 110. Molony entered the seminary the year Gleeson was ordained to the priesthood.

⁵⁷ *Corpus Christi* magazine (Melbourne: Corpus Christi Priests' Association, 1974), 40.

⁵⁸ Molony, *Luther's Pine*, 111.

⁵⁹ Shinnick, David John. *Memoirs of David John Shinnick 1930 to 2000*, vol 1, 1930 to 1970, 'Youthful Yearnings and Beyond' (Adelaide: Author, 2002), 118.

⁶⁰ Charles Mayne SJ taught at Werribee in 1942-58. Mayne was born in Manchester, England, but reared in Ireland.

⁶¹ Molony, *Luther's Pine*, 129. See also John Molony, *By Wendouree: memories 1951-1963* (Ballan, Victoria, Connor Court Publishing Co, 2010), 305-6.

⁶² Molony, *Luther's Pine*, 129.

College in 1942 when Gleeson was halfway through his priestly formation. Gleeson found Mayne to be a wise confessor and spiritual director, and an enthusiastic teacher who ‘continually broadened our vision of what it meant to be a Christian, a Catholic and a priest’.⁶³ Gleeson recalled:

One very special memory I have of Father Mayne was his constant effort to assist me and all priests to come to an ever deeper appreciation of the role and responsibility of lay people in the church and in the world. In no way did his efforts detract from the role of the priest. He wanted us to recognise that we had a special call and gift as priests, not to do the work of the laity, but to breathe in the Spirit to enable them to fulfil their role.⁶⁴

Gleeson absorbed this lesson and as a priest and bishop acted in accordance with it.

In the above-mentioned interview with Laffin, Gleeson said that Bartholomew Augustine (Bob) Santamaria, who in 1937 became involved in the Catholic Action movement, visited the seminary often and addressed the students on the lay apostolate and social action. Gleeson said that he had ‘great reverence’ for Bob Santamaria and that he was really motivated by his words. This respect was to decline when Santamaria formed the Catholic Social Studies Movement (‘The Movement’) and became covertly involved in the political arena, a move that caused serious divisions in the Australian Labor Party and the Australian Episcopal Conference.⁶⁵

The years spent in preparation for ordination to the priesthood at the Werribee seminary were devoted mainly to the study of philosophy, theology, and Sacred Scripture. However, during the first year, described as rhetoric, the students studied Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, history, and the world of philosophy and literature.⁶⁶ The formation given to Gleeson and his fellow students described below must be borne in mind if their ministry before Vatican II is to be understood.

⁶³ Tribute to Fr Charles Mayne SJ by Emeritus Archbishop J. Gleeson. Series 0128-0005 ACAA.

⁶⁴ Tribute to Fr Charles Mayne.

⁶⁵ For the Movement from an Adelaide perspective, see Josephine Laffin, *Matthew Beovich: a biography* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2008), Chapter 6. The most comprehensive account is Bruce Duncan’s *Crusade or Conspiracy: Catholics and the Anti-Communist Struggle in Australia* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2001).

⁶⁶ Tony Ryan, ‘An Interview with Emeritus Archbishop James W. Gleeson’.

During Gleeson's seminary days the Church was addressing the problems proceeding from the Enlightenment, also known as the Age of Reason. This eighteenth-century intellectual movement in Europe had its roots in the 'scientific revolution and advances of the seventeenth century'.⁶⁷ Proponents of the Enlightenment asserted that reliable knowledge was derived from 'observation, experiment, and reason'. When this premise was accepted the conclusion was that religious truth could not be verified.

This challenge to Church teaching and authority was met by the Apostolic Constitution on Faith, *Dei Filius*, approved by the First Vatican Council in April 1870. In Chapter 2, the Council affirmed that 'God, the origin and end of all things, can be known with certainty by the natural light of human reason from the things that he has created'.⁶⁸ But it added that it was the 'good pleasure of his wisdom and goodness to reveal himself and the eternal decrees of his will to the human race in another and supernatural way'.⁶⁹

On 4 August 1879 Pope Leo XIII issued the encyclical *Aeterni Patris*. The letter was an impassioned plea to the Catholic bishops to enshrine the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas in seminaries and academies to 'furnish to studious youth a generous and copious supply of those purest streams of wisdom flowing inexhaustibly from the precious fountainhead of the Angelic Doctor'.⁷⁰ The pope linked Aquinas with the Council of Trent, recalling that 'the Fathers of Trent made it part of the order of conclave to lay upon the altar, together with Sacred Scripture and the decrees of the supreme Pontiffs, the 'Summa' of Thomas Aquinas, whence to seek counsel, reason, and inspiration'.⁷¹

⁶⁷ 'Enlightenment' in Matthew Bunson, *OSVs Encyclopedia of Catholic History*, rev ed (Huntington, Indiana, USA: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2004), 326.

⁶⁸ John F Clarkson, ed, *The Church Teaches: documents of the Church in English translation* (Rockford, Illinois: Tan Books, 1973), 27.

⁶⁹ *The Church Teaches*, 27

⁷⁰ *Aeterni Patris*, par 26.

⁷¹ *Aeterni Patris*, par 22.

Thomism, generally regarded as the zenith of Scholastic philosophy, was deemed to provide a sound foundation for Catholic theology and a tool to refute attacks on the faith.⁷² In the nineteenth century, the name neo-Thomism was applied to writings that claimed to expound and apply the methods and principles of Thomas Aquinas.⁷³ The weakness of Thomistic philosophy was that it did not think historically and it lacked a subjective starting point. Since René Descartes (1596-1650), the ‘chief architect of the seventeenth century intellectual revolution which destabilized ... scholasticism, and laid down the philosophical foundations for ... the “modern” scientific age’, the thinking subject had been the starting point of enquiry.⁷⁴ But the drafters of *Aeterni Patris* confidently ‘distinguished the timeless, universal Aristotelian science of the Angelic Doctor from the individual, subjective, and historical thought of the modern philosophers’.⁷⁵ This was an example of the Church ‘resisting all the major social and cultural forces which were shaping the modern world’, a resistance that dated from the time of the Council of Trent.⁷⁶ John Molony, who studied at Corpus Christi College and the Urban College of Propaganda in Rome and was ordained there in 1950, recalled that the theology he was taught under the broad umbrella of neo-Scholasticism or neo-Thomism, ‘had little relevance to my spiritual life, to my daily life, to society in general and indeed to any life except its own’.⁷⁷

A similar view was expressed by Peter Gough, a journalist with the Australian weekly news magazine, *The Bulletin*. He said: ‘Vatican II has erected high barriers

⁷² Scholastic philosophy, the philosophy of the ‘schools’, arose in medieval universities, in 13th-14th centuries and was associated with the names of the major philosophers, Aquinas, Scotus and Ockham. From the 15th century it was replaced successively by Renaissance humanism, rationalism and empiricism.

⁷³ The origin of neo-Thomism is usually linked to Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical, *Aeterni Patris*.

⁷⁴ Honderich, Ted, ed, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, 2nd ed (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 201.

⁷⁵ Gerald A. McCool, *Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century: the quest for a unitary method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1977), 235.

⁷⁶ Neil Ormerod, ‘The Laity in the Australian Church’ in Neil Ormerod, Ormond Rush, David Pascoe, Clare Johnson, Joel Hodge, eds, *Vatican II: reception and implementation in the Australian Church* (Melbourne: Garratt Publishing, 2012), 63.

⁷⁷ John N Molony, *By Wendouree: memories 1951-1963* (Ballan, Victoria: Connor Court Publishing Co, 2010), 79.

against a return to former ways that knew neither free-speech nor articulate dissent.’ Gough also asserted that before Vatican II most seminaries taught a brand of philosophy and theology ‘better suited to angels than men’, the deep human involvements that are the lot of human beings living in a ‘world of sweat and tears’ were cast aside ‘before the angelic niceties of scholastic definitions’.⁷⁸ This neo-Thomism was the basis of the philosophy and theology Gleeson learned in his seminary days.⁷⁹

From the 1870s onwards the Catholic Church contended with biblical criticism. The historical-critical method of interpreting the Bible involved ‘textual criticism’ which dealt with the discrepancies in the various texts and versions of the Bible; ‘literary criticism’ endeavoured to isolate the various sources present in a text; the ‘critical study of forms’ revealed the different types of writing present in the Bible, which is really a library of different writing types; and ‘redaction criticism’ treated the editorial process leading to the final work. This method could raise questions concerning the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible.⁸⁰ The Church, committed to preserving the Scriptures as the Word of God, reacted at times with intemperate language to the historical-critical approach. Pope Leo XIII in the encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* (1893) asserted ‘the sense of Holy Scripture can nowhere be found incorrupt outside the Church, and cannot be expected to be found in writers who, being without the true faith, only gnaw the bark of the Sacred Scripture, and never attain its pith’.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Peter Gough, ‘A Year after Vatican II: breathing new life into Catholicism’, *The Bulletin*, 12 November 1966, 31

⁷⁹ It is relevant to note the twentieth-century philosophical movement, Transcendental Thomism, that adds to the fundamentals of theistic thought the insights from modern schools of philosophy. Two such theologians, who were exact contemporaries, were the Jesuits Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan (1904-84). Due to such writers, Scholasticism remains a feature of the philosophical landscape. In 2016 *The Cambridge Companion to the Summa Theologiae* was published. It contains 24 essays that view the *Summa* as a classic Catholic writing that is an integral part of the story of Western thought.

⁸⁰ *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church: address of His Holiness John Paul II and document of the Pontifical Biblical Commission* (Boston: St Paul Books, 1993), 35-8.

⁸¹ *Providentissimus Deus*, par15.

The turning point for Catholic biblical studies came with the encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, issued by Pope Pius XII in 1943. This letter ‘marked a complete about-face and inaugurated the greatest renewal of interest in the Bible that the Roman Catholic Church has ever seen’.⁸² ‘Literary criticism’, ‘textual criticism’ and the ‘literary mode’ were encouraged as means to better understand the ‘Divine letters’. The severe criticism to which scripture scholars had been subjected was rejected:

Let all the other sons of the Church bear in mind that the efforts of these resolute laborers in the vineyard of the Lord should be judged not only with equity and justice, but also with the greatest charity; all moreover should abhor that intemperate zeal which imagines that whatever is new should for that very reason be opposed or suspected.⁸³

Catholic critical scholarship following this encyclical was marked by intensive growth. This indicated that before Vatican II scholars were preparing the ground that finally produced fruit. The Council did not come solely from the initiative of Pope John XXIII though it is impossible to exaggerate his influence. There were movements favouring change building up for years before the Council began.

However, the impact of this renewal came to seminary life well after Gleeson had been ordained to the priesthood. Given his acknowledgement that he was not a student as was his predecessor Beovich, he probably had a literalist understanding of the Scriptures. A student who arrived at Werribee four years after Gleeson had been ordained recalled: ‘Probably the least helpful subject I studied was scripture. This was, of course, before the Church’s acceptance of critical approaches to its understanding.’⁸⁴ Archbishop Derek Worlock of Liverpool was a contemporary of Gleeson. Both were born in 1920 and both were present at Vatican II, Worlock as an expert (*peritus*) on the role of lay people in the Church and as secretary to the English and Welsh Bishops.

⁸² Raymond E Brown and Thomas Aquinas Collins, ‘Church Pronouncements’ in Raymond E Brown ed, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 1167, no 6.

⁸³ *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, par 47.

⁸⁴ *Memoirs of David John Shinnick 1930 to 2000, vol 1, 1930 to 1970 ‘Youthful Yearnings and Beyond’* (Adelaide: Author, 2000), 86.

During his seminary days in England, Worlock likewise found the lectures in Sacred Scripture ‘dry as dust’ but nonetheless he gained an appreciation of the Word of God as something real and relevant to life. Scripture was a poor relation in the seminary curriculum at the time, viewed as something for the Protestants and not ‘a Catholic thing’.⁸⁵

A Werribee student who was ordained in 1964 recalled how the Second Vatican Council ‘broke through existing patterns’ in the college.⁸⁶ Students were able to read the works of significant European theologians who made considerable contributions to the Council, such as the French Dominican Yves Congar and the Jesuits, Henri de Lubac and Karl Rahner. All three had been under suspicion by Roman authorities before the Council but were vindicated by it. The students also benefited from the lectures of visiting scripture scholars, the Vincentian, Bruce Vawter and the Jesuit, Robert North.⁸⁷ There was also an ‘excellent range of journals available in the college library’.⁸⁸ Rules governing access to the library had apparently changed since the 1940s and 1950s.

Some glimpses of Gleeson’s seminary days are provided in the college magazine *Corpus Christi 1974*, in the chapter headed *In Diebus Illis*: in 1938, ‘J. Brosnan is deposed from the honourable position of Beadle of rhetoric English on grounds of inefficiency, and is replaced by J Gleeson’; in 1940, ‘New Prefects: Theology – F Ruth; Philosophy – J Gleeson’; in 1941, ‘Best and fairest footballer – J. Kiniry; most improved – J. Gleeson’.⁸⁹ It is also noteworthy that in his second year at the seminary Gleeson joined the Total Abstinence Society of Corpus Christi College. On 16 June 1939 he pledged to abstain from intoxicating drink for life. The signed document

⁸⁵ John Furnival and Ann Knowles, *Archbishop Derek Worlock: his personal journey* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1998), 55.

⁸⁶ Val (Valentine) Noone, *Disturbing the War: Melbourne Catholics and Vietnam* (Melbourne: Spectrum Publications, 1993), 74.

⁸⁷ Other significant theologians were Edward Schillebeeckx, John Courtney Murray and Hans Küng. See McBrien, *Catholicism*, 662-66.

⁸⁸ Val Noone, *Disturbing the War*, 74.

⁸⁹ *Corpus Christi* magazine (Melbourne: Corpus Christi Priests’ Association, 1974), 80; 82; 83.

declared that he made this commitment for the greater glory of God, in reparation for the sins of intemperance, and to obtain strength for others to resist the abuse of alcohol. In making this pledge, he asserted he was relying on the help of God's Holy Mother, St Joseph, all the Angels and Saints, and the grace of God.⁹⁰ Later in life Gleeson, despite this youthful pledge, did at times, in moderation, enjoy alcoholic drinks. During his time in the seminary he and the other students were called up for military service but were subsequently granted exemption.

A clear statement of how much theological change was required of Gleeson and Beovich because of Vatican II emerged in Gleeson's interview with Josephine Laffin. He did not think Beovich was 'aware of or even open to the developments in theology which were occurring in Europe particularly'.⁹¹ Both he and Beovich were accepting of the early drafts of proposed documents, prepared by the Preparatory Commissions, 'that were later put in the bin', drafts which 'harmonised with our experience of Church and theology'.⁹²

Four other influences

The *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (index of prohibited books) was a legacy of the Counter-Reformation that was to continue until Vatican II.⁹³ The *Index* was a list of books and publications deemed to be contrary to Church teaching and morals and therefore not to be read by Catholics without special permission. Since the invention of the printing press by the German goldsmith Johannes Gutenberg (1398-1468), mass production of books and the rapid dissemination of knowledge throughout Europe became possible. The Council of Trent at its 24th session in 1563 considered how this could be a threat to the faith of Catholics but left it to Pope Pius IV (1559-65) to

⁹⁰ Certificate, Series 0129-0014, ACAA.

⁹¹ Laffin interviews Gleeson, 5.

⁹² Laffin interviews Gleeson, 5.

⁹³ The term 'Counter-Reformation' has in recent times been replaced by 'Catholic-Reformation' to indicate that even prior to Luther there were reform movements within the Catholic Church.

complete the work, known as the Tridentine Index. The 20th and final edition was published in 1948 and in June 1966 it was abolished by Pope Paul VI.⁹⁴ The *Index* fostered the ‘image of the disapproving and embattled Church, out of step and sympathy with what was going on in the modern world’.⁹⁵ It also kept both clergy and laity separated from the ‘major intellectual works of modern times’⁹⁶ The *Index* shielded Gleeson from contact with some of the developments in other churches and religious communities – not an ideal preparation for understanding the world in which he was to exercise his priestly ministry.

Before his ordination to the priesthood, Gleeson would have sworn the Oath against Modernism, as did the author of this thesis. In the pontifical letter, *Sacrorum Antistitum*, Pope Pius X, in September 1910, required all clergy, pastors, confessors, preachers, religious superiors, and professors of philosophy or theology in seminaries to take this oath which remained a requirement until 1967.⁹⁷ The oath required adherence to all ‘condemnations, declarations, and all the prescripts’ contained in the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* (1907) and the decree *Lamentabili* (1907) which was a syllabus of sixty-five alleged errors. Modernism was an intellectual movement that developed within the Church in the late nineteenth century which ‘attempted to reconcile the teachings of the Church with modern advances in science, historical and biblical research, and philosophical trends’.⁹⁸ However, it was viewed by Pius X as ‘the synthesis of all heresies’.⁹⁹ The oath stalled the progress of Catholic theology and it was not until Vatican II that theologians felt free to ‘depart from the traditional textbook

⁹⁴ The 1917 Code of Canon Law included 22 Canons (Canons 1384-1405) that dealt with permission to publish books on religious subjects and the types of books Catholics were forbidden to read.

⁹⁵ See article by Father Peter Hebblethwaite SJ, *Southern Cross*, 15 July 1966, 5.

⁹⁶ McBride, *Catholicism*, 636.

⁹⁷ The Oath against Modernism was rescinded by a decree of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (the former Holy Office) in July 1967.

⁹⁸ Lawrence F Barmann, *Baron Friedrich Von Hügel and the Modernist Crisis in England* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972). ‘Modernism’, Matthew Bunson, ed, *Encyclopedia of Catholic History*, revised (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2004), 606.

⁹⁹ Pope St. Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, par 39.

approach and study theological questions in their wider historical and even ecumenical contexts'.¹⁰⁰ At Werribee Gleeson learned his theology from traditional textbooks. In the encyclical *Pascendi Dominici Gregis* the pope decreed that in every diocese a 'Council of Vigilance' was to be established to 'watch most carefully for every trace and sign of Modernism both in publications and in teaching'.¹⁰¹ The stand against suspect Modernists caused the formation of a 'network of reactionary espionage' eager to report to Rome any suggestion of Modernism, a 'network so despicable that Pope Benedict XV himself formally censured it'.¹⁰²

Doctor Leslie Rumble MSC (1892-1975), a convert from the Anglican Church, powerfully influenced Catholic attitudes in Australia and the world.¹⁰³ His 'confident certainties' nourished and expressed the culture of Australian Catholicism at the time. He was the 'world's first regular priest-broadcaster', who for 'nearly half a century was the English-speaking world's most outstanding apologist for the Roman Catholic faith'.¹⁰⁴ His *Radio Replies* were featured in diocesan newspapers, and four book versions were produced 'which achieved the staggering circulation of more than seven million copies'.¹⁰⁵ Rumble presented definitive and clear answers to questions submitted by listeners. Typical of his approach was his contribution to the Adelaide Catholic weekly, the *Southern Cross*, in March 1956. He asserted that a Catholic could not contribute to a non-Catholic church because, no matter how sincere non-Catholics may be, they were adherents of a false religion, set up in opposition to the Catholic

¹⁰⁰ McBrien, *Catholicism*, 55.

¹⁰¹ Pope St. Pius X, *Pascendi Dominici Gregis*, par 55.

¹⁰² 'Church Pronouncements' Article 72, *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, 1167, no 5. A Council of Vigilance was listed in the Adelaide Archdiocesan entry in the Australasian Catholic Directory from 1916-40. From 1940-75 it was listed as Diocesan Censors and Council of Vigilance.

¹⁰³ Edmund Campion, 'Rumble, Leslie Audoen (1892-1975)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/rumble-leslie-audoen-11584/text20679>, published first in hardcopy vol 16 (2002). Accessed online 3 October 2017.

¹⁰⁴ Alan Gill, 'The Turbulent Years of Doctor Rumble', *Sydney Morning Herald 'Weekend Magazine'*, Saturday, 15 November 1975, 14.

¹⁰⁵ Gill, 'The Turbulent Years', 14.

Church and teaching doctrines at ‘variance with Catholic teaching’.¹⁰⁶ Such an attitude would have been shared by Gleeson at the time. Rumble remained loyal to the Church but was very unhappy with the changes instigated by Vatican II.

Gleeson would have frequently prayed the prayer for the conversion of Australia. At the Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand the bishops directed that the prayer should be recited by the faithful ‘frequently, even daily’. The prayer asked that ‘our brethren outside the Church may receive the light of faith’ so that ‘Australia may become one in faith under one shepherd’. The prayer was based upon the belief that those outside the Catholic Church had not received the gift of faith, at least not in its fullness, and if they had done so they would have joined the Catholic Church. This attitude was in line with the encyclical of Pope Pius XI *Mortalium Animos* (1928) which stated plainly that the union of Christians could only be furthered by ‘promoting the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it, for in the past they have unhappily left it’.¹⁰⁷ During Vatican II this prayer was replaced by a prayer for the unity of all Christians, a unity already partially realised through the sharing of a common baptism.

For the first twenty-five years of his life, Gleeson lived in a Catholic Church profoundly affected by the Protestant Reformations, the Council of Trent, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the First Vatican Council that had defined the primacy and infallibility of the Pope. Other Christian denominations were deemed to be heretical or schismatic and the Church saw itself as being in opposition to the world that was seen as a danger to the faith of Catholics. The style of the Church, the way it presented itself, was ‘judicial and legislative’.

¹⁰⁶ *Southern Cross*, 23 March 1956, 4.

¹⁰⁷ *Mortalium Animos*, par 10.

On the other hand, Gleeson grew up in a small rural community where the people needed to work and socialise together; the different Christian groups mingled more freely. There was not the sectarianism that was obvious in some larger regional and urban settings. There was mutual respect in a way foreshadowing what came to be known as the ecumenical movement that sought unity among Christians. The Catholic Church only became fully committed to the ecumenical movement during the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council.

Gleeson's early formation was in a Church and a society that might be termed as stable. Vatican II and the 'remembered sixties' wrought massive changes in both Church and society. An understanding of Gleeson's early years and seminary days makes it possible to comprehend the new mind-set and new value system needed in a changing Church and society.

Chapter 2

GLEESON THE PRIEST

Gleeson was one of eleven young men ordained to the priesthood by Archbishop Matthew Beovich in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Adelaide, on 25 July 1945. This was, and still is, the largest ordination ceremony celebrated in the history of the Adelaide archdiocese. Nine of the priests belonged to the Passionist Congregation; Gleeson and Fr John O'Donohue were ordained for the archdiocese.¹ This ordination ceremony took place as the Second World War was coming to an end and the Atomic Age began with the detonation of the first nuclear (atomic) bomb, 'The Gadget', in New Mexico on 16 July 1945, and the bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August. The Atomic Age brought profound changes in socio-political thinking and accelerated the rate of technological development. This was also the time when political and military tension between the United States of America and the Soviet Union resulted in what came to be called the Cold War.²

Early days in the priesthood

Gleeson celebrated his first Mass at St Joseph's Convent, Kensington, on 26 July, attended by his parents, family and many relations. This reflected his gratitude to the Sisters of Saint Joseph who had assisted him by their example and with his secondary education. On Sunday, 29 July, Gleeson celebrated Mass at Saint Canice's Church, Snowtown, his home parish. People attended from Bute and Blyth and from other points of the scattered parish. Gleeson was the first priest to come from the Snowtown parish. After Mass, the people assembled to show their regard for Gleeson. Two of the speakers

¹ *Southern Cross*, 27 July 1945, 7. See also the report in the *Southern Cross*, 10 September 1971, 2, on Archbishop Gleeson ordaining nine priests for the archdiocese of Adelaide on 4 September 1971.

² The Cold War was deemed to end in November 1990 when NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries signed a treaty.

stressed the sacrifices made by the parents of priests to enable their sons to be educated and prepared for the 'highest vocation under Heaven'. Gleeson was then handed a wallet of notes from the congregation and a preacher's stole from one family. It was recorded that the young priest responded with warmth and 'tactfully chose his words and wisely his subject'.³ There were no indications of what this tact and wisdom had involved.

Sacred Heart College rejoiced in the fact that, for the first time, three former students had been ordained together, thus bringing the number of ordained former students to twenty-one. Included in this number were bishops, Thomas Fox of Wilcannia-Forbes and Francis Henschke of Wagga. The former scholars of Sacred Heart College ordained with Gleeson were Martin Kearns and Kevin Dower from the Passionist Congregation. On 30 July Gleeson officiated at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament for the boarders at Sacred Heart College. Next morning he celebrated the community Mass and later in the day was deacon at a Solemn High Mass celebrated by Martin Kearns. Following this Mass there were speeches in the College Hall and the newly ordained were each given a 'silver ablution bottle'.

This gift deserves some explanation. After the distribution of communion at Mass the priest was required to purify the chalice and paten. Any particles of bread on the paten were placed in the chalice and the priest added water and drank the contents. However, if he had another Mass to celebrate he could not do this as it would break the fast he was required to observe before celebrating Mass. So the priest poured this water into a 'silver ablution bottle' to be consumed at his last Mass for the day. The author, as an altar boy, recalled priests using small glass bottles for this purpose but clearly there

³ Martin L Burns, *Saint Canice's Southern Centenary: the Catholic Church at Snowtown, S.A. 1882-1982* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1982), 116-17.

were more elaborate containers. These gifts are a reminder of how precisely the law was applied in the Church in which Gleeson was ordained.

Gleeson was appointed assistant priest in the Cathedral parish in December 1945 and retained this position for twelve months. However, owing to the sickness of the parish priest of Snowtown, Gleeson was sent back to his home parish for the Christmas celebrations. In the Cathedral parish Gleeson recalled that he enjoyed a ‘tremendous variety of work’. He knocked on every door in the south-east corner of the city and got to know many people, some of whom were extremely poor. At that time the visitation of parishioners in their homes was a significant part of a priest’s responsibilities.

Archbishop Beovich, at clergy conferences, conducted irregularly, but usually one to four times each year, often stressed the importance of this means of knowing and encouraging parishioners.⁴ Beovich, in his 1955 report to Rome on the archdiocese, estimated the Catholic population to be 94 000 ‘including the good, the indifferent and the wayward’ but added: ‘The people are helped by constant parochial visitation of priests in their parishes – a most important and indispensable duty.’⁵ Gleeson, in an article written after his retirement, recalled:

The established priority in pastoral care was the visitation of homes. I visited about 1000 homes in the south-eastern section of the City in my first year, travelling initially on a bicycle and then on a succession of second-hand motor bikes. The verandas of most houses fronted directly on to the streets and their frontages were very narrow. Whatever about the living conditions, the situation certainly simplified home visitation. No time was lost between the front gate and the front door.⁶

Gleeson was assistant chaplain to the Royal Adelaide Hospital and to some hospitals in the south-east of the city. He also assisted with the task of providing

⁴ Beovich personal diaries. Entry concerning the Clergy Conference held on 23 June 1953: ‘Inter alia, again exhorted priests re parochial visitation’, Series 0175, ACAA. Beovich also kept office diaries. See also, Molony, *By Wendouree*, 283; Robert Pascoe, *The Feasts & Seasons of John F. Kelly* (Melbourne; Allen & Unwin, 2006), 80, 85.

⁵ ‘Relatio of the archbishop of Adelaide of the diocese of Adelaide in South Australia 1955’. Series 1.20, Box 169, ACAA.

⁶ James William Gleeson, ‘The Church in Adelaide during my Years as a Priest and Bishop’ *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 65, no 3 (1988), 293. Some of these homes are still inhabited.

religious instruction to the Catholic children in state schools. At the invitation of the Catholic Hour Committee he contributed to the programme which was broadcast on radio station 5KA; in December 1946 his topic was Advent, and in January 1947 the Immaculate Conception.⁷ In December 1949, Gleeson's appointment as secretary of the Catholic Hour Committee was confirmed.⁸ He retained this position until 1957 when he became the auxiliary bishop. Committee minutes provided glimpses of the practical involvement which characterised Gleeson's life. In March 1952 Gleeson stated his preparedness to make a box to contain a turntable and pick up arm, and an amplifier, as one unit.⁹ He was one of the speakers in a Catholic Hour segment that gave a dramatic presentation of a call to a sick person.¹⁰ In 1955 Gleeson reported that he had received complaints that he was 'appearing too often' on the programme and sought the guidance of the committee. The response of the committee members was that Gleeson should continue as the chief interviewer.¹¹

Gleeson also found time to contribute to the work of the Australian Catholic Truth Society that produced booklets for a popular readership explaining Catholic teachings. In the porch of most churches there was a rack containing these publications. In 1953, eight years after his ordination, and aged thirty-two, Gleeson was the author of *Family Life and Dangers of Today*, price four pence. He gave advice to husbands, wives and children. An example was his attitude to modest dressing. He asserted that 'aided and abetted by materialistic and naturalistic philosophies' designers of dress adopted a 'dress as you dare' policy, completely ignoring the question of original sin and the 'psychological and physiological differences between men and women'. He then added: 'Rather perhaps than forgetting it, they are deliberately acting upon it in the

⁷ The Catholic Hour was first broadcast from radio station 5KA on 12 December 1943.

⁸ Minutes of the Catholic Hour Committee, 15 December 1949, Series 8.30, Box 127, Catholic communications, ACAA.

⁹ Minutes of the Catholic Hour Committee, 7 March 1952.

¹⁰ Minutes of the Catholic Hour Committee, 27 August 1954.

¹¹ Minutes of the Catholic Hour Committee, 29 July 1955.

service of the Devil.’¹² But the Catholic Church had the remedy: ‘We must keep in mind the fact that in our Catholic Faith and in the sacramental helps supplied by it, we have the answer to our needs.’¹³ The idea that ‘Father knows best’ appears to have been accepted by many, when a young celibate male was able to provide advice for married persons and families.

Sisters of Mercy Teachers Training College

In 1947 Archbishop Beovich sent Gleeson to the Sisters of Mercy Teachers Training College at Ascot Vale, in Melbourne, as preparation for his work as inspector of Catholic primary schools in the archdiocese.¹⁴ This college was destined to become part of the Australian Catholic University, which was formed in 1990 by the amalgamation of the Catholic teachers’ training colleges in eastern Australia. In the 1940s, the college had a small number of students. During Gleeson’s year, there were about a dozen women religious, an equal number of lay women, and Gleeson who was the sole male student. The course required one year of academic work, followed by a year of teaching experience, before applying for registration. Gleeson said the year at the college was a ‘hands-on course’ in the style of that time. The priests in the Catholic Education Office in Melbourne allowed him to accompany them when they were inspecting schools and also arranged for him to do the same with state school inspectors.¹⁵

But during this year Gleeson had to do more than his academic work. Archbishop Beovich, who was responsible for the Young Christian Students (YCS), a Catholic Action body, appointed Gleeson as its National Chaplain. This required Gleeson to spend one day a week in the National Office of the YCS. He was also an

¹² Fr J W Gleeson, *Family Life and Dangers of Today* (Melbourne: Catholic Truth Society Record, 1953), 26.

¹³ Gleeson, *Family Life*, 18.

¹⁴ Beovich personal diaries, 14 January 1947.

¹⁵ Transcript of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) Oral History Project, Part 1, Shinnick interviewing Gleeson, 3. Adelaide Catholic Education Office Archives.

assistant priest in the parish of Kensington, an inner suburb of Melbourne, which he claimed was an interesting experience because he had never before worked in, or experienced, a parish in an industrial area.¹⁶ These extracurricular responsibilities suggest that the academic segment of the course could not have been too onerous.

The Catholic Education Office

Gleeson was appointed inspector of Catholic primary schools on his return to Adelaide at the end of his academic year at the training college. He then claimed that his work as inspector satisfied the requirement for teaching experience.¹⁷ The Victorian Council of Public Education accepted this and in September 1948 awarded him a teacher's certificate, primary division.¹⁸ He continued as inspector of Catholic primary schools in the archdiocese of Adelaide until 1952 when he succeeded Monsignor William Russell as director of Catholic Education, a position he held until December 1958.¹⁹

The official dates of Gleeson's appointments do not reveal the full extent of his duties. After about three years as inspector of Catholic schools, Gleeson was the de facto director. Monsignor Russell was appointed parish priest of the Woodville parish which was of considerable size, and growing, so he was unable to give much time to the work of the education office. At this time, the education office had one full-time secretary and one part-time secretary, so Gleeson would have had heavy demands on his time and energy. A further responsibility came when Beovich asked Gleeson to provide religious instruction for the migrant children in the Woodside Migrant Camp that was located within the Woodside Army Camp. Assisted by members of the Legion of Mary

¹⁶ Transcript of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project, Part 1, Shinnick interviewing Gleeson, 7.

¹⁷ Extracts from Public Records Office, Victoria, Teacher Registration Records. These extracts include Gleeson's original application and various official letters including his application for registration which contained his assertion that as inspector of Catholic primary schools he had fulfilled the requirement for teaching experience. Documents supplied by Olivia Parkinson, archivist of the Sisters of Mercy, Melbourne Congregation, are in the author's possession.

¹⁸ Certificate in Series 129, ACAA.

¹⁹ Beovich personal diaries, 2 September 1952; 2 September 1958.

and the Dominican Sisters from Cabra Convent, Gleeson attended to this task each Sunday. He recalled that Beovich asked him to attend to this apostolic work for three months but it lasted for three years.²⁰ His involvement of lay people in this work indicated that he had taken to heart Fr Charles Mayne's teaching that a priest was called to empower the laity for apostolic work.

Chaplaincies

Gleeson lived at the presbytery in Stanley Street, Lower North Adelaide, after his year at the teachers training college and had many commitments, apart from inspecting schools and directing Catholic education. When he was appointed auxiliary bishop in 1957, the *Southern Cross* summarised his involvement in the archdiocese and the civic community during his years as a priest. Within the church community, Gleeson was the diocesan chaplain to the Young Christian Students and chaplain to the Saint John Bosco Society for Catholic student teachers at Adelaide Teachers College. The future director of Catholic education, John McDonald, a student at the time, noted that the Society was 'a very good group'. Gleeson was also chaplain to the Assisian Guild for Catholic teachers employed in departmental schools and director of the Pontifical Mission Aid Society.²¹

At the meeting of the diocesan consultors in December 1953, Beovich announced that Gleeson was to be chaplain to the Springfield Convent of Mercy and the sisters' proposed new college.²² The appointment was to take effect after January 1954. The Sisters of Mercy had taken possession of a suitable property for the project on 7 May 1953. Mercedes College opened its doors to about eighty boarders on 8 February 1954 and about sixty day scholars the following day. Sr M Philip (Mavis) McBride was told she was the principal of the new college on 20 November 1953, her

²⁰ South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project, Part 1, 12.

²¹ *Southern Cross*, 29 March 1957, 1

²² Beovich personal diaries, 16 December 1953.

thirtieth birthday. A young principal and a young chaplain faced a new and challenging project.

At Mercedes College Gleeson demonstrated his energy and his practical skills. A large building on the property was in part used as a residence for the sisters but there was not enough sleeping space for all the sisters, known as ‘the Springfield Eleven’. Consequently, the principal and one other sister slept on the front verandah until the milkman began arriving early and Gleeson ‘expressed disapproval of the possible immodesty’.²³ The sisters retreated to the patio until Gleeson erected a tent for them. Gleeson, despite a heavy workload, put ‘great gusto’ into his role as chaplain. He was frequently in overalls on Saturday mornings and could be called on at any time to fix things that were malfunctioning. He secured a bulldozer free of charge and supervised the grading, planting, watering and weeding of the oval. He also assisted in the clean-up after events such as a ‘famous Garden Party’. Gleeson visited classes on Monday mornings, his day off, and had dinner and tea with the boarders on Sundays. On the tennis court – there was only one – he gave the A Grade Tennis Team some worthwhile practice. ‘He was gregarious and approachable, fond of children and a capable teacher, but always attracted respect.’²⁴ The Mercedes school annual for the year 1956 thanked Gleeson for his unfailing interest in all college activities and added: ‘And we mean literally “all activities” whether it be instructing children, helping parents, planting ovals or taking part in a tennis tournament.’²⁵ During his time as chaplain to Mercedes College he also found time to make the counter and shelves for Gleeson’s Utility Store, opened by his brother Ray, at Klemzig.

²³ Anne McLay, *Women on the Move: Mercy’s Triple Spiral: a history of the Adelaide Sisters of Mercy, Ireland to Argentina 1856-1880 to South Australia 1880-* (Adelaide: Sisters of Mercy Adelaide, 1996), 144.

²⁴ McLay, *Women on the Move*, 147.

²⁵ Quoted in the *Southern Cross*, 7 April 1982, 11.

Gleeson's involvement in 'all activities' at Mercedes College was not exceptional, but an indication of his habitual approach to whatever task was at hand. In 1944 Archbishop Beovich, on behalf of the Director of Catholic Education, asked the Dominican Sisters to establish a special class for handicapped and retarded children. The first classes were conducted in a lean-to attached to the old St Patrick's School in Gray Street, Adelaide. In time it became a separate school within the grounds of the Franklin Street Convent. Gleeson was one who assisted with the clearing of the grounds and the digging of the trenches for the foundations of the prefabricated building that in 1951 became St Patrick's Special School.²⁶ In 1959, Beovich encouraged and assisted the Young Christian Workers to purchase and renovate a house on Ayers Hill Road, Stirling, in the Adelaide Hills, as a training centre for YCW leaders. Before the centre could be used, a septic tank needed to be installed. A Saturday morning ritual for Bishop Gleeson was to gather three or four willing young men, drive them to Stirling, and work with them to establish the required sewerage. The work went on for several months before the centre was opened in 1960.²⁷

Gleeson's commitment to Catholic education and formation never waned, even though he had to cope with changing situations and conditions, as will be dealt with especially in Chapter 6. Apart from Catholic schools, he reached out to Catholic children in state schools and supported further education and formation of priests and the laity. His contributions to education during his time as chaplain to the newly established Mercedes College and also his assistance in establishing a training centre for YCW leaders revealed a willingness to make a contribution in many and varied ways.

²⁶ Helen Northey, *Living the Truth: the Dominican Sisters in South Australia 1968-1958* (Adelaide: Holy Cross Congregation of Dominican Sisters (South Australia), 1999), 259. *Southern Cross*, June 2013, 12.

²⁷ 'A tribute to Archbishop Gleeson' by Brian Moylan, at the Vigil Service on Sunday 26 March 2000, in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral. Copy in the author's possession.

Catholic Action – Catholic Social Studies Movement

Although generally speaking the laity was not encouraged to be involved in the management or mission of the Church, there were exceptions. In the archdiocese of Adelaide (and many other dioceses around the world) there were groups that went beyond the traditional piety and good works ethos of most Catholic organisations. In 1922, Pope Pius XI in his first encyclical, *Ubi Arcano*, encouraged Catholic Action, described as ‘the participation of the laymen in the hierarchical apostolate’.²⁸ Catholic Action, first mentioned by Pope Pius X, aimed to ‘turn society back to its Christian foundations’.²⁹ In 1937, at the Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand, an episcopal committee was appointed to ‘stimulate and direct Catholic Action in the region’ for a period of five years.³⁰ The committee set up a National Secretariat of Catholic Action conducted by F K (Frank) Maher and B A (Bob) Santamaria. Maher was the convenor of a group of Catholic intellectuals who gathered weekly in the Catholic Library in Collins Street Melbourne to discuss Catholic teaching and the social order: the group styled themselves the Campion Society after St Edmund Campion, executed at Tyburn, 1 December 1581. In 1931 Maher invited Bob Santamaria to join.³¹ The Catholic Action groups, the Young Christian Workers (YCW), and the Young Christian Students (YCS), encouraged their members to analyse their life situation, judge it in the light of gospel values, and decide to implement any required action to promote these values. This methodology was summarised as ‘See, Judge, Act’.³² Many hours during the author’s first decade of priestly ministry were devoted to the YCW.

²⁸ *Ubi Arcano* (1922), par 58.

²⁹ ‘Catholic Action’ in Richard McBrien, ed, *Harper Collins Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 241.

³⁰ Robert Rice, ‘Matthew Beovich, Eighth Bishop of Adelaide and the First Australian Born Occupant of the See’, *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 88, no 1 (2011), 52-3.

³¹ Brenda Niall, *Mannix* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2015), 265.

³² The Young Christian Workers movement was founded by Fr Josef Cardijn (Cardinal in 1965) in Belgium in the 1920s.

In 1941, the secretariat asked the bishops to approve and support a Catholic Social Studies Movement. Known generally as ‘the Movement’, its members quickly gained significant influence in the Industrial Groups formed by the ALP in the 1940s to combat communist influence in the unions. Despite Santamaria’s efforts, the bishops never declared the Movement to be ‘an official body of Catholic Action’.³³ On 5 October 1954 the ALP leader, Dr H V Evatt, denounced the Movement. This led to a damaging split in the Labor Party which did not return to power in Canberra until 1972. It also caused severe divisions among the Australian bishops.³⁴ In 1950 Gleeson was appointed by Beovich as chaplain to the Catholic Social Studies Movement in South Australia.³⁵ It is both surprising and revealing that he was trusted with this sensitive role so early in his priesthood.

‘The Split’ was the ‘third and most devastating split’ in the Australian Labor Party. The first, in 1916, came with the debate on conscription during the First World War and the second, in 1931, was caused by divergent attitudes to the economic response to the Great Depression. According to the historian Malcolm Saunders, in the mid-1950s, there was a ‘split in South Australia, but it was small and largely over by the time it happened elsewhere in Australia’.³⁶ Some of the reasons for this were the low proportion of Catholics in the state, the Catholic Church’s low profile and the refusal of Archbishop Beovich to support the breakaway political party, the Democratic Labor Party. Another reason was that Clyde Cameron, a Labor politician who ‘possessed...a

³³ Molony, *By Wendouree*, 306.

³⁴ See Bruce Duncan, *Crusade or Conspiracy? Catholics and the Anti-Communist Struggle in Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales, 2001). Josephine Laffin, *Matthew Beovich: a biography* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2008), Chapter 6.

³⁵ Homily by Archbishop Faulkner, Archbishop of Adelaide, at the Diocesan Mass of Thanksgiving for the Golden Jubilee of Priesthood of Archbishop James Gleeson – St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral, 25 July 1995. Copy in author’s possession.

³⁶ Malcolm Saunders, ‘The Labor Party and the Industrial Groups in South Australia 1946-55, precluding the split’. *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no 33 (2005), 84. Accessed online 8 October 2017.

strong strand of anti-Catholicism’, confronted and defeated the Movement.³⁷ Cameron, a member of the federal parliament in 1949-80, ‘combined passionate idealism with ruthless manipulation’.³⁸

Gleeson, as chaplain to the Movement, would have been involved in the decisions made by Beovich. In March 1955, Santamaria wrote to Gleeson indicating that at the National Conference of the Movement held that year an ‘impasse’ had been reached. The problem was that there was a fundamental disagreement between the archbishops of Sydney and Melbourne on how the communist threat was to be challenged. The Sydney newspaper, the *Daily Telegraph*, identified the central issue behind the rift: ‘Sydney wants the Church to disband all organisations that can be interpreted as bringing the Church into organised politics’ while ‘Melbourne wants the Church to keep intact all organisations that can function as a spearhead against Communism’.³⁹ After consulting Archbishop Mannix and Bishop James O’Collins of Ballarat, Santamaria made a statement to the National and Victorian offices of the Movement. A copy of this statement was sent to Gleeson and an accompanying letter by separate mail for security reasons. The letter stressed that the statement was to be regarded ‘as completely confidential to yourself and to your Ordinary [bishop].’⁴⁰ Some of the Australian bishops appealed to Rome for advice on the Movement. The response was that it was ‘not advisable that a confessional political party be created or that the Movement take political character upon itself’.⁴¹ When Mannix’s appeal to Rome against some aspects of the Vatican directives was dismissed, Gleeson told James Carroll, auxiliary bishop in Sydney, ‘His Grace [Beovich] was pleased to receive this

³⁷ Saunders, ‘The Labor Party and the Industrial Groups in South Australia’, 72 and 84. See also Saunders, ‘The Origins and Early Years of ‘The Movement’ in South Australia: 1932-48’, *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no 40 (2012), 81-95, accessed on line 10 Oct 2017.

³⁸ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 March 2008, Obituary. <https://www.smh.com.au/national/whitlam-minister-clyde-cameron-dies-20080314-1zhh.html>. Accessed 30 May 2018.

³⁹ *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney), 5 April 1956, 3.

⁴⁰ Santamaria to Gleeson, 16 March 1955. Series 0012-0013, ACAA.

⁴¹ Quoted by Laffin in *Matthew Beovich*, 198.

information and it would have done you good to see the smile of satisfaction on his face.⁴² Clearly Gleeson was involved in the affairs of the Movement and was loyal to the stance adopted by Beovich which was in harmony with the thinking of Cardinal Gilroy and the authorities in Rome.

Communism was viewed at this time as an ever-present and dangerous ideology. In August 1954, Beovich blessed extensions to the Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic School at East Street, Brompton. In his address he spoke of the action of the state executive of the ALP in expelling four members of the party and penalising three others. This action had been taken because the seven members in question, all Catholics, had declared that they could not in conscience solicit votes for the member for Boothby, Rex Matthews, whom they believed to have Communist sympathies.⁴³ Beovich supported the seven in their conscientious stand. The state president of the ALP, A J Shard, was of the opinion: 'If a member's conscience disagrees with a majority decision of the party, then the first thing his conscience should direct him to do is to resign.'⁴⁴

As a result of Beovich's address, Matthews requested and was granted an interview. Gleeson, not yet a bishop, attended the meeting and took detailed notes of what transpired. Later in the day Beovich sought the opinion of Albert Hannan KC regarding his remarks to Matthews.⁴⁵ Gleeson's involvement in this again indicates Beovich's trust in him and appreciation of his ability.

⁴² Gleeson to Carroll, 9 December 1957. Series 0012-0014/1, ACAA.

⁴³ Beovich personal diaries, 8 August 1954.

⁴⁴ *Advertiser*, 9 August 1954, 3.

⁴⁵ Beovich personal diaries, 8 August 1954; 11 August 1954. *Southern Cross*, 13 August 1954, 7 and 11. *Advertiser*, 9 August 1954, 3; 12 August 1954, 1. Hannan was Crown Solicitor from 1927 until retirement in 1952.

The Church Triumphant

Gleeson was joint secretary with Fr Luke Roberts for the committees organising the national Marian Congress in October 1951 and the Family Rosary Campaign in November 1953.⁴⁶ According to good authority, Gleeson was the dominant contributor.⁴⁷ These events occurred during the period known as the ‘long 1950s’, which commenced in the late 1940s and ended about 1964.⁴⁸ During this time, the churches confidently and publicly proclaimed their beliefs and aims.

The Catholic contribution to the state celebrations of the golden jubilee of the Commonwealth of Australia was the Marian Congress, the first such event in Australia. Cardinal Gilroy of Sydney presided and eighteen archbishops and bishops attended. The culmination of the five-day celebration was a procession from St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral, along King William Street to Elder Park, situated on the bank of the River Torrens. About 20 000 marched in the procession which was witnessed by some 30 000 lining the route.⁴⁹

In November 1953, the Irish-American priest, Patrick Peyton, of the Congregation of the Holy Cross, came to Adelaide as part of his World Family Rosary Crusade. He preached to an estimated crowd of 60 000 (possibly an exaggeration), at Elder Park, and promoted his slogan ‘The family that prays together stays together’.⁵⁰ Both events were statements by the ‘Triumphant Church’. Even following the Second Vatican Council celebrations on these lines were held, though numbers attending were dwindling. In February 1973, the ‘enormously successful’ 40th International Eucharistic Congress was held in Melbourne with the theme ‘Love one another as I have loved

⁴⁶ Fr Roberts was the first diocesan priest to be trained as a social worker.

⁴⁷ Interview with Emeritus Archbishop Faulkner at Netley, SA, 27 August 2013.

⁴⁸ David Hilliard, ‘Church, Family and Sexuality in Australia in the 1950s’, *Australian Historical Studies*, no 97 (1991), 135.

⁴⁹ For a full account of the Marian Congress see *Mother of God and Mother of Men: record of Marian Congress, Adelaide 1951* (Adelaide: Archdiocese of Adelaide, 1952).

⁵⁰ Other churches held such major events. The Methodist Church conducted the Crusade for Christ (1949-51) and the Mission to the Nation led by Rev Alan Walker (1953-57). The Billy Graham Crusade of 1959 was supported by every major Protestant church except the Lutherans.

you'. In Sydney, St Mary's Cathedral 'overflowed with congregations composed in most part of the middle-aged and elderly' during the Marian Congress in September 1976.⁵¹ Some saw these events as 'retreat from engagement with the complexities of the modern religious and secular worlds, and reversion to the old and secure forms of piety and procedure'.⁵²

How would members of the Anglican and Protestant churches have reacted to a statue of Mary being borne with great solemnity through the streets of the city of Adelaide? When Pope Pius XII declared the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary to be a dogma of the Catholic faith (1 November 1950), Archbishop Fisher of Canterbury deplored the definition because it was 'a bar to re-union' and added that the doctrine was 'unacceptable to practically all Protestants'.⁵³ The *South Australian Methodist*, in October 1950, printed an article taken from the English *Methodist Recorder*, entitled 'Rome's Latest Heresy'.⁵⁴ The article deplored the dogmas of the Immaculate Conception (8 December 1854) and Papal Infallibility (18 July 1870).⁵⁵ Concerning the first, it said there was 'no scintilla of evidence in the New Testament', and of the second it mockingly said that the belief had remained dormant for about eighteen centuries. The writer then said the pope had thrown 'another bombshell into the theological arena' by defining a dogma that was 'preposterous, gratuitous, and false'. Consequently, the hope of growing understanding between Rome and other communions 'recedes into immeasurable distance in the light of its persistence in unwarrantable doctrinal error'.⁵⁶

⁵¹Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community: an Australian history*, third revised edition (Sydney: New South Wales University Press, 1992), 411.

⁵²O'Farrell, *Catholic Church*, 411.

⁵³*Southern Cross*, 26 January 1951, 6.

⁵⁴*Methodist Recorder*, published continuously since 1861, is an independent weekly newspaper that examines events and current affairs within the Methodist community in Britain and worldwide.

⁵⁵The Pontificate of Pius IX (1846-1878), the longest in history, was in process when these two dogmas were defined.

⁵⁶*South Australian Methodist*, 27 October 1950, 7.

When an awareness of the historical conditioning of human life was applied to all branches of sacred learning, scholars noted discrepancies in the Christian tradition between past and present. It became clear, for example, that the doctrines of the Immaculate Conception of Mary and her Assumption could not be found in explicit or at least literal terms in early Christian writings, so the objections of Protestant scholars were understandable.⁵⁷ Beovich sought to avoid extreme forms of Marian devotion. At the conclusion of Fr Peyton's Rosary Crusade he said: 'Those who pray the Rosary ten minutes daily recall not once but twice each week the entire life of Our Divine Saviour, from the announcement of His coming into the world and His birth, to His death and resurrection.'⁵⁸ Beovich was at pains to stress the centrality of Jesus Christ for Catholics.

Changing racial, ethnic, political and cultural milieu

The Second Vatican Council, unlike its predecessors, considered the changes in society at large and refused to see them in 'globally negative terms as devolution from an older and happier era'.⁵⁹ It recognised the profound shift in human awareness taking place and its implications: 'And so mankind substitutes a dynamic and more evolutionary concept of nature for a static one, and the result is an immense series of new problems calling for a new endeavour of analysis and synthesis.'⁶⁰ Further, the Church no longer presented itself as opposed to the 'modern world' but as part of it.⁶¹ At the beginning of this chapter it was noted that Gleeson was ordained to the priesthood at the commencement of the 'Atomic Age': attention will now be given to more local happenings.

⁵⁷ John W O'Malley, *What happened at Vatican II*, (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2008) 299.

⁵⁸ *Southern Cross*, 4 December 1953, 1.

⁵⁹ O'Malley, *What happened at Vatican II*, 297.

⁶⁰ Church in the Modern World, (*Gaudium et Spes*), par 5.

⁶¹ O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, 297.

Gleeson, as priest and bishop, had to deal with the implications of the considerable racial, ethnic, political, and cultural changes affecting Australia following the Second World War. As this was a constant requirement during Gleeson's ministry, it will be considered here. Prior to the First World War, the culture of Australia was very much Anglo-Celtic and British. In 1973 the Whitlam government declared Australia to be a 'multicultural society' thus acknowledging the rich diversity migrants had brought to Australia, especially since 1947. Between 1947 and 1961 the Italian-born community in South Australia grew from 2428 to 26 230. Of these 93 per cent identified themselves as Catholic or Roman Catholic in the 1961 census. Catholics were also well represented among 16 007 migrants born in Germany (30 per cent), 12 539 from the Netherlands (42 per cent), 6939 from Poland (81 per cent), 4996 from Yugoslavia (62 per cent), 2288 from Ukraine (47 per cent), 2881 from Latvia (11 per cent), 2713 from Hungary (70 per cent), 1431 from Lithuania (75 per cent), and 1076 from Czechoslovakia (62 per cent).⁶² In his 1960 report to Rome, Beovich stated that approximately one third of the Catholics in the archdiocese (40 000 out of 120 000) were migrants who had arrived in the previous twelve years.⁶³

Gleeson experienced this 'multicultural society' early in his priestly ministry when arranging religious formation for children in the Woodside Migrant Camp. He declared that it was 'a real privilege to meet the people who had just arrived from concentration camps and refugee camps and to be able to help them'.⁶⁴

⁶² *Census of the Commonwealth of Australia, 30 June 1961*, vol IV: *South Australia*, Commonwealth Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, 1963, 26, 42-49. All figures refer to country of birth.

⁶³ Relatio by the Archbishop for the Archdiocese of Adelaide in South Australia 1960. Series 1.20, Box 169, ACAA.

⁶⁴ *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

In December 1950, the *Southern Cross* reported that the archbishop had administered the sacrament of confirmation to forty-nine children and some adults at the camp, which was the main centre for European migrants. The congregation included Russians, Ukrainians, Poles, Latvians, Lithuanians, Germans, Austrians, Yugoslavs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Czechs and others. Father Fazekas (Hungarian) resided in the camp, and Father Kuczmanski (Polish), Father Jatulis (Lithuanian) and Father Kaczmar (Ukrainian) visited the camp regularly. The editor noted that 'Father Gleeson has been a regular visitor to the camp, chiefly for the purpose of organising the religious instruction for the children.'⁶⁵

Later, as the Archbishop of Adelaide, Gleeson saw the enrichment of the local Church brought by refugees from the war in Vietnam.⁶⁶ These were the first large group of Asian immigrants to come to Australia following the complete and final end of the White Australia Policy in 1973. There were three phases in the coming of Vietnamese people; 537 orphans adopted by Australian families, pre-1975; refugee resettlement in 1975-85; family reunions since the late 1980s. The 1976 Commonwealth census recorded that there were 2427 people born in Vietnam living in Australia and the 1981 census revealed that the number had increased to 41 096. The 2011 census indicated that 185 000 people born in Vietnam were resident in Australia and that 219 000 people spoke Vietnamese at home.⁶⁷ Although a majority of Vietnamese Australians lived in Sydney, a significant number resided in Adelaide, especially in the western suburbs, Woodville, Kilkenny, Pennington, Mansfield Park, Athol Park, and also in Adelaide's north at Parafield Gardens and Pooraka.

⁶⁵*Southern Cross*, 15 December 1950, 9.

⁶⁶The Vietnam War began in 1954 with the Communist North and its southern allies the Viet Cong opposed to South Vietnam and its principal ally the United States of America. It ended in 1975 and the following year the country was united as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Conflict in the region dated back to the mid-1940s.

⁶⁷'Racismnoway: Anti-racism education for Australian schools', NSW Government Education and Communities 2013. Accessed, 22 February 2014.

Gleeson also experienced Catholics becoming more prominent in government and the legal profession. About 1952 the premier, Thomas Playford, had a conversation with Archbishop Matthew Beovich, which resulted in Playford reporting to Reg Wilson, the general secretary of the Liberal and Country League (LCL):

He [Beovich] says it's time the Government recognised the influence and support the Party gets from Catholics. He wants to see their numerical strength better reflected in Parliament, in the Cabinet and in the Courts. I think he's right, Reg. I think he's right, and I think you'd better have a look at how we can preselect some good men.⁶⁸

A short time later Leo Travers QC, a prominent Catholic, was preselected for the LCL seat of Torrens which he held for one term (1953-56). In 1959, J T Brazel was the first Catholic to be appointed to the Supreme Court.⁶⁹ In his diary entry for 2 July 1966 Beovich noted: 'Mr George Walters appointed to the Supreme Court following the retirement of Sir Herbert Mayo. There are now 4 Catholic Justices out of 7 on the Court.'⁷⁰ Playford had endeavoured to have Albert Hannan elevated to the Supreme Court Bench but met resistance from the chief justice, Sir Mellis Napier, who eventually agreed to Hannan being appointed as an acting judge on three occasions in 1954-57.⁷¹ Napier had also stalled the appointment of Brazel for some time and anti-Catholic

⁶⁸Quoted by David Hilliard, 'Religion in Playford's South Australia', in Bernard O'Neil, Judith Raftery, and Kerry Round, eds, *Playford's South Australia: essays on the history of South Australia, 1933-1968* (Adelaide: Association of Professional Historians Inc, 1996), 255.

⁶⁹Brazel was appointed 16 November 1959. His term of office ended 23 August 1961.

⁷⁰Beovich personal diaries. See also *Southern Cross*, 17 February 1967, 3 for photograph of Justices Travers, Mitchell, Hogarth and Walters together with the Lord Mayor (Mr Bridgland) and Archbishop Gleeson following the Annual Red Mass for the opening of the legal year in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral.

⁷¹John Playford, 'Hannan, Albert James (1887-1965)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hannan-albert-james-10415/text18459>, published first in hardcopy, vol 14, (1996), accessed online 24 October 2017.

sentiment may have been part of the reason.⁷² When Playford lost power in 1965, he was followed as premier by the first Catholic to hold that office, Frank Walsh.

Gleeson lived to see the Catholic Church become the largest religious denomination in South Australia. In 1933, when Gleeson was twelve years of age, Catholics in South Australia, comprised 12 per cent of the population, the smallest proportion of any Australian state. In 1954 self-described Catholics were 16 per cent of the population and 20 per cent in 1966. The 1981 census showed that Catholics made up 20 per cent of the population and the 1986 census revealed that Catholics were 22 per cent. Between 1981 and 1986 Catholics replaced Anglicans as the largest religious group in the state; the 1986 census indicated that the Anglican proportion had declined to 19 per cent.⁷³ So during his time as priest, bishop and archbishop Gleeson saw the Catholic Church in South Australia grow in numbers, racial, ethnic and cultural diversity, and in social influence. He also experienced the impact on the community of the Australian government's focus on the expansion of communism in South-East Asia.

Significant change of government in South Australia.

In 1938, the year Gleeson entered *Corpus Christi* seminary, a forty-two-year-old orchardist, Thomas Playford, became leader of the Liberal and Country League (LCL) and premier of South Australia; he remained premier for twenty-seven years. He had ceased the formal Christian worship he had shared with his Baptist mother but continued to abide by 'much of her puritanical outlook, shunning tobacco, philandering and gambling, and refusing to get into debt'.⁷⁴ The Liberal and Country League under Playford 'consisted of three distinct groups: the Adelaide Establishment, the yeoman

⁷²David Hilliard, 'Religion in Playford's South Australia', 255,

⁷³*Census of the Commonwealth of Australia*. Figures rounded to the nearest whole number.

⁷⁴P A Howell, 'Playford, Sir Thomas (Tom) (1896-1981)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/playford-sir-thomas-tom15472/text26686>, published first in hardcopy, vol 18, (2012), accessed online 17 Sept 2017.

proprietary and the Adelaide middle class....it exercised, prior to the post-war economic transformation, a degree of financial influence and control probably unparalleled by any other group in any Australian State'.... Cultivated and frequently libertarian on moral and religious issues, they were economically, socially and politically conservative.'⁷⁵

The South Australian election in March 1965 brought to a close a generation of Liberal rule: the Labor party came to power with Frank Walsh as Premier. Liberalising of gambling, liquor and entertainment laws were initiated by the Walsh ministry. These culminated in the Licensing Bill of the first Dunstan government.⁷⁶ Reform of the Sunday Entertainment Laws and easing of restrictions on public entertainment on the Sabbath 'crowned the vigorous assault of the thirty-eighth Parliament on the more puritanical achievements of the "Nonconformist conscience" in South Australia.'⁷⁷ The government moved with caution when changing the social laws of the state. The state lottery was preceded by a referendum on the issue, the Totalisator Agency Board was introduced in response to a Private Member's Bill, and licensing reform followed on the report of a royal commission. Under pressure Walsh stood down in May 1967 and Dunstan became Leader of the Labor Party and Premier of the state. At forty years of age and a QC, he became the youngest state premier in Australia and the second Labor premier in South Australia in thirty-three years. Dunstan said, 'I see South Australia as returning to the radical era, which is its Chartist heritage.'⁷⁸

The first Dunstan government ended on 16 April 1968 when Dunstan handed his resignation to the governor. In the subsequent election, Raymond Steele Hall became the thirty-sixth premier of South Australia, and the leader of a minority LCL government that was dependent on the support of an independent, T C Stott (Ridley).

⁷⁵Neil Blewett and Dean Jaensch, *Playford to Dunstan: the politics of transition* (Melbourne: Cheshire Publishing, 1971), 8.

⁷⁶The first Dunstan government was between 1 June 1967 and 16 April 1968.

⁷⁷*Playford to Dunstan*, 54.

⁷⁸*Advertiser*, 31 May 1967, 1.

Dispute concerning the construction of two dams to protect South Australia's water requirements led to the destruction of the Hall-Stott alliance and the calling of an election for 30 May 1970.⁷⁹ The ALP won handsomely, under reformed and fairer electoral boundaries, and so was born the 'Dunstan decade'. Dunstan's government was the first in Australia to introduce land rights for Aborigines, decriminalise homosexual acts, appoint a woman Supreme Court judge and introduce anti-discrimination legislation. Dunstan's aim was to 'shake his state out of its provincial somnolence and to turn Adelaide into the "Athens of the south"'.⁸⁰ How Dunstan brought such a revolution 'to a society once identified by its Waspish establishment remains one of the spectacular success stories of Australian politics'.⁸¹ The 'Dunstan decade' commenced a year after Gleeson became archbishop of Adelaide.

All these changes in the cultural, social, racial, ethnic and political fabric of the community must be borne in mind in assessing Gleeson's life. The Church was an integral part of society to which it endeavoured to bring what it claimed to be the 'Good News' of the life and teaching of Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth. To do this it needed at all times to understand and have empathy with this society. It is probably accurate to hold that the Church did not express this clearly until the Second Vatican Council asserted:

The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men [and women] of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and the anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts.⁸²

⁷⁹ *Playford to Dunstan*, Chapter 11, Division over Dartmouth.

⁸⁰ 'Obituary: Don Dunstan' *The Independent*, 17 February 1999. <Vhttp://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/obituary-don-dunstan-1071332.html>. Accessed 24 October 2017.

⁸¹ 'Obituary', *Independent*.

⁸² Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*), par 1.

Gleeson's involvement in civic affairs

The involvement of Gleeson in the wider community began early in his priesthood and continued during his time as a bishop. This brought significant advantages to the Church: he was a public and respected figure. Gleeson assisted with the celebration of the jubilee of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1951 and was on the executive committee which arranged the Royal Visit in 1954. He was a member of the Australia Day Council, and contributed to Education Week, first held in Adelaide in 1957. In 1952-1957 Gleeson was a member of the Soldiers' Children's Education Board South Australia which reported annually to the Commonwealth of Australia Repatriation Commission. This body funded educational opportunities for the children of soldiers. The 38th Annual Report noted Gleeson's appointment as Auxiliary Bishop of Adelaide and his consequent resignation from the board. Then followed the acknowledgement of Gleeson's contribution: 'In accepting the resignation with regret the Board recorded its deep appreciation of the untiring service given by Bishop Gleeson in the interests of beneficiaries under the scheme.'⁸³

Gleeson was a member of the Children's Book Council of South Australia. The Council aimed to foster the reading of books for boys and girls appropriate to their age. The idea of such a body originated with Frank Mathews, the American Chief Scout Librarian, early in the 1900s. He was concerned by the poor quality of books being read by boys and organised a Children's Book Week to foster better books for children. The *Advertiser* reported in 1948 that for the fourth successive year the International Children's Book Week was held in Adelaide. The article asserted that all citizens should support this move as 'the thoughts and mental pictures sown in the child mind

⁸³38th Annual Report of the Soldiers' Children Education Board South Australia, 4.

are of paramount importance'.⁸⁴ Gleeson was also on the Advisory Committee for School Broadcasts of the Australian Broadcasting Commission.⁸⁵

False optimism

Gleeson's early days of priesthood were during the long 1950s. During this time the various Christian denominations in Australia were confident of their place in society and growth in membership seemed assured.⁸⁶ In August 1964, the *Southern Cross* manifested this confidence when reporting that a five-storey building was to be erected at St Francis Xavier's Seminary to accommodate an additional seventy students. The article estimated that by 1991, 450 additional diocesan priests would be required for the state.⁸⁷ This startling optimism proved to be unfounded. The 1960s, peopled in part by the generation born following the Second World War, was a time of massive political, social, and ecclesiastical change.

During this period, young people questioned the values of parents and governments, women demanded equal rights in all spheres of life, and the environment became a major concern as did the quest for the rights of Indigenous people. The Vietnam War (1959-75), in which 50 000 Australians served in 1965-72, eventually divided the Australian community and there were protests and sometimes violent demonstrations against the war and the Australian government. The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) sought to bring the Church into dialogue with the modern world in place of the adversarial stance prominent since the French Revolution.

⁸⁴ *Advertiser*, 12 November 1948, 2.

⁸⁵ *Southern Cross*, 29 March 1957, 1.

⁸⁶ David Hilliard, 'Church, Family and Sexuality in Australia in the 1950s', *Australian Historical Studies*, vol 27, issue 109 (1997), 135-36. The 'long 1950s' is a cultural period, not calendar months.

⁸⁷ *Southern Cross*, 7 August 1964, 1.

Archbishop Beovich noted the commitment of the young Fr Gleeson. Of the many favourable references to him in Beovich's diary, the following are typical. In March 1951 the Young Christian Students Movement held a camp at Mylor in the Adelaide Hills. Beovich noted the contribution of Gleeson to the successful event.⁸⁸ A special Mass was celebrated in the cathedral in May 1951 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Commonwealth Parliament. Beovich noted: 'Very successful ceremony ably organised by Fr Gleeson.'⁸⁹ Beovich viewed the Marian Congress in October 1951, as a 'tremendous success: details of organisation were perfect'. He added that the committee deserved praise and that 'everyone who had a job to do, did it perfectly'. Gleeson, as one of the committee, was included in these words of acknowledgement.⁹⁰

Gleeson was possessed of boundless energy and commitment. Beovich frequently chose him for special works in the archdiocese. His involvement in civic affairs raised his profile and that of the Church in the wider community. At all times he acted in harmony with the model of Church he had learned in the seminary. The style of the Church, the way in which it communicated and operated, was still the 'judicial and legislative'. As priest and bishop Gleeson needed to be aware of the racial, ethnic, political, and cultural changes in the community. Vatican II proclaimed that just as the world needed to learn from the Church, so the Church needed to learn from the world:

Just as it is in the world's interest to acknowledge the Church as a social reality and a driving force in history, so too the Church is not unaware how much it has profited from the history and development of mankind.⁹¹

⁸⁸Beovich personal diaries, 31 March 1951.

⁸⁹Beovich personal diaries, 9 May 1951.

⁹⁰Beovich personal diaries, 28 October 1951.

⁹¹Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, par 44.

Chapter 3

AUXILIARY BISHOP AND COADJUTOR ARCHBISHOP

On 15 February 1957, at the age of 36, Gleeson became Australia's youngest Catholic bishop. He was appointed auxiliary to Archbishop Beovich and assigned the titular see of Sesta in Caesarian Mauretania.¹ On 21 May Gleeson was consecrated (ordained) in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral by Beovich, assisted by Brian Gallagher of Port Pirie and Arthur Fox, auxiliary to Archbishop Mannix in Melbourne. His Eminence Norman Thomas Cardinal Gilroy, archbishop of Sydney, presided from the throne. Fox was the first student from Corpus Christi College to receive episcopal consecration. Gleeson was the first diocesan priest of the Adelaide archdiocese to be appointed a bishop and the second student from Corpus Christi College to receive episcopal ordination.² When in July 1964 Gleeson became coadjutor archbishop he was the first archbishop to have studied at Werribee.³ He was not, however, the first South Australian to become a bishop. Bishop Francis W Henschke, born in Hookina, in the mid-North of South Australia, was parish priest of Jamestown, in the diocese of Port Augusta, when, on 15 August 1937, he was consecrated auxiliary bishop of the diocese of Wagga Wagga. Two years later he became its bishop.⁴ Bishop John P O'Loughlin MSC, who was born in the Adelaide suburb of Brompton on 25 July 1911, was consecrated bishop of Darwin on 20 April 1949.⁵

The reasons that moved Beovich to request an auxiliary bishop were mainly health related. In September 1956 he felt unwell and was admitted to Calvary Hospital

¹ He was five years older at the time than Bishop (later Archbishop) Guilford Young who, at the age of 31, was the youngest Catholic bishop in the world when appointed as auxiliary bishop to Archbishop T B Maguire in Canberra and Goulburn.

² *Southern Cross*, 29 March 1957, 1. Fox was later bishop of Sale, Victoria, 1968-81.

³ *Corpus Christi* magazine, 1967, 4.

⁴ *Southern Cross*, 13 October 1939, 11; 24 November 1939, 11. *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 November 1939, 8.

⁵ *Southern Cross*, 21 November 1985, 3

and prepared for an appendectomy.⁶ This was deferred and the following month the doctors discovered that his problem was diverticulitis.⁷ In November, the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Romulo Carboni, visited Adelaide for a packed programme of church and civic engagements. Near the end of the delegate's visit, Beovich was back in hospital and was found to be suffering from a thrombosis behind the right eyeball and the detachment of the retina, a condition that was eventually corrected. Carboni visited Beovich in hospital and Beovich asked if the Holy See would grant him an auxiliary. Seemingly there was a good relationship between Beovich and the delegate as Beovich recorded that Carboni enjoyed his visit to the Adelaide archdiocese and 'wrote me a flattering letter'. The archbishop also noted that as regards himself 'in future it will be a matter of walking, not galloping'.⁸

When a bishop requested an auxiliary he was normally given a significant say regarding the person to be selected and Gleeson was the one whom Beovich sought. Thomas McCabe, bishop of Wollongong, wrote to Beovich congratulating him on having an auxiliary and 'the wisdom of your choice'. McCabe added that from former discussions it was clear that you 'justly looked on him as the most suitable for episcopal responsibility'.⁹ The intention of Beovich to lessen his commitments and to slow down partly explained the prominent role assumed by Gleeson from the beginning. Beovich welcomed the energy of the younger man.

Some Australian bishops experienced difficulties when appointed as auxiliaries or coadjutors. Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran (Sydney) was given a coadjutor, Michael Kelly, who was consecrated in August 1901. During the following ten years Moran

⁶ Beovich personal diaries, 29 September 1956.

⁷ Beovich personal diaries, 17 October 1956.

⁸ Beovich personal diaries, 6 December 1956.

⁹ Quoted by Josephine Laffin, *Matthew Beovich: a biography* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2008), 225-6.

‘treated him with coldness and arbitrary command’.¹⁰ In 1922 Kelly had accepted as coadjutor the distinguished Maynooth catechetical scholar, Michael Sheehan. In May 1936, after years of waiting to succeed Kelly, Sheehan was advised by the apostolic delegate, Archbishop Giovanni Panico (‘Panicky Jack’), that his resignation had been accepted by the pope, even though Sheehan had not submitted a letter of resignation. He was the victim of the policy of ‘Australianisation’ of the hierarchy, the appointing of Australian-born bishops, vigorously pursued by Panico.¹¹ In a letter dated 16 March 1912 from the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, James Duhig, bishop of Rockhampton, was appointed coadjutor archbishop of Brisbane, with the right to succeed Robert Dunne (1830-1917), and apostolic administrator of Rockhampton until his successor was appointed. For five years Duhig claimed that he was ‘treated like an altar boy’ and had no legal authority because Dunne would not appoint him vicar-general. Moreover, he did not receive an adequate or regular salary.¹² Archbishop Justin Simonds (1890-1967), the first Australian-born Catholic priest to reach the rank of archbishop, was appointed coadjutor archbishop of Melbourne in 1942 with the right to succeed Daniel Mannix.¹³ Neither he nor Mannix was consulted prior to the appointment. For twenty-one years Simonds remained parish priest of West Melbourne until Mannix died at the age of ninety-nine. During this time, although he was appointed vicar-general, his exercise of authority was curtailed because Mannix kept total control until his death in 1963.¹⁴

¹⁰ Patrick O’Farrell, ‘Kelly, Michael (1850-1940)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/kelly-michael-6920/text12009>>, published first in hardcopy, vol 9 (1983), accessed online 24 October 2017.

¹¹ Brenda Niall, *Mannix* (Melbourne: Text Publishing, 2015), 234. John Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy: an obedient life* (Sydney: St Paul’s Publications, 2017), 29-30.

¹² T P Boland, *James Duhig*, (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1986), 116.

¹³ Michael Costigan, ‘Simonds, Justin Daniel (1890-1967)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/simonds-justin-daniel-11693/text20897>>, published first in hardcopy, vol 16 (2002), accessed online 24 October 2017.

¹⁴ Max Vodola, *Simonds: a rewarding life* (Melbourne: Catholic Education Office, 1997), 41.

Gleeson endured no such treatment. In his diary entries, during Gleeson's first five months as a bishop, Beovich noted that Gleeson's appointment had been 'splendidly received'; that he had been Beovich's representative at Sale for the funeral of Bishop Richard Ryan and at Goulburn for the funeral of Archbishop Terence McGuire, the first archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn; that he had ordained a priest at Penola and confirmed 102 adults in the cathedral on Pentecost Sunday. The entry for the 28 October 1957 was: 'With Bishop Gleeson's splendid help, we find pretty well a doubling of appointments. Anyhow he is doing parish visitation effectively and relieving me considerably for which I am deeply grateful.'¹⁵

The author remembers the negative response of some senior priests to the vigour with which Gleeson carried out certain aspects of parish visitation. Gleeson was a young Australian-born cleric while a majority of the diocesan priests were from Ireland and much his senior in experience. In the late 1950s, Irish priests were in charge of thirty-one of the forty-seven parishes for which diocesan priests were responsible.¹⁶ An example of Gleeson being resisted by an Irish parish priest occurred in the author's first appointment, the Brighton parish. William Collins told his two assistant priests (curates) that Gleeson had queried the allowance being paid to them. At that time it was up to the parish priest to decide what to pay his assistants (and when). Collins was paying more than any other parish priest and that, to Gleeson, was not desirable. The parish priest related that he had told the bishop that the curates helped to raise the funds and therefore deserved a decent share. It may be that Gleeson was over-zealous and not sufficiently sensitive nor adequately diplomatic. In January 1959, Beovich named two

¹⁵ Beovich personal diaries, 28 October 1957.

¹⁶ *Australasian Catholic Directory 1958*. Eleven parishes were in the care of religious orders and five religious priests, as individuals, were in charge of parishes, as no diocesan priest was available. One parish was without a resident priest. Some information in the annual directory relates to the previous year. So Gleeson was listed as the auxiliary bishop for the first time in 1958.

priests who 'are delinquents whom for the present I'm leaving to Bishop Gleeson'.¹⁷

The priests in question were Irish-born parish priests who would not have appreciated a young bishop working to discipline them.

In June 1961 Beovich recorded that he was suffering a cold or the flu and that 'Bishop Gleeson is more than generous in making things easy for me.'¹⁸ In December 1962, Beovich and Gleeson arrived home from the first session of Vatican II and Beovich noted that during the at times demanding requirements of participation, 'Jim Gleeson was very kind and solicitous for me'.¹⁹ Clearly Gleeson was accepted and appreciated by Beovich and allowed to fully exercise his ministry.

Correspondence between Gleeson and Bishop James Carroll, auxiliary bishop in Sydney (1954-1984), provides additional evidence of this. In March 1958 Gleeson replied to a letter from Carroll that dealt with the Movement and the formation of the National Civic Council (NCC) in Melbourne, a body established by B A Santamaria to enable the programme of the Movement to continue under another name. Carroll had a doctorate in Canon Law and Gleeson expressed his regret at not possessing that qualification. He also reported: 'His Grace is in good form but continues to enjoy handing over a lot of things to me.'²⁰ In another letter to Carroll the following year Gleeson asserted: 'I am keeping very well except for bouts of weariness which is the lot of mortal man.'²¹ Gleeson's weariness was in part due to his inability to sleep through the night; his sleep was interrupted and restless.²²

Beovich, however, remained the person in charge. In October 1959, Denis O'Connell, parish priest of the Dulwich parish, wrote to Beovich seeking permission to build two churches, one at Dulwich and the other at Burnside, and also a presbytery.

¹⁷ Beovich personal diaries, 12 January 1959.

¹⁸ Beovich personal diaries, 1 June 1961.

¹⁹ Beovich personal diaries, 16 December 1962.

²⁰ Gleeson to Carroll, 31 March 1958, Series 0012, Archbishop Beovich Papers. ACAA.

²¹ Gleeson to Carroll, 25 September 1959, Series 0012, ACAA.

²² Interview with Marie Shevlin, Church Office Secretary, Kensington Park, S A, 4 February 2014.

Replying to this request, the then Bishop Gleeson, acting on the advice of the Council of Sites and Architecture, approved O'Connell's choice of architect and the church at Burnside. As for the Dulwich church, 'plans for a worthy church be prepared, but only a ground plan for a presbytery at this stage until the church is paid for'.²³ A fortnight later there was another meeting of the Council of Sites and Architecture. Before the meeting Gleeson told a member of the council, Monsignor H B Skehan, that the Dulwich church was again on the agenda. Skehan said that he thought that it had already been approved by the council to which Gleeson responded, 'I know, but the Archbishop hasn't.'²⁴ In fact Beovich twice rejected the plans for the Dulwich church before granting approval.

In a diary entry in March 1961 Beovich recorded that Gleeson visited him to report on 'two disturbing items', a parish priest who sought permission for a loan and also some concerns with regard to Dutch migrant chaplains. Regarding the first, Beovich asserted that Dr Gleeson needs to 'remind himself constantly to play a second string' and added that this remark did not refer to the second item.²⁵ Four days later Beovich noted that Gleeson was handling the 'Netherlands problem' well and a month later that he [Beovich] had drawn up a 'distribution of work that should prevent overlapping'.²⁶ The priest requesting a loan appeared to have been the Irish priest, Michael Murphy, parish priest of Croydon in 1958-93. His assistant priest, Robert Egar (1959-63), recalled Murphy relating how he had attended a meeting with Beovich and Gleeson with regard to a loan he was seeking. Murphy liked to relate how Beovich had supported his proposal, which differed from Gleeson's position – Murphy savoured this victory.²⁷ On another occasion Gleeson made a decision regarding the *Southern Cross*

²³ *The Rays of the Crucifix Links in the Chain: a brief history of the Catholic Church in the Dulwich-Burnside Parish 1869-1994* (Adelaide: Dulwich-Burnside Catholic Parish, 1994), 53.

²⁴ *Rays of the Crucifix*, 53.

²⁵ Beovich personal diaries, 24 March 1961.

²⁶ Beovich personal diaries, 28 March 1961; 26 April 1961.

²⁷ Interview with Monsignor Egar, Dover Gardens, 19 March 2015.

without consulting Beovich who expressed disapproval in a few but terse words.

Gleeson quickly apologised – he knew who was really in charge.²⁸

On 6 July 1964, Pope Paul VI appointed Gleeson a coadjutor archbishop with the right to succeed Beovich. Some events in that year provided an insight into Gleeson's way of operating, his theology, and his courageous profession of his faith. As explained above, during his years as a priest Gleeson had been involved in many civic activities that provided him with contacts in the wider community. This appears to explain why he received invitations to be involved in civic and national events. His acceptance of such invitations showed his growing confidence in addressing, on common ground, those outside the Catholic Church. His stature as a civic figure and leader was growing.

Annual Banka Sound Memorial Service

Each year, at the South Australian Women's Memorial Playing Fields in the suburb of St Marys, the women who had served in the armed forces and paid the supreme sacrifice during the Second World War were remembered. The special focus was on the twenty-one Australian nurses murdered by the Japanese on Radji Beach, Banka Island, Indonesia, on 16 February 1942. The service was conducted each year on the Sunday nearest 16 February and in 1964 Gleeson, still an auxiliary bishop, was invited to officiate. This was the first time Catholics had been officially represented. When Gleeson accepted the invitation, the president of the Returned Sisters' sub-branch of the Returned Services League, Mrs T T Ainsworth, said: 'We are all overjoyed that a wider religious spirit has entered the playing fields.'²⁹ At the observance, the president noted that it was appropriate, but coincidental, that one of the new seats at the venue was in memory of Matron Irene Melville Drummond who was born at Millswood, suburban

²⁸ Laffin, *Beovich*, 226.

²⁹ *Southern Cross*, 7 February 1964, 10.

Adelaide, and was a Dominican old scholar. Drummond, the senior among the nurses, towards whom she was 'like a mother hen', had called out to the nurses on Radji Beach just before the machine gunner opened fire, 'Chins up, girls. I'm proud of you and I love you all.'³⁰ The remembering of Drummond, a product of Catholic schools in Adelaide and Broken Hill, would have enhanced the standing of Catholics as loyal citizens. It is also of note that it was Gleeson, not Beovich, who received the invitation. Gleeson was being seen as a Catholic bishop acceptable to the general community and willing to be involved in civic and national concerns.

In his address Gleeson paid tribute to the women of Australia. He said that, faced with challenging situations, they showed the virtues of fidelity and devotion manifested in their homes and daily lives before the war. Referring to the Banka Straits massacre, he said 'there must be no spirit of revenge but only one of forgiveness in our memories'.³¹ This was a courageous presentation of the Christian teaching concerning loving one's enemies because at the time animosity towards Japan was still prevalent among the Australian public. Gleeson saw the memorial service as a means of reminding young people of the price paid for the freedom they enjoyed.

Violet Memorial Day

As coadjutor archbishop, Gleeson spoke at the fiftieth observance of Violet Memorial Day, held in the Adelaide Town Hall, in August 1964. Alexandra Seager, an honorary organiser of the Cheer-Up Society, whose three sons had enlisted in the Australian armed forces, instigated Violet Day to commemorate the Anzac landings at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. However, the heavy casualties suffered by the Australian and New

³⁰ Ian W. Shaw, *On Radji Beach* (Sydney: Pan Macmillan, 2010), 216. Julie Gorrell, 'Drummond, Irene Melville (1905-1942)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/drummond-irene-melville-10051/text17727>> published first in hardcopy, vol 14 (1996), accessed online 24 October 2017.

³¹ *Southern Cross*, 21 February 1964, 10.

Zealand forces led to Violet Day being a commemoration of those who had died. The first ceremony was held on 2 July 1915. After the First World War, the day was moved to August and observed on the Sunday nearest to the date war was declared.³²

In his address, Gleeson confidently asserted that, aided by friendly countries Australia would be able to meet any challenges from abroad but that the threats from within were more insidious and dangerous. He was of the opinion that the young people were ‘being subjected to influences which can destroy their personal honor, and the stature and freedom of Australia herself’.³³ Gleeson cited the deceit and injustice at times apparent in commerce and industry and a ‘climate of opinion’ which led to the ridicule of those who were concerned ‘with standards of taste, of purity, of modesty, of family stability and fidelity in marriage’.³⁴ He added: ‘Ridicule can make reasoned and responsible views seem valueless.’³⁵

Much of what Gleeson said had already been said in the ‘Call to the Nation’ issued by Churches leaders and members of the Judiciary in November 1951. The ‘Call’ asserted that Australia was in danger from abroad and at home. At home we were in danger from ‘moral and intellectual apathy, from the mortal enemies of mankind which sap the will and darken the understanding and breed evil dissensions’.³⁶ The Prime Minister, R G Menzies, and the Leader of the Federal Opposition, Dr H V Evatt, supported the ‘Call’.³⁷ As Hilliard remarks, ‘The willingness of church leaders to put their names to the Call at a time when such displays of unity were very rare – throws light on how they saw the role of the church in post-war Australia, their anxieties and concerns.’³⁸

³² Britain declared war on Germany on 4 August 1914.

³³ *Southern Cross*, 7 August 1964, 3.

³⁴ *Southern Cross*, 7 August 1964, 3.

³⁵ *Southern Cross*, 7 August 1964, 3.

³⁶ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 November 1951, 1.

³⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 November 1951, 3.

³⁸ David Hilliard, ‘Church, Family and Sexuality in Australia in the 1950’s’, *Australian Historical Studies*, vol 27, Issue 109 (1997), 135.

Colours of the original 43rd Battalion

On Sunday, 13 December 1964, the King's and Regimental Colours of the original 43rd Battalion were laid up in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral. From 1953 the battalion saw service with the newly raised 43/48th Battalion until it was disbanded in 1960. The Battle Honours of the 43rd and 2/43rd are recorded on the colours. Gleeson received the colours from Colonel R A Blackburn and acknowledged the 'solemn trust we have accepted'. In his address Gleeson acknowledged that some saw it as incongruous to give emblems of war a place of honour in the house of God but asserted that in fact they were not symbols of hate but of 'love, devotion and heroism – all great Christian virtues'.³⁹ He added that the colours represented the men who had served in the unit and those who died: 'The freedom we have to enter this cathedral is due to the great sacrifices of the men we honor today.'⁴⁰

These three events occurred during the life of the Second Vatican Council. Clearly a new relationship was emerging between the Catholic Church, other churches, and the civic community. The ease with which Gleeson related with people was a significant and valuable asset at this time of renewal for the Catholic Church. His

³⁹ *Southern Cross*, 18 December 1964, 29.

⁴⁰ *Southern Cross*, 18 December 1964 29. See also Brian Andrews, *The Cathedral Church of St. Francis Xavier Adelaide, South Australia* (Adelaide: Catholic Church Endowment Society, 1996), 40.

conduct during the Eucharistic Congress in India in 1964 further illustrated this aspect of his character.

Gleeson's stopovers in Bombay in 1964 and 1965.

Gleeson attended the thirty-eighth International Eucharistic Congress, celebrated in Bombay (now Mumbai) from 12-15 November 1964. This was the first Eucharistic Congress celebrated in Asia and the first in a country without a significant Catholic population. The purpose of these congresses was to proclaim the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Gleeson lived with an Indian Catholic family during the congress and was impressed by the hospitality of the Indian people. During the congress, Gleeson was one of Pope Paul VI's two co-consecrators of several bishops from five continents. He described it as 'one of the biggest moments of my life'.⁴¹

Fr James Valladares, who joined the Archdiocese of Adelaide in 1988 and was incardinated in 1992, wrote an appreciation of Gleeson following his death. He recalled that Gleeson, during the Eucharistic Congress in Bombay, stayed with very good friends of his family. This family was 'thrilled beyond words to be privileged to host an archbishop' but at the same time the family members were 'overawed, and wondered how they would cope': 'To their great surprise and relief, they met with a cleric, who was as modest as he was amiable, and as genial as he was jovial. That was an experience they would treasure for the rest of their lives, nostalgically reverting to it often thereafter.'⁴²

After the close of the Second Vatican Council (8 December 1965) a group of Australian bishops, including Gleeson, returned to Australia through India. At the time,

⁴¹*Southern Cross*, 11 December 1964, 1.

⁴²Fr James Valladares, 'Archbishop James Gleeson, Pastor Emeritus (1921-2000), Random Reminiscences of a Dutiful Guide, a wise Philosopher & a Faithful Friend'. Copy of unpublished paper in author's possession.

Valladares was a theology student in St Pius X College, the diocesan seminary for the archdiocese of Bombay. Gleeson visited the seminary and Valladares recalled: 'I well remember how very gracious he was in intermingling with the seminarians, for whom such an experience was both extraordinary and memorable.'⁴³ The friendly manner in which he related to students was something they had not previously experienced from their own bishops. Gleeson's view of the Church as a community of disciples and not primarily an institution appeared here.

In 1971 Valladares came to Australia for the first time. He attended St Francis Xavier's Cathedral for the Mass at which Beovich handed over the archdiocese to Gleeson on 1 May 1971. He also attended the formal dinner at St Francis Xavier's Seminary for the clergy and visiting prelates. Valladares said he 'was deeply touched when Archbishop Gleeson walked up to me to personally welcome me. That made me feel inexpressibly special'.⁴⁴ Gleeson's gift for remembering names impressed people, as it clearly did in the case of Valladares. Another to express this view was a religious sister, Debra L McCarthy, a Daughter of Charity. In a letter of condolence to Archbishop Faulkner following the death of Gleeson in 2000 she said:

Archbishop Gleeson was the first archbishop that I just sat and had coffee with and chatted informally....He was a fatherly, warm and wise man. He was always interested in what the Daughters were doing and in the various aspects of my work. With a superb memory and attention to people and their lives he was able to make everyone feel special.⁴⁵

As a bishop, Gleeson continued to devote himself to the requirements of his calling in a manner reminiscent of the Puritan ethic that called for hard work, a sense of duty, thrift and self-discipline. Archbishop Beovich encouraged him to fully exercise his ministry but Beovich remained the one in charge. Gleeson's profile as a public figure was

⁴³Valladares, 'Archbishop James Gleeson'.

⁴⁴Valladares, 'Archbishop James Gleeson'.

⁴⁵McCarthy to Faulkner, 27 March 2000, Series 0021, ID 27, ACAA.

enhanced by invitations to take part in civic celebrations. His admission that he regretted not having a degree in Canon Law as did Bishop James Carroll raises an interesting point. The 1983 Code of Canon Law lists the qualities required of a person being considered for episcopal ordination. One requirement was that such a person ‘hold a doctorate or at least a licentiate in sacred Scripture, theology or canon law, from an institute of higher studies approved by the Apostolic See, or at least be well versed in these disciplines’ (Canon 378 §1). Much the same was stated in the 1917 Code: Canon 331 required of those chosen for episcopal consecration: ‘solid learning in theology and canon law’.⁴⁶ Seemingly more was expected and hoped for from a bishop than just to be a ‘practical administrator’ as Luttrell described Gilroy.⁴⁷ Gleeson described his predecessor, Beovich, as ‘more a man of the book’ whereas ‘Fixing engines and things, that was my life.’⁴⁸ Possibly Gleeson and Gilroy may have been more effective had they found time to spend with the academics who could have kept them up to date, especially in theology and Sacred Scripture. Vatican II taught: ‘The Order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in their role as **teachers** and pastors, and in it the apostolic college is perpetuated.’⁴⁹

⁴⁶Bouscaren, T L; Ellis, A C; *Canon Law: a text and commentary* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1951), 174.

⁴⁷Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy*, 400.

⁴⁸Laffin interviews Gleeson, 4.

⁴⁹Vatican II’s ‘Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church’, *Christus Dominus*, par 4. Emphasis by author.

Chapter 4

GLEESON AT VATICAN II AND IMPLEMENTING THE COUNCIL

Gleeson was a bishop for forty-three years, fifteen of them as the Emeritus Archbishop of Adelaide. The Second Vatican Council met about the midpoint between James Gleeson's priestly ordination and his retirement; it concluded five years before he became the archbishop of Adelaide. Vatican II's dominant images of the Church were that it was 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation...the People of God'.¹ Pope John XXIII, in his opening speech to the Council, had referred to the Church as the 'loving mother of all'.² The new paradigm of the Church required of Gleeson, all bishops and indeed all Catholics, a change of attitude and action; many of the 'old certainties' no longer applied. For many bishops, the new ways meant a total reversal of inherited policies in their relations with other Christian denominations. Bishop Hugh Ryan of Townsville, for example, as a result of the Council, expressed his intention 'to try to be charitable to the leaders of other Christian Churches'.³ He also, in March 1965, attended a combined liturgical and civic reception for Michael Ramsey, the visiting archbishop of Canterbury, in St James' Anglican Cathedral. This was the first time in the history of Townsville that a Catholic prelate had entered St James' Cathedral for a service of any kind. It was fortunate that the vicar-general, Frank Kelly, referred the invitation to Ryan before sending a routine apology for the event.⁴

Neither Beovich nor Gleeson was aware of the developments in theology taking place in Europe. The French Dominican priests, Marie-Dominique Chenu and Yves

¹Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, (*Lumen Gentium*), par 9.

²'Pope John's Opening Speech to the Council' in Abbott, Walter M, ed, *The Documents of Vatican II* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), 716.

³John P McGuire, *Prologue: a history of the Catholic Church as seen from Townsville 1863-1983* (Toowoomba: Church Archivists' Society, 1990), 215.

⁴McGuire, *Prologue*, 215. Bishop Ryan was bishop of Townsville in 1938-67. He retired as the Titular Bishop of Nigizubi and died, in 1977, with the title Emeritus Bishop of Townsville.

Congar, both of whom were censured by Roman authorities before the Second Vatican Council, became significant contributors to the Council. The French Jesuits, Henri de Lubac and Jean Daniélou, and their German confrère, Karl Rahner, contributed to the theological debate both before and during the Council. Gleeson and Beovich were accepting of the early drafts of documents prepared for debate by the Preparatory Commissions because they ‘harmonised with our experience of church and theology’.⁵ Like Cardinal Gilroy in Sydney, Gleeson was ‘a church manager rather than a scholar’.⁶

According to the historian Massimo Faggioli, a decisive element enabling the Council to move from a ‘European Catholicism’ to a ‘world Catholicism’ was the contribution of revival movements in the first decades of the twentieth century. These were the ‘biblical movement, the liturgical renewal, the patristic revival, and *ressourcement* – a return to the earlier sources of an undivided Church – and the ecumenical movement based in Europe and North America’.⁷ Thanks to these theological movements, the Council was a time of ‘reflection and not seldom of spiritual and intellectual “conversion” to the need for a real *aggiornamento* for many of its participants’.⁸ Not all managed to cope with the required challenge. Gleeson attended three sessions of the Council and signed all the documents except the two signed at the end of the second session.⁹ Together with Beovich he promoted the Council and when he became the archbishop he continued to promote the reception and implementation of the Council in the archdiocese.

⁵ Interview with James William Gleeson conducted by Josephine Laffin, at ‘Ennis’ 8 October 1997. Copy in author’s possession.

⁶ John Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy: an obedient life* (Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 2017), 320.

⁷ Massimo Faggioli, *Vatican II: the battle for meaning* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2012), 4.

⁸ Massimo Faggioli, *Vatican II*, 4-5.

⁹ The documents were the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) and the Means of Social Communication (*Inter Mirifica*).

Contributing to Vatican II

Despite neither Beovich nor Gleeson speaking in the *aula* (St Peter's Basilica), each contributed to the Council. In fact, some deemed these official proceedings to be 'tedious, if not alienating' and much of the speechifying to be 'irrelevant'.¹⁰ Eighty-five per cent of the council fathers did not address the Council and so, with regard to influencing council proceedings, 'written submissions played a more important role'.¹¹ There was also a 'complex of mini-councils: discussions, dinners, conversations, coffees, Conference meetings, colloquia, canvassing and chats with foreigners'.¹² Many bishops attended lectures by some of the leading theologians involved with the Council.

Gleeson was a signatory to eight written interventions and the author of one. In them he revealed his values and hopes. He did not attend the second session of the Council because Beovich directed him to remain in Adelaide in 1963. One of the reasons for this appears to be that Beovich sensed a new wave of Modernism at the first session and did not want his auxiliary to be tainted by it. He was also concerned for the governance of the archdiocese if both bishops were absent for three months each year of the Council. Gleeson later advanced two other reasons for Beovich's decision. One was that Beovich wanted to get away by himself and 'not have me butting in' so that he could quietly decide if the Council was of God. The second was to test Gleeson: to note 'how I would manage caring for the diocese while he was away'. Gleeson was named coadjutor in May of the following year and he felt sure Beovich 'had something to do with it'.¹³ Beovich did not insist on Gleeson remaining in Adelaide for the third and fourth sessions of the Council so perhaps fear of Modernism was the reason for leaving Gleeson in Adelaide during the second session.

¹⁰ Jeffrey J Murphy, 'The Far Milieu Called Home: Australian bishops at Vatican II (The Final Session: 1965)', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 80, no 3 (2003), 368.

¹¹ Ormond Rush, 'The Australian Bishops of Vatican II: participation and reception' in Neil Ormerod; Ormond Rush; David Pascoe; Clare Johnson; Joel Hodge; eds, *Vatican II Reception and Implementation in the Australian Church* (Melbourne: Garratt Publishing, 2012), 11.

¹² Ormond Rush, 'The Australian Bishops', 11.

¹³ Interview with Gleeson by Laffin, at Medindie, 8 October 1997, 5.

At the second session, Beovich's concerns about the direction of the Council dissipated and he returned home in a much happier frame of mind.¹⁴

Gleeson and Beovich both gave their names to three interventions. George Andrew Beck, archbishop of Liverpool, England, submitted a written intervention in the debate on ecumenism. The *schema* (draft) spoke of the many communions 'which have separated themselves from the See of Rome' and stated that among these the 'Anglican Communion is pre-eminent'. The intervention sought the replacement of the words 'have separated themselves' by 'are separated'. Beck said that the fact was that the break with Rome was achieved by the civil power against the unanimous vote of the bishops in the House of Lords. This small change, he asserted, would avoid involvement in the historical debate and facilitate dialogue with the separated brethren. The wisdom of this intervention found a place in the Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*) that referred to the many communions that 'were separated' from the Roman See, avoiding the question of how they came to be separated.¹⁵ At this time the Anglican Church was the largest Christian denomination in South Australia and in Australia. Mindful of this, the two Adelaide bishops would have been conscious of the importance of the words 'are separated' for the ecumenical endeavour.

Gleeson's support for and contribution to the Decree on Ecumenism indicated a massive change in outlook. The final document spoke of the 'restoration of unity among all Christians': not a return of non-Catholics to the Catholic Church. The ecclesial reality of other Christian communities which shared the same Sacred Scriptures, a common baptism and many other common elements was affirmed. That both Catholics and Protestants shared blame for the divisions resulting from the Reformation was accepted.

¹⁴ Josephine Laffin, *Matthew Beovich: a biography* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2008), Ch 8.

¹⁵ Robert Rice, 'Some Reflections on the Contributions of Matthew Beovich and James Gleeson to the Second Vatican Council', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 78, no 1 (2001), 49-50.

Beovich and Gleeson supported Cardinal Gilroy's intervention in the debate concerned with the appropriate renewal of the religious life. The *schema* stated that it was lawful for religious institutes to publicise their ethos and work and to seek candidates, as long as it was done prudently and in accordance with norms laid down by the Holy See. Gilroy requested that the decree include the requirement that the norms set by the local bishop be also observed. The thrust of this intervention appeared in the Decree on the Up-To-Date Renewal of Religious Life (*Perfectae Caritatis*).¹⁶

The two Adelaide bishops also supported the written intervention of Archbishop Beck on the question of Christian education. Beck sought a stronger statement of the right of parents to choose the type of education they deemed best for their children and a clear statement that the Church's right to establish and direct schools was based on the Lord's command to go and teach all nations. An acknowledgement was sought that Catholic schools provided education that otherwise the state would have to fund and that such schools contributed to the moral fabric of the community by the moral and religious formation provided to the students. All these points were included in the Declaration on Christian Education (*Gravissimum Educationis*).¹⁷ By their support of these three interventions Beovich and Gleeson showed that they accepted the Council's promotion of ecumenism, the preservation of the authority of the bishop of a diocese and the rights of the Church in the field of education, including the obligation of the state to provide financial assistance to independent schools.

Gleeson gave his name to another five contributions to the Council debates. Almost six hundred council fathers signed a submission with regard to the *schema* on the Church, during the Council's third session. The signatories called for a clearer statement that holiness was the principal characteristic of the 'people of God' and that

¹⁶ Rice, 'Some Reflections', 51-2.

¹⁷ Rice, 'Some Reflections', 52-3.

this should be stressed before addressing the various categories within the people of God – hierarchy, religious, and laity. The intervention also called for religious life to be seen as a ‘holocaust’ offered in union with Christ for the Church, hence religious needed to step carefully as they worked to adapt themselves to a changing world. Vatican II laid to rest the long-held view that spirituality was for priests and religious only:

It is therefore quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love, and by this holiness a more human manner of life is fostered also in the earthly society.¹⁸

Unsurprisingly, as these recommendations came from six hundred council fathers, they appeared in the final document, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*).

Gleeson was one of eleven Australian bishops to give their names to a written intervention by Thomas Vincent Cahill, bishop of Cairns, regarding the *schema* on the life and ministry of priests. The intervention was brief so will be quoted in full:

Since in our days there is everywhere the custom among priests to substitute lay fashions in dress for clerical attire, it is my humble opinion that the schema should state that the prescribed clerical dress should always be worn.

Ecclesiastical dress is the sign of the clerical state and no priest should blush to be recognised as such. Moreover, clerical dress is a help and safeguard for the priest and should be esteemed as a support for a wholesome life.¹⁹

The final document made no mention of clerical dress, and although it appears to be a minor matter, the author recalls how significant it was at the time. The topic was later discussed in Adelaide by the Senate of Priests (see below) and permission was sought from the bishop for any alterations in clerical dress.

¹⁸ Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of the Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, par 40.

¹⁹ *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II* (hereafter AS), (Citta Del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanus, 1970-80, vol 4, pars 5, 254.

Bishop Brian Foley of Lancaster addressed the Council a little over a month before it ended. He called for clerical dress to be worn at all times and requested a clear statement that the ‘care of souls effected by personal contact, was the most important priestly task’. The question of clerical dress was not included in the final document, the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*), but the ‘care of souls effected by personal contact’ was promoted. Gleeson was the only Australian bishop to sign Foley’s intervention – his second involvement in the discussion of the life and ministry of priests.

Gleeson and three other Australian bishops supported the intervention of Bishop Thomas Holland, of Salford, England, in regard to the debate that led to the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*). The central thrust of the intervention was that artificial birth control had been condemned by the Church as a ‘sin against nature’, a ‘deed which was shameful and intrinsically vicious’, and asserted that those who practised it were ‘branded with the guilt of a grave sin’. The bishop was referring to Pope Pius XI’s encyclical *Casti Connubii* (1930) which was the Catholic response to the limited acceptance of contraception by the Lambeth Conference of 1930. Holland claimed that the teaching contained in the encyclical was guaranteed by the ‘ordinary universal magisterium’ of the Church and therefore binding on all Catholics. He alleged that if the teaching of the pope’s encyclical was not honoured the ‘ordinary universal magisterium’ of the Church was meaningless.²⁰ The final document of the Council did refer to the fact that ‘married love is too often dishonoured by selfishness, hedonism, and unlawful contraceptive practices’ and that the sons of the Church ‘are forbidden to use methods [of birth regulation] disapproved

²⁰ Rice, ‘Some Reflections on the Contributions of Matthew Beovich and James Gleeson’, 59-60.

of by the teaching authority of the Church in its interpretation of the divine law'.²¹ The Council's statements, however, were mild compared with the words of Pius XI.

Holland's concern for the infallibility of the 'ordinary universal magisterium' of the Church appeared to be a manifestation of 'creeping infallibility', the steady expansion of the number of Church teachings that were deemed to lie beyond debate. This attitude failed to distinguish the varying degrees of authority attached to communications from ecumenical councils, papal encyclicals and teachings of the Roman Curia. Moreover the only generally accepted exercise of infallibility since the First Vatican Council was the declaration of Mary's Assumption by Pope Pius XII in 1950 which indicated that the exercise of infallibility was rare.²² As will be discussed in Chapter 9, Pope Paul VI in his encyclical *Humanae Vitae* did not claim infallibility for his maintaining the Church's 'constant doctrine' that natural law teaches that 'every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life'.²³

Gleeson made a personal written submission concerning the apostolate of the laity. Writing in English, he claimed: 'there is a tendency by too many people to approach the question of the lay apostolate as something that has only become necessary because of the present state of the world rather than seeing it as the full flowering of the life of the faithful'.²⁴ Gleeson's ideas were certainly evident in the final document on the Apostolate of Lay People (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*): 'From the fact of their union with Christ the head flows the laymen's right and duty to be apostles. Inserted as they are in the Mystical Body of Christ by baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit in confirmation, it is by the Lord himself that they are assigned

²¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 47 and par 51.

²² John T. Ford, 'Infallibility', *The HarperCollins Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (New York: Harper Collins, 1995), 665.

²³ *Humanae Vitae*, par 11.

²⁴ *A S*, vol.3, pars. 4, 807.

to the apostolate.²⁵ The view that Catholic Action (the Lay Apostolate) was the ‘participation of the layman in the hierarchical apostolate’, as Pope Pius IX had declared, was no longer adequate.

Implementation of Vatican II

Archbishop Guilford Young of Hobart, having attended all four sessions of the Council, was to have over twenty-two years to implement it. He told his people: ‘Our first task will be to “learn the council”’.²⁶ The archdiocese of Adelaide was fortunate in that Beovich and Gleeson were also able to implement its decrees and spirit for a combined total of nineteen and a half years: Beovich for five and a half years and Gleeson for an additional fourteen years following Beovich’s retirement.

On 7 December 1965, Pope Paul issued an Apostolic Constitution, *Mirificus Eventus*, declaring an extraordinary Jubilee (Holy Year) from 1 January to Pentecost Sunday, 29 May 1966. The purpose of the jubilee was to bring the work of the Second Vatican Council into the minds and hearts of all the faithful. The jubilee was to be centred on the bishop of the diocese and the cathedral, for the bishop was the centre of unity for the local Church and the cathedral the visible reminder of the universal Church. During the jubilee a plenary indulgence could be gained by those who received the sacraments of penance and Eucharist and attended instructions on the decrees of the Council or came to the cathedral to privately profess their faith.

Beovich, still on his way home from Rome on the liner *Marconi*, sent a letter which was published in the *Southern Cross* in December 1965.²⁷ He referred to the jubilee and the plenary indulgence that could be gained, and directed that in the cathedral every Sunday evening, commencing from 2 February 1966, there should be a

²⁵ *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, par 3.

²⁶ Reported in Tasmania’s Catholic newspaper, *The Standard*, 24 December 1965, 1.

²⁷ *Southern Cross*, 24 December 1965, 1.

series of ‘instructions’ that dealt with the Second Vatican Council and its implications. Beovich indicated that Gleeson would give more details on the first Sunday of January.

At the first of the series of talks, Gleeson told the hundreds who had gathered in the cathedral that the purpose of the jubilee was the formation of a ‘Council Conscience’ in bishops, priest and people. He spoke of Pope Paul’s desire that the bishops returning to their dioceses would ensure that the letter and spirit of the Council decrees would be ‘carefully and zealously explained’ so that they became part of the everyday thinking and life of all the people of God. Gleeson also reported that each week in the *Southern Cross* there would be a letter from him supplementing the Sunday evening talks.²⁸ The first such letter appeared in the same issue of the *Southern Cross*. Gleeson produced sixteen letters for publication and signed them all ‘Archbishop Gleeson for the Archbishop of Adelaide’.

Beovich did not arrive back in Australia until 31 January 1966. In February, he received a liturgical reception in St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral on his return to the archdiocese. In his address to the assembly he declared that the task ahead was to implement the teachings of the Council ‘with zeal and prudence under the guidance of your Archbishop and the Coadjutor Archbishop’.²⁹ The day after his liturgical reception he departed by train for Ballarat and his annual holiday at Koroit. He returned to Adelaide on 5 March but from 25 April until 10 May was in Calvary Hospital due to a severe attack of influenza. Beovich contributed on only three occasions to the series of instructions on the decrees of Vatican II. He spoke concerning the Decree dealing with the Training of Priests (6 March); the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (20 March) and the Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People (17 April). Clearly Gleeson shouldered most of the responsibility for the promotion of the

²⁸ *Southern Cross*, 7 January 1966, 1.

²⁹ *Southern Cross*, 11 February 1966, 1.

Council during the jubilee and, in the eyes of many, was seen as the driving force behind its implementation. On the concluding night of the jubilee, Gleeson told the gathering in the cathedral that a true appreciation of the Second Vatican Council would involve prayer and study ‘for the rest of our lives’.³⁰ Clearly he shared the view of Beovich that progress should be made with care, not too fast or too slow. He then summarised the targets to be kept in mind by quoting from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: ‘to impart an ever-increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful; to adapt more closely to the needs of our age those institutions which are subject to change; to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ; to strengthen whatever can help to call all mankind into the Church’s fold’.³¹ The Catholic community was in for a long haul that would demand patience and prudence.

The author was impatient for the implementation of the reforms of Vatican II, especially in the area of the liturgy. But, with the wisdom of hindsight, it became obvious that great sensitivity was called for when changing what generations had accepted and valued. The author remembers the distress to many that was caused especially by the restructuring of the Mass.

On 9 July 1967, Beovich preached at a concelebrated Mass in St Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney, where thirty-two Australian bishops inaugurated the Year of Faith, proclaimed by Pope Paul VI to commemorate nineteen centuries since the martyrdom of St Peter and St Paul. Catholics, individually and collectively, were exhorted to proclaim their faith.³² The Year of Faith was closed on 30 June 1968 when Pope Paul VI released his ‘Credo of the People of God’.³³ Beovich said that in promoting the decrees of the Council: ‘There is danger in moving too slowly in this matter. There is even more

³⁰ *Southern Cross*, 3 June 1966, 3.

³¹ The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, par 1.

³² Pope Paul VI inaugurated the Year of Faith in the St Peter’s Basilica on the evening of 29 June 1967, the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, and closed it on 30 June 1968.

³³ Credo of the People of God, <<https://www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/p6credo.htm>.> Accessed 19 May 2017.

danger – and this the Pope lamented – in moving too far, too fast, as a few speakers and writers are doing in various parts of the world; that is, going beyond the Church’s teaching.’³⁴ Gleeson was of one mind with Beovich in this matter.

Gleeson’s commitment to work was evident in his promotion of Vatican II. His efforts were also an indication that there was a lack of balance in his approach. Shortly after Pentecost, and the end of the Council Jubilee in May 1966, he was admitted to Calvary Hospital, a setback after a recent influenza attack, which, Beovich asserted, was undoubtedly due to his over-work. Gleeson was discharged from hospital on 19 June but returned for an examination on 22 June. This revealed he was suffering from an hiatus hernia. On 24 June Gleeson set off for a well-earned holiday at Geraldton, Western Australia.³⁵

There are many adjectives to describe the approach of Beovich and Gleeson as they implemented the Council’s directives: they were faithful, persevering, prudent, balanced and cautious. The Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*) called for the setting up of a ‘group or senate of priests’ that would represent the body of priests and assist the bishop in the management of the diocese.³⁶ The first meeting of the Senate of Priests in the archdiocese of Adelaide was on 29 June 1967. From 1978, in accordance with the ongoing revision of the Code of Canon Law, it was known as the Council of Priests. The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (*Christus Dominus*) stated that it was ‘highly desirable’ for every diocese to establish a pastoral council to deliberate on pastoral activity and produce practical suggestions on its implementation. Members of this council, presided over by the bishop, could include priests, religious and laity ‘specially chosen’.³⁷ The pastoral

³⁴ *Southern Cross*, 14 July 1967, 2.

³⁵ Beovich personal diaries, 7 June 1966; 19 June 1966; 22 June 1966; 24 June 1966. ACAA.

³⁶ *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, par 7.

³⁷ *Christus Dominus*, par 27. Apostolic Letter, written Motu Proprio, on the Implementation of the Decrees *Christus Dominus*, *Presbyterorum Ordinis* and *Perfectae Caritatis*, August 1966, pars 15-17.

council would cease to exist when the bishop died or was transferred, unless special arrangements prevailed. Adelaide's first Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) met at St Francis Xavier's Seminary, Stradbroke Park, on Sunday 31 March 1968. The members – priests, religious and lay persons – were chosen by the archbishop, not elected. The names of the council members with their photographs had been published in the *Southern Cross* in December 1967. The council had a three-year term.³⁸ Beovich, conscious of a new era in church governance resulting from the formation of the DPC, told those present: 'As the bishops were at the beginning of the General Council, so are we – apprentices in this Pastoral Council. But we will gradually find our feet.'³⁹ According to Archbishop Leonard Faulkner, Gleeson was the dynamic moving force behind the formation and structure of the council.⁴⁰

An important recommendation of the first DPC, which gained approval, was to seek elected members. The result was that the second Diocesan Pastoral Council, with a two-year term, had a majority of elected members. The only members who were not elected were ex officio members: the archbishop, vicar-general (Gleeson), Director of the Society of the Propagation of the Faith, and five counsellors chosen by the archbishop. The provenance of elected members was the Senate of Priests (3); religious women and men (4); metropolitan regions of the diocese (10); country regions (3); and the Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee (5).⁴¹ The bishop was not obliged to accept elected members but Beovich accepted the recommendation and Gleeson was to follow this precedent.

³⁸ *Southern Cross*, 15 December 1967, 1.

³⁹ *Southern Cross*, 5 April 1968, 1.

⁴⁰ Interview with Emeritus Archbishop Faulkner at Netley, 27 August 2013.

⁴¹ The Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee was formed in April 1966, with the commission 'to harness the resources of the lay apostolate groups in the diocese for their greater benefit'. It was claimed to be the 'envy of the eastern states'.

The second Diocesan Pastoral Council met for the first time at St Francis Xavier's Seminary on 14 March 1971.⁴² Gleeson explained that the lay representatives from the pastoral regions of the archdiocese had been nominated by the priests of these regional groups, but this was only a temporary measure; when the Parish Pastoral Councils developed to a stage of working together in their regions, nominations would be made through them. The fact that Gleeson made this announcement was an indication that Beovich was accepting of Gleeson taking a leading role in affairs and also of Gleeson's commitment to ensure members of such structures were representatives of groups to which they could report back.

William (Bill) Brewer, chairman of the second pastoral council, was the first layperson to hold this office.⁴³ He stated that the two archbishops had 'accepted the risk' of allowing elected members because they believed that the Holy Spirit was involved in the diocese and its implementing of the decrees of the Council. He said the council could only advise, 'But I know for example that Archbishop Gleeson will always listen carefully to the council's recommendations. He would need extremely grave reasons for not accepting its advice. He is that sort of man.'⁴⁴ When Gleeson became the archbishop of Adelaide on 1 May 1971 he confirmed all appointments in the archdiocese and these included membership of the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

The Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*) called for social justice for priests.⁴⁵ The Senate of Priests proposed the pooling of pastoral income so that it could be shared equitably among all priests. Then as now, pastoral income was derived from the first collection at Sunday Mass, special offerings at

⁴² *Southern Cross*, 12 March 1971, 1 and 12. Photograph of the members of Second Diocesan Pastoral Council were in the *Southern Cross*, 19 March 1971, 7.

⁴³ Archbishop Beovich stood down as chairman of the DPC at the end of the three-year term of the first DPC.

⁴⁴ *Southern Cross*, 18 June 1971, 4.

⁴⁵ *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, par 20.

Christmas and Easter (Christmas and Easter Dues), and offerings on the occasions of baptisms, marriages and funeral services. The accepted policy was that the parish priest was entitled to the pastoral income of his parish after paying a tax to the bishop (*cathedraticum*) for the bishop's personal support and the maintenance of diocesan activities. The flaw in the system was that in wealthy parishes the priest was well-off while in small and poor parishes the priest struggled to meet his financial obligations. Furthermore, and this was a startling omission, there was no provision for retired priests. Consequently a priest often remained in his parish even when he was unable to function in a satisfactory manner. The proposed change, in addition to caring for priests active in parishes, would make provision for adequate remuneration for housekeepers and accommodation for retired priests. In June, the Little Sisters of the Poor at Glen Osmond announced that they intended to build a block of four residential units for retired priests, and the priests of the archdiocese began an appeal to fund another unit for any priest forced to retire due to ill health before being eligible for the old-age pension.⁴⁶

The proposal was put to a vote at a gathering of all diocesan priests on 18 June 1970. Discussion preceding the vote revealed some opposition to the scheme, possibly from those who realised their income would be reduced. But when the vote was taken, 76 per cent gave approval.⁴⁷ The author, who was present at the meeting, remembered Gleeson's activity before and during the meeting, endeavouring to ensure the necessary numbers for the scheme to be accepted.⁴⁸ The new scheme began on 1 July 1970.

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) required each diocese to have a 'commission on the sacred liturgy' under the direction of the bishop to

⁴⁶ *Southern Cross*, 26 June 1970, 1, 15, 3.

⁴⁷ John Swan, 'A Brief History of the Diocesan Presbytery Fund, Archdiocese of Adelaide'. Series 0117 ACAA.

⁴⁸ In Sydney, Cardinal Gilroy had to contend with stern opposition to a similar proposal, one of the priests viewing it as socialisation and totalitarianism. Laffin, *Matthew Beovich*, 273.

promote the liturgical apostolate.⁴⁹ Beovich established a Diocesan Commission for Sacred Liturgy, Music and Art in 1964 and chaired the meetings himself.

As a bishop, prior to Vatican II, Gleeson's conduct was in accord with long-held customs. He was at times too zealous in the eyes of some of the clergy who spoke disparagingly of the 'boy bishop'. Vatican II required of him, at the age of 45, to embrace and promote positions that had long been rejected by the Church. Before priestly ordination Gleeson took the oath against Modernism. This would have included his acceptance of the condemnation by the Holy Office of the sixty-five propositions listed in the decree *Lamentabili*.⁵⁰ One example suffices to show that this decree came from another era, issued by a Church 'indifferent to the problems raised by historical methods, and often hermeneutically naïve'.⁵¹ Proposition Number 11 anathematised the opinion that 'Divine inspiration does not extend to all of Sacred Scriptures so that it renders its parts, each and every one, free from every error.' Modern criticism demonstrated that such a position was untenable while still asserting that the Bible contains God's gracious revelation to humanity.

Gleeson contributed to the Second Vatican Council, embraced its call and was seen by many in the archdiocese as its main promoter. The Council adopted a new style that expressed in a new language, a new vision of Catholicism, and Gleeson strove to put this into practice:

[moving] from commands to invitations, from laws to ideals, from definition to mystery, from threats to persuasion, from coercion to conscience, from monologue to dialogue, from ruling to serving, from withdrawn to integrated, from vertical to horizontal, from exclusion to inclusion, from hostility

⁴⁹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, par 45.

⁵⁰ Decree of the Holy Office, 3 July 1907. <http://www.papalencyclicals.net/pius10/p10lamen.htm>. Accessed 5 May 2018.

⁵¹ O'Malley, *What Happened*, 293.

to friendship, from rivalry to partnership, from suspicion to trust, from static to ongoing, from passive acceptance to active engagement, from fault-finding to appreciation, from prescriptive to principled, from behaviour modification to inner appropriation.⁵²

Gleeson's style of being a bishop changed from his early days as an assistant bishop, and also from the manner in which bishops conducted affairs before Vatican II. He shared Archbishop Beovich's opinion that 'Pope John XXIII had unwittingly set up an adult education course for bishops when he initiated the Council'.⁵³ Gleeson made his contribution to the Council and its teaching the lodestar for the rest of his life.

⁵² O'Malley, *What Happened*, 307.

⁵³ James William Gleeson, 'The Church in Adelaide During my Years as a Priest and Bishop', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 65, no 3, (1988), 300.

Chapter 5

ECUMENICAL AND INTER-FAITH COMMITMENT, MODIFIED ECCLESIOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

At the Second Vatican Council there was a seismic shift in the official Church's attitude to other Christian denominations and to non-Christian religions. Ecumenism moved from the verge of Catholic life to become 'one of the principal concerns' of the Council.¹ The Church 'urges her sons to enter with prudence and charity into discussion and collaboration with members of other religions.'² Albert C Outler, professor at the Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, was an official observer at the Second Vatican Council. He noted its 'truly pastoral tone and ecumenical spirit', and welcomed the demise of the 'siege mentality of pre-conciliar Rome'.³

A 'strongly sectarian' Church

Gleeson began his priestly ministry in a sectarian church, 'a religious group characterised by strict adherence to its beliefs and by exclusivity, as in resistance to outside influences'.⁴ The concern was 'the social and cultural reproduction of the Church, ensuring that Catholics were held within the Church from birth to death'.⁵ To achieve this there were Catholic schools, various prayer sodalities, sporting clubs, Catholic hospitals, and separate sections in cemeteries. The laity was not encouraged to be involved in the management of the Church.

Catholics were forbidden to take part in worship services with other Christian

¹ Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, par 1.

² Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, *Nostra Aetate*, par 2.

³ Albert C Outler, 'Response', in Abbott, *Documents of Vatican II*, 102-103.

⁴ *Macquarie Encyclopedic Dictionary*, definition of sectarian.

⁵ Neil Ormerod, 'The Laity in the Australian Church', in Neil Ormerod; Ormond Rush; David Pascoe; Clare Johnson; Joel Hodge; eds, *Vatican II: reception and implementation in the Australian Church* (Melbourne: Garratt Publishing, 2012), 68.

denomination or other faiths. As chaplain to Catholic student teachers, Gleeson revealed himself as a product of his time. A student who was at the Adelaide Teachers College in 1950-52 approached Gleeson to enquire if she could accept an invitation to join a small select choir at the college, even though it might be required at times to sing at non-Catholic services. Gleeson expressed his regret that he could not give the permission.⁶ Archbishop Beovich, in January 1954, gave a comparable response when he was visited by Mrs Una Hannan, wife of Albert James Hannan, former South Australian Crown Solicitor, and their daughter Mignon. Beovich refused to grant permission for Mignon to be a bridesmaid at a Protestant wedding and noted in his diary: 'I refused to give permission. It is not easy to say No, but very necessary.'⁷ As Mrs Hannan was not a Catholic and so was unable to marry before the altar in a Catholic church, this additional rebuff would have been difficult to understand and accept.

Another area where the commitment to keeping Catholics within the Church caused considerable resentment, anger and embarrassment was the Church's legislation regarding mixed marriages. This legislation was the result of the papal decree, *Ne Temere* (Lest Rashly) which came into effect in 1908. This decree declared that unless a Catholic was married before a Catholic priest and two witnesses, the marriage was not valid in the sight of God or the Church, even though it was accepted as valid by the state. Prior to this decree such marriages were regarded by the Catholic Church as valid though illicit.

⁶ Interview with Rosemary Rendell at Ascot Park, 24 December 2013.

⁷ Beovich personal diaries, 7 January 1954.

How much this legislation was resented by other Christian denominations was shown in July 1911 when the Council of Churches in South Australia organised a meeting in the Exhibition Building in Adelaide to protest the promulgation of the *Ne Temere* decree.⁸ The event drew an enthusiastic crowd of 3500.⁹ Rev Lionel B Fletcher from the Port Adelaide Congregational Church urged the leadership of the Methodist Church to further the protest: 'Let us demand that no woman shall be branded as a harlot and no child as illegitimate just because the Pope of Rome and his priests care to say they are.'¹⁰

The Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand (1937) addressed the question of mixed marriages in ten decrees (numbers 451-460). These stated that the Church prohibited such marriages because of the danger to the faith of the Catholic party and of children born of the marriage. Each year, on the second Sunday after the Epiphany, sermons on the subject were to be preached at all Masses to discourage parishioners from entering such unions. If, for a serious reason, the bishop granted permission for such marriages, the non-Catholic party was to attend at least five instructions regarding the Catholic faith; he or she was to give a guarantee that the Catholic spouse would not be hindered in the practice of the faith, and both parties were required to sign a declaration that all children of the marriage would be baptised and brought up as Catholics. Moreover, such marriages were not to be celebrated before the main altar (or any altar in the church) unless, for a serious reason, the bishop gave permission.

⁸ *Advertiser*, 30 June 1911, 6.

⁹ *Australian Christian Commonwealth* (Adelaide), 8 September 1911, 3.

¹⁰ *Australian Christian Commonwealth*, 8 September 1911, 3.

These marriages usually took place in the sacristy. In all of these prescriptions the Plenary Council was mainly following the 1917 Code of Canon Law, especially Canon 1061§1 and Canon 1109 §3. Clearly such an attitude would be resented by many persons, both Catholic and non-Catholic. The ruling also failed to respect the conscientious beliefs of the non-Catholic party. This attitude was that of the triumphant Church, and an arrogant Church. Gleeson, like the author, would have endured the tension and embarrassment experienced in dealing with some mixed marriages.

Evidence that this tension continued was revealed in 1966, the year after the closing of the Second Vatican Council. The weekly newspaper, *South Australian Methodist*, printed an editorial entitled ‘Mixed Marriages’.¹¹ It referred to changes announced by the Catholic archbishop, Matthew Beovich, regarding marriages involving a Catholic and a member of another Christian denomination.¹² The editor, Dr Arnold Hunt, said that the changes were encouraging evidence that the thinking of the Second Vatican Council was ‘percolating down to local diocesan level’.¹³ The changes were not to be exaggerated because the claims regarding the validity of Catholic marriages still stood but there was recognition of the religious position of the non-Catholic party and most notably the non-Catholic minister might be invited to share the ceremony. Hunt saw two ways of viewing this and other changes in the Roman Catholic Church. One was to note the ‘continuing distortions of evangelical truth’ and deduce that the Roman Catholic Church had hardly moved. The other was to admit that there was still a long way to travel but to acknowledge that Rome was indeed changing. It would be churlish for Protestants to ‘deprecate any movement away from the frozen positions of the past’¹⁴

¹¹ *South Australian Methodist*, 29 July 1966, 2.

¹² See also, *Southern Cross*, 22 July 1966, 1; *Advertiser*, 23 July 1966, 17.

¹³ From 1959 to 1972 Dr Hunt was Vice-Principal and then Principal of Wesley (later Parkin-Wesley) Theological College in the Adelaide suburb of Wayville.

¹⁴ *South Australian Methodist*, 29 July 1966, 2.

The editorial also showed an awareness that Catholicism, like other churches, was being forced to recognise that in society there are a 'number of religious options': people move from church to church and even to no church. This will happen frequently as people of different faiths mix more freely. An increasing number of mixed marriages will be celebrated, even though Catholic and Protestant leaders regard them as 'undesirable'. Young people entering such marriages were asked to 'weigh the implications soberly and slowly'.¹⁵ Ministers of the Methodist Church appear to have grasped these facts more clearly and earlier than their Catholic counterparts.

¹⁵ *South Australian Methodist*, 29 July 1966, 2.

Gleeson addresses the Anglican synod

In September 1967, Gleeson (then coadjutor archbishop) was invited by Thomas Reed, Anglican bishop of Adelaide (Archbishop from 1973), to address the synod of the Anglican diocese of Adelaide on the topic, 'Ecumenical Developments since the Second Vatican Council'. This was the first time in South Australia that an Anglican synod was addressed by a Roman Catholic bishop.¹⁶ Gleeson addressed the assembly as 'my brothers and sisters in Christ' but he also referred to them as 'separated brethren'. These two appellations revealed the tortuous road ahead towards unity. He admitted that before Vatican II the Catholic Church was not prominent in the area of ecumenism. He was treading carefully here as in fact the Catholic Church had long 'remained aloof' from the ecumenical movement fearing it could lead to 'indifferentism', the belief that one church was as good as another. The problem for the Catholic Church, Gleeson said, was the belief that the true Church established by Jesus Christ was to be found in the community that recognised the pope as the successor of Peter. In this Church the fullness of the faith and all the means to gain salvation were present. His hearers would have expected a Catholic bishop to make this statement but nevertheless it would not appear to be a promising point of departure for ecumenical dialogue.

Gleeson then directed his hearers to Vatican II's Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitatis Redintegratio*) which said that among the communions that 'were separated' from the Roman See at the time of the Reformation the 'Anglican Communion occupies a special place'¹⁷. Gleeson saw the promptings of the Holy Spirit in the ecumenical contributions of the Anglican archbishops of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher and his successor Michael Ramsay, Patriarch Athenagoras, and the popes, John XXIII and Paul VI.

¹⁶ *Anglican* (Sydney), 28 September 1967, 3. For the full text of the address see Series 128, ACAA. *Southern Cross*, 8 September 1967, 1; 15 September 1967, 4 and 11.

¹⁷ *Unitatis Redintegratio*, par 13.

He then commented on the meetings between Canterbury and Rome. Fisher in a ‘courageous and imaginative action’ made a courtesy visit to John XXIII in Rome in December

1960. As the first meeting between an archbishop of Canterbury and a pope since the English Reformation, this was a real ecumenical milestone.¹⁸ Gleeson did not mention that this was a visit from one who had once said: ‘I grew up with an inbred opposition to anything that came from Rome. I objected to their doctrine; I objected to their methods of reasoning; I objected to their methods of operation in this country.’¹⁹ Also, as noted in Chapter 2, when in 1950 the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary was declared to be a dogma of Catholic faith, Fisher deplored the move as a ‘bar to re-union’ and a doctrine unacceptable to practically all Protestants.²⁰ So Fisher’s visit was not merely courteous but also surprising, given these expressed opinions.

Archbishop Michael Ramsey was a guest of Pope Paul VI from the 22-24 March in 1966. He came as the Archbishop of Canterbury and President of the Lambeth Conference of Bishops of the worldwide Anglican Communion. In the Sistine Chapel he declared to the pope: ‘I have come with the longing in my heart which I know to be in your heart also, that we may by our meeting together help in the fulfilment of the prayer of our Divine Lord that all His disciples may come to unity in the truth.’²¹

Gleeson also recalled the words of their joint declaration of cooperation:

¹⁸Vatican Radio: The voice of the Pope and the Church in dialogue with the World. Recollections of the first Anglican-Catholic encounter in the Vatican.

<http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2015/12/02/recalling_first_anglican-catholic_encounter_in_the_vatican/1191514 Accessed 25 October 2017.

¹⁹ Adrian Hastings, *A History of English Christianity 1920-2000* (London: SCM Press, 2001), 522.

²⁰ *Southern Cross*, 26 January 1951, 6.

²¹ For the full record of the speeches at this event see: *The Archbishop of Canterbury’s Visit to Rome March 1966* (Westminster: Church Information Office, 1966). *Southern Cross*, 15 September 1967, 11.

They [Pope Paul and Archbishop Ramsey] affirm their desire that all those Christians who belong to these two Communion may be animated by these same sentiments of respect, esteem and fraternal love; and in order to help these develop to the full, they intend to inaugurate between the Roman Catholic Church and the whole Anglican Communion a serious dialogue which, founded on the Gospels, and on the ancient common tradition may lead to unity in truth for which Christ prayed.²²

The Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) was set up by Ramsay and Paul VI in 1967; its terms of reference were determined by the Malta Report prepared by a Joint Preparatory Commission (1967-68). There have been three phases: ARCIC I, 1970-81; ARCIC II, 1983-2005; ARCIC III that commenced in 2011 and is still in progress.²³ On 2 July 2018, the commission issued its first document in thirteen years. The sixty-eight page report, 'Walking Together on the Way: learning to be the Church – local, regional, universal' showed that 'receptive ecumenism', how churches can be mutually enriched by insights gained from each other, can enable progress on the path to unity.²⁴ Its previous document, 'Mary: grace and hope in Christ' was published in 2005.

Gleeson reminded the synod that in 1962 Pope John XXIII had invited observers from all major Christian churches to the Council and that this invitation was renewed by Paul VI for the remainder of the Council. The presence of these observers was a constant reminder of a divided Christendom that 'openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages the most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature'.²⁵ The words of apology, addressed to the observers by Paul VI in 1963, were recalled: 'If we are in any way to blame for the separation, we humbly beg God's forgiveness and ask pardon, too, of our brethren who feel them to have been injured by us.'

²² Austin Flannery, ed, *Vatican Council II: the conciliar and post conciliar documents* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1975), 479-80.

²³ *Anglican Communion*, 'ARCIC – Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission' <<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/relationships/ecumenical-dialogues/roman-catholic/arcic.aspx>>. Accessed 25 October 2017.

²⁴ *Tablet* (London), vol 272, no 9258 (2018), 2 and 25.

²⁵ Gleeson was here quoting the Introduction to the Decree on Ecumenism, par 1.

Gleeson stressed the unity among Christians deriving from baptism but warned against a ‘false irenicism’ which deemed differences in doctrine, discipline and structure of the Church to be unimportant. Gleeson reminded Anglicans that Rome had other ecumenical interests requiring attention. He referred to the meeting of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I of Constantinople on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem in January 1964 and the subsequent lifting, in December 1965, of the anathemas pronounced by both sides in 1054.²⁶

Gleeson’s words revealed a significant departure from his stance at a meeting organised by the student religious societies at the University of Adelaide in June 1962. The gathering was part of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity celebrated in the southern hemisphere at the time of Pentecost. Gleeson, together with the Methodist chaplain, Rev Arthur Jackson, presided. In his address Gleeson stated that the unity of Christians would involve the separated brethren returning to the Roman Catholic fold.²⁷ Here Gleeson was in step with the traditional attitude, well expressed in an editorial in the *Southern Cross* eleven years earlier: ‘The only re-union that the Church can have with non-Catholic bodies is that which would come about through their acceptance of her claims – claims made not in a spirit of arrogance but out of simple fidelity to Christ and the truth.’²⁸

Gleeson addresses the Methodist Ministers Study Seminar

In January 1968, Gleeson addressed the South Australian Methodist Ministers Study Seminar at Wesley College. He covered much the same ground as in his address to the Anglican synod but added the words of the chief Anglican observer at the Second Vatican Council, Bishop John Moorman of Ripon, who said the presence of observers at the Council ‘was a real turning-point in Church history, a sign of the entry of the Roman

²⁶ For ‘The Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I’ see Flannery, ed, *Vatican Council II: the conciliar and post conciliar documents*, 471-73.

²⁷ Anglican (Sydney) 14 June 1962, 12.

²⁸ *Southern Cross*, 26 January 1951, 6.

Catholic Church into ecumenical discussion, the inauguration of a new era in Church relations'.²⁹

Ecumenism in Adelaide was significantly progressed in 1968 by a series of six meetings arranged jointly by the Christian Life Movement (Catholic) and the South Australian Council of Churches.³⁰ The project had the title: “‘Togetherness’– an exercise in ecumenical understanding’. Gleeson addressed the first public meeting in September 1968. He insisted that at no stage did Vatican II indicate any weakening of the belief that the Catholic Church was the true Church founded by Jesus Christ. However, the Council taught that Jesus Christ in his Holy Spirit was also at work in the churches and communities beyond the visible limits of the Catholic Church. All the validly baptised were brothers and sisters in Christ. Outside the visible bounds of the Catholic Church there were many aids to the achievement of holiness of life: Sacred Scripture; the life of grace; faith – hope – charity; the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Gleeson again warned against over-optimism and over-pessimism and called on all in the ecumenical process to be realists.

Gleeson’s addresses, while being respectful of other traditions, still presented the view that the Catholic Church was the ‘one true church’ in clear and unambiguous terms. He warned against ‘false irenicism’ and accepted that the path to unity among Christians would be long and tortuous.

The Lutheran – Roman Catholic Dialogue

In April 1975, the Lutheran – Roman Catholic Dialogue, authorised by the General Church Council of the Lutheran Church in Australia and the Australian Episcopal Conference of the Roman Catholic Church, commenced in South Australia. Adelaide

²⁹*Southern Cross*, 2 February 1968, 2.

³⁰The Christian Life Movement, from the 1 January 1968, was the new name for the Newman Institute of Christian Studies, established in 1948 by Beovich, as the education arm of the Movement.

was chosen because the Lutheran Church was numerically strongest in South Australia and Adelaide was the home of the only Lutheran seminary in Australia.³¹ Gleeson's commitment to the dialogue, on which he served from April 1975 until October 1985, was revealed in the attendance records. During this time forty-four meetings were held and, despite the demands on his time as Archbishop of Adelaide, he tendered an apology on only six occasions.³²

Sr Barbara Agnew CPPS, an American religious sister teaching at St Francis Xavier's Seminary, who was a member of the dialogue (August 1984-August 1985), wrote to Gleeson to thank him for inviting her to join the dialogue and also to express her concern for his health. She reported that at the recent drafting committee meeting two Lutheran pastors, Siegfried Hebart and Friedemann Hebart, expressed their concern for Gleeson's health and also for the dialogue which would be deprived of the archbishop for a time. The 'younger man said quite plainly he felt you had kept the Dialogue going through the years'.³³ After Gleeson's death, the Lutheran Church of Australia, SA District, placed the following entry in the personal notices of the *Advertiser*: 'Gratefully remembered for his contribution to the Lutheran – Catholic Dialogue'.³⁴

In 1977 the two churches agreed to recognise each other's baptism.³⁵ Reports followed on the Eucharist, *Sacrament and Sacrifice* (1985) and on ordained ministry, *Pastor and Priest* (1990). The dialogue has produced a report on ecclesiology, *Communion and Mission* (1995); a statement concerning *Justification* (1998); a report on the office of bishop and president, *The Ministry of Oversight* (2007), and the result of

³¹David Schubert, 'Lutheran Church', in Wilfred Prest, ed, *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2001), 323.

³²Attendance sheets. Copy in author's possession.

³³Agnew to Gleeson, 29 September 1984. Series 0021-0023, ACAA. The Lutheran pastors were father and son.

³⁴*Advertiser*, 30 March 2000, 80.

³⁵Raymond K. Williamson, ed, *Stages on the Way: documents from the bilateral conversations between churches in Australia* (Melbourne: Joint Board of Christian Education, 1994), 57-59.

the dialogue concerning Scripture and Tradition, *Living word, Living Tradition* (2011). At the 148th meeting of the dialogue, held in May 2011, preparations were made to study the Petrine ministry.³⁶ In 2016 the dialogue partners published an agreed statement in which each church agreed to ‘look at a new way of exercising the primacy, and to identify the challenges ahead of them’.³⁷

In November 1985, a gathering of Lutheran and Catholic clergy celebrated the publication of *Sacrament and Sacrifice*. Gleeson, by then Emeritus Archbishop, addressed the gathering and stated: ‘We have a long journey in faith ahead of us, but it is a most important one’.³⁸ He also quoted from the introduction of the report: ‘We believe that the eventual outcome of our dialogue does not lie in our hands; it is the prerogative of the Lord of the Church’.³⁹ So Gleeson acknowledged that unity may not be achieved only by other Christians re-joining the Catholic Church: ‘the eventual outcome of our dialogue does not lie in our hands’.

³⁶J T E Renner, ‘Twenty-five years of Lutheran and Roman Catholic Dialogue’, *Lutheran Theological Journal*, vol 34, no 1 (2000), 3-13.

³⁷Gerard Kelly, ‘The Commemoration of the Reformation and the Path to Unity’. *The Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 94, no 4 (2017), 461. The agreed statement: *The Petrine Ministry in a New Situation: a joint statement on the papacy by the Lutheran – Roman Catholic Dialogue in Australia 2011- 2016* (Adelaide: Lutheran – Roman Catholic Dialogue in Australia, 2016).

³⁸*Lutheran* (National magazine of the Lutheran Church of Australia), 2 December 1985, 6.

³⁹*Sacrament and Sacrifice*, 7, par. 3.

The South Australian Dialogue of the Roman Catholic and Uniting Church

On 16 June 1979 a small group of people met with Gleeson and Rev. Dr D’Arcy Wood, the Moderator of the South Australian Synod of the Uniting Church. The Uniting Church was formed in 1977 from a union of Methodist, Congregationalist and Presbyterian Churches; Methodism, in particular, was well represented in South Australia. The meeting in June 1979 was the first meeting of a Roman Catholic – Uniting Church in Dialogue in Australia.⁴⁰ In 1989 the heads of the two communions reconstituted the dialogue with the revised name, The South Australian Dialogue of the Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches.⁴¹ The Catholic diocese of Port Pirie had become a member of the dialogue which now became state-wide. The membership consisted of six representatives from each denomination with two co-chairpersons, one from each of the churches involved. The overall purpose of the dialogue was to ‘contribute at the State level to the search for mutual understanding leading to the fullness of Christian unity’.⁴² In 1994 the dialogue produced a discussion paper ‘Sharing the Eucharist’.⁴³

Then in 2005 the dialogue issued the document ‘The Bible in our Churches’.⁴⁴ A resource paper, ‘Lay Ministry in the Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches’ was approved in 2008.⁴⁵ A future dialogue will treat receptive ecumenism, the churches learning from, and being enriched by, each other’s traditions. Gleeson was not as involved with this dialogue as he was in the Lutheran – Roman Catholic dialogue but it is noteworthy that he was one of the founding fathers of the venture.

⁴⁰Rev Anna Catlin, ‘Brief History of the Journey so far’ in Uniting Church in Australia/Roman Catholic Dialogue in South Australia 1979-1989, 1. Series 0042–0007, ACAA.

⁴¹Charter of the South Australian Dialogue of the Roman Catholic and United Churches (Revised 17 March 2011), 1. <<http://sadiologuercuc.org/index.php?page=our-charter>>. Accessed 28 October 2015. ⁴²Charter of the South Australian Dialogue of the Roman Catholic and Uniting Churches, 2 and 3. <http://sadiologuercuc.org/index.php?page=our-charter>. Accessed 8 August 2018.

⁴³Sharing the Eucharist, <<http://sadiologuercuc.org/index.php?page=sharing-the-eucharist>>. Accessed 27 October 2017.

⁴⁴The Bible in our Churches. <<http://sadiologuercuc.org/index.php?page=bible-in-our-churches>>. Accessed 27 October 2017

⁴⁵Lay Ministry, <<http://sadiologuercuc.org/index.php?page=lay-ministry>> Accessed 27 October 2017.

The West Lakes Church

By 1967 the only large parcel of undeveloped land within ten kilometres of the central business district of Adelaide was a tidal swamp within the western suburbs. A deal between the South Australian Government and the private company, Development Finance Corporation, undertook to form a new company, West Lakes Limited. This was the beginning of the West Lakes development. Reclamation of the land began in July 1970 and at the time it was ‘the largest single civil undertaking in Australia and the largest private enterprise urban development’.⁴⁶

In 1970, West Lakes Limited approached the Heads of Christian Churches in South Australia, offering land for development for religious purposes. The churches formed a sub-committee, comprising twelve mainstream denominations, to be chaired by Archbishop Gleeson, who at the time was the coadjutor archbishop. The churches made commitments: none would act unilaterally; the venture was to be ecumenical. Within a year all but the Catholic Church, the Churches of Christ, and three Uniting Church congregations had dropped out of the conversation. This was the first time in Australia that the Catholic Church would jointly own a church building with Protestant denominations. Although all the denominations would have their own timeslots for worship, Gleeson promoted the idea of regular combined ‘prayer services’.

⁴⁶John Watt, *One Sign of Hope: the story of the vision the planning the planting and the first eight years of the West Lakes United Parish* (Adelaide: John Watt, 2016), 15

The four Protestant congregations planned to jointly establish the West Lakes United Parish while the West Lakes Catholic congregation would be part of the adjacent Semaphore parish. The Uniting Church minister, John Watt, was ‘surprised and excited’ to be chosen as the first minister of West Lakes United Parish. Gleeson maintained a strong personal commitment to the project throughout.⁴⁷

The West Lakes United Parish first worshipped in the newly-built manse, at 9.30am on Sunday 28 September 1975. It was the first house in the estate and contained a large lounge room that could be used for worship by the community, ‘estimated to grow to about thirty people in the first year or three’.⁴⁸ However thirty-two attended the first Sunday worship service. In February 1976, due to the growing number of worshippers, Sunday services moved to the Semaphore Park State School and finally, on 19 February 1978, the Church in the Market Place was opened, owned jointly by the Catholic Church, the Uniting Church and the Churches of Christ. It was an integral part of the Bartley Shopping Centre. Gleeson, by now the archbishop, pledged \$ 33 750 towards the cost of the building.

At its opening, the Governor of South Australia, Rev Keith Seaman, was welcomed at the lych gate of the building and the heads of the three denominations involved were present: Archbishop Gleeson, Rev Ian Tanner, Moderator of the Uniting Church, and Mr Neil Bright, President of the Churches of Christ⁴⁹ Tanner challenged the people to spread the good news of God’s love and Bright received offerings symbolic of the commitment of the two congregations. Gleeson’s address revealed his total commitment to the ecumenical process:

⁴⁷Watt, *One Sign of Hope*, 16.

⁴⁸Watt, *One Sign of Hope*, 18

⁴⁹Lych gate takes its name from the old English ‘lich’ meaning corpse. It was a covered entrance where the priest met the corpse and funeral party.

With the development of West Lakes, the Churches participating in this religious centre project have found a new opportunity for working and growing together.

Goodwill, generosity and openness in Christian love to meet and discuss the various facets of this project have given evidence of a degree of Christian unity in faith which has long existed but has not always been manifested.

We publicly express our gratitude to God and to one another that we have been able to give this public witness to our unity in Christ and our commitment to him.

With the people of the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide, and in particular of the Parish of Semaphore, I offer to our brothers and sisters in our partner Churches our reverence and respect for them and give the assurance that we wish to support one another while, with Christ, we grow and walk together as the pilgrim people of God.⁵⁰

The Southern Cross reported that the West Lakes Church was the first in the state to be jointly owned and used by Protestant Churches and the Roman Catholic Church; it was believed to be the first time the Churches of Christ had been involved in such a venture and it certainly was for the Catholic Church.⁵¹ Local historian Heather Hartshorne declared that Monsignor James Hanrahan, the first and longest serving parish priest of Semaphore (1907-65), ‘must have somersaulted in his grave for in his eyes this would have been apostasy’!⁵² In his day he had urged parishioners to cross the street rather than walk close to any Protestant establishment. On 6 May 1982, the West Lakes United Parish moved into a larger building fashioned from a former Shell Service Station. It was officially opened by Rev Dr Darcy Wood, Moderator of the Uniting Church in South Australia, and is still used by the Catholic and Uniting Churches

⁵⁰Watt, *One Sign of Hope*, 113.

⁵¹*Southern Cross*, 24 February 1978, 2.

⁵²Heather Hartshorne, *Faith of Our Fathers in Semaphore 1907-2007* (Adelaide: Seaview Press, 2007), 108

A revealing episode

Initially the Sunday morning chaos at the Ecumenical Centre, opened on 19 February 1978, was ‘pushing goodwill and friendship to the edge’.⁵³ The Roman Catholic Mass was at 8.30am and the United Church family service at 9.30am. John Watt approached Brendan Bowler, parish priest of Semaphore, seeking some variation of the time of the Catholic Mass but was told: ‘That is a matter for the Archbishop.’ Bowler was being evasive because it was in fact up to him and his parishioners to set Mass times. However, to change Mass times in any parish usually caused disharmony and criticism of the parish priest. Clearly Bowler wanted to avoid this. After consulting with his peers, Watt arranged a meeting with Gleeson to suggest that the Catholic Mass be moved to the Saturday evening.

On the day of the meeting, Watt and Michael Sawyer, the Mission and Outreach Officer of the Synod, gathered with Gleeson and Bowler in Gleeson’s West Terrace study that ‘was a wonder to behold’.⁵⁴ There were books, magazines, staplers and whatever else happened to be in use strewn in layers across his desk. On the floor there were some fifteen piles of papers, the tallest some eighteen inches high. Gleeson seemed ‘completely unselfconscious’ of his office arrangements.

Watt explained the problem and asked if it would be possible to move the Mass to Saturday evening. Bowler, when asked his opinion, said he could not see how this could be done. Gleeson then knelt down and shuffled through one of the ‘mini-towers of papers’ on the carpet. Watt noted that there were two huge holes in the soles of his shoes. Gleeson then went to his filing cabinet and within minutes produced a sheet of paper with the times of Saturday and Sunday Masses in the Parish of Semaphore.

⁵³Watt, *One Sign of Hope*, 128.

⁵⁴Watt, *One Sign of Hope*, 128.

There was silence in the room as Gleeson, pencil in hand, worked out alternative times for the parish Masses. Eventually he said: 'It is possible. I think this should work.' He read out the list and the parish priest said: 'Yes, your Grace.' In about ten minutes the matter was solved. The episode was an illustration of Gleeson's down-to-earth leadership. The author experienced this when Gleeson spent time in Our Lady of Victories Church in Glenelg assisting with the plans to remodel the sanctuary to enable the celebration of Mass with the celebrant facing the congregation.

A Contrast

Rev John Watt was deeply impressed by Gleeson and admired his ecumenical response and his humanity. Hence it was understandable that he was puzzled by an experience he related in a letter to Brian Martin, director of the West Lakes development: 'You probably know that over the years I was at West Lakes I developed a very high opinion of Archbishop Gleeson. But I also found my very positive experience of him hard to reconcile with his treatment of a friend of mine who had resigned from the Catholic priesthood and got married. It was a very distressing dilemma.'⁵⁵

The author spoke to Watt who explained that he only knew about Gleeson's treatment of his friend from what his friend told him. The author then spoke to other persons who had experienced Gleeson's response to their leaving their religious calling and embarking on a new way of life. They remembered his lack of empathy. The author also recalled a significant happening that occurred during his time in St Francis Xavier's Seminary in 1950-52. Following the Sunday Mass in the main chapel, the senior students walked down to the philosophy building to find a fellow student on the

⁵⁵John Watt to Brian Martin, 15 January 2017. Copy in author's possession.

verandah with his bags packed. It had been planned that he would leave during the Mass: no opportunity for a friendly farewell. But the taxi had been late. So it seems reasonable to deduce that there was at the time an unaccepting attitude, even to those in seminaries, who left to embark on another path through life. The author recalled Gleeson's stern warning to parents who refused to consent to their children giving their lives to God in the religious life: 'Upon these parents rests the heavy responsibility of denying a Christian education to hundreds of the least of Christ's brethren.'⁵⁶ It appears that Gleeson found it difficult to accept or understand anyone turning away from a lifelong commitment.

A waning of ecumenical enthusiasm

The initial enthusiasm for the unity of Christians, apart from ecumenical dialogue and cooperation, has to some degree waned. The historian, David M Thompson, noted: 'It proved easier to bring churches together in organisations where their individual identity was not lost than to inaugurate structural reunion. Thus the pace of ecumenical advance seemed to slacken during the last quarter of the century.'⁵⁷ The insistence of the Catholic Church that it was the one true Church even though 'many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside its visible confines' has proved to be a stumbling block.⁵⁸ The papacy, as it was exercised, was also part of this problem. In 1967, Pope Paul VI made the 'astonishing statement': 'The Pope – as we all know – is undoubtedly the gravest obstacle in the path of ecumenism'.⁵⁹ Pope John Paul II, during his visit in 1984 to the World Council of Churches in Geneva, acknowledged that the ministry of the Bishop of Rome 'constitutes a difficulty for most other Christians, whose memory is marked by

⁵⁶ *Southern Cross*, 12 February 1954, 4.

⁵⁷ David M Thompson, 'Ecumenism' in Hugh McLeod, ed, *The Cambridge History of Christianity: world christianities c. 1945-c.2000*, vol 9 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 50.

⁵⁸ *Lumen Gentium*, par 8.

⁵⁹ Peter Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI: the first modern pope* (London: Harper Collins, 1993), 9.

certain painful recollections'.⁶⁰ However there are clear indications that the ecumenical project is still progressing. The Catholic Church in Australia is involved in national dialogues with the Anglican Church, the Lutheran Church, and the Uniting Church. The Catholic Church has been a member of the National Council of Churches in Australia since its foundation in 1994 and in 2010 signed the document *Australian Churches Covenanting Together*.⁶¹ The Covenant bound the fifteen member churches to support each other as partners on the ecumenical journey. Some hold that the way forward is receptive ecumenism where all involved seek to be enriched by what they can gain from the other participants in ecumenical dialogue. This will involve a willingness of churches to be self-critical in light of the insights gained and a preparedness to grow through this process. The Australian theologian, Gerard Kelly, claimed that receptive ecumenism is a 'New Ecumenical Wave' because the image suggested movement and energy. Moreover, as waves have their origin far from the shore, so receptive ecumenism is a fruit of the continuing ecumenical movement.⁶² Gleeson clearly contributed to the development of the 'New Ecumenical Wave'.

When Gleeson retired, due to ill health, in 1985, Dr D'Arcy Wood, then president of the Australian Council of Churches and deputy-principal of Parkin-Wesley Theological College in Adelaide, wrote an appreciation of the archbishop's life. He praised Gleeson as 'a man of great devotion to Christ and to the Church, a warm and friendly person, a good administrator, and an enthusiastic ecumenist'. He recorded that Gleeson 'stated his views with openness and vigour, yet with a sincerity and Christian

⁶⁰John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, *Ut Unum Sint* (That They May All Be One), par 88.

⁶¹A National Covenant, <<http://www.ncca.org.au/all-documents/29-australian-churches-covenanting-together/file>>. Accessed 8 March 2016. ⁵⁹A National Covenant, <<http://sadiologuercuc.org/index.php?page=a-national-covenant>>. Accessed 29 October 2017. Australian Churches Covenanting – Pamphlet, <<http://www.ncca.org.au/faith-and-unity/30-australian-churches-covenanting-a5-pamphlet/file>>. Accessed 29 October 2017.

⁶²Gerard Kelly, *A New Ecumenical Wave: a public lecture at the National Council of Churches Forum, Canberra, 12 July 2010*, <<http://www.ncca.org.au/faith-and-unity/46-a-new-ecumenical-wave/file>>. Accessed 8 March 2016. See also Denis Edwards, 'Receptive Ecumenism and the Charism of a Partner Church: the example of justification', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 86, no 4 (2009), 457-467.

grace that prevent any rupture of relationships'. Gleeson, by his regular attendance at meetings of the Heads of Christian Churches, revealed that the meeting was high on the list of his priorities. Wood concluded: 'We thank God for his work as priest, as bishop, and as ecumenical leader, but most of all for his Christian example.'⁶³

Gleeson and non-Christian religions

The Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*) was promulgated by the Second Vatican Council on 28 October 1965, a short time before closure. A response to the document was given by Dr Claud D Nelson, the official Religious News Service correspondent at the Council for the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Nelson noted that although Christian churches were 'involved in a common guilt for anti-Semitism' the document contained no real confession of guilt. Nonetheless, he said that some Jews, perhaps most, 'while not enthusiastic, find substantial grounds for hope for the future'.⁶⁴ Nelson was grateful for the inclusion of Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and 'primitive religions' in the declaration and noted the 'respectful and cordial tone' obvious in references to them. He would have noted the Declaration's statement:

The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men.⁶⁵

Mindful of Nelson's critique of the declaration, the following section examines Gleeson's conduct towards non-Christian religions.

⁶³*New Times*, Monthly publication of the South Australian Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia, vol 4, no 6 (1985), 11.

⁶⁴Claud Nelson, 'A Response', Abbott, ed, *The Documents of Vatican II*, 669-71.

⁶⁵Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*) par 2.

People of the First Testament

Since 1960, the Jewish community in South Australia has never exceeded 0.1 per cent of the population.⁶⁶ They are members of the oldest of the great monotheistic religions of the West and share a common spiritual heritage with Christians. The Second Vatican Council sought to ‘encourage and further mutual understanding and appreciation’ between Christians and Jews.⁶⁷

In November 1969 Gleeson attended the annual dinner for the Adelaide Jewish Community arranged by the Women’s International Zionist Organisation. This organisation was founded in London in 1920 with the aim of contributing to the welfare of all Jewish communities. Gleeson appears to have been the first Catholic bishop to have been invited to address such a gathering, a further indication of his acceptance in the wider community. The major section of his address surveyed the common ground and the spiritual treasures shared by Christians and Jews.⁶⁸ He referred to the Divine Office, a prayer he recited daily, as did all priests and many religious. The Hebrew Scriptures were major contributors to this prayer, providing the 150 psalms and readings from the Torah (Law/Teaching), the Prophets and the Writings. On a personal note Gleeson revealed that at the end of each day he assessed his words and actions against the background of the commandments given to Moses (Exodus 20: 1-17), the standard of love of God (Deuteronomy 6:5), and the requirement of love of neighbour (Leviticus 19:18).

Gleeson did not gloss over the terrible and tragic errors of the past in Jewish-Christian relations. But he stressed the work of Vatican II which taught: ‘Even though the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ (John 19:6) neither all Jews indiscriminately at that time, nor Jews today, can be

⁶⁶Bruce Rosen, ‘Jews’, in Wilfrid Prest, ed, *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2001), 287-88.

⁶⁷Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*), par 4.

⁶⁸*Southern Cross*, 28 November 1969, 1. For the full text of the address see Series 128, ACAA.

charged with the crimes committed during his passion'.⁶⁹ He gave credit to Pope John XXIII who had insisted that Jewish-Christian relations be discussed in the Council and also to Pope Paul VI who continued the work of his predecessor in building bridges to the Jewish people.⁷⁰ Gleeson also expressed the hope that there would be continuing contact between Jews and Catholics. Gleeson's hopes were to be fully realised. His successor, Leonard Faulkner, participated in two Holocaust memorial services held in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, and in 2011 Dr Michael Trainor, a priest of the archdiocese and lecturer in New Testament studies at the Catholic Theological College in Adelaide, was elected to the board of the International Council of Christians and Jews.⁷¹ In April 2014, the Remembrance of the Shoah (Hebrew for 'the catastrophe') was celebrated in the cathedral. In November 2015, 2016 and 2017 the cathedral was the venue for the remembrance of *Kristallnacht*, the Night of Broken Glass, when Jewish shops and schools were set alight throughout Germany and Austria in 1938.⁷² In 2015, Fr Michael Trainor, as co-chair of the South Australian Council of Christians and Jews, referred to the Second Vatican Council's declaration, *Nostra Aetate*, as the 'Catholic Church's response to the rising global anti-Semitism which reached its tragic conclusion with the Shoah, the holocaust, and to the long-held Christian teaching of contempt for Jewish people'.⁷³

In December 1982 Gleeson addressed the Christmas luncheon meeting of the Adelaide Rotary Club. He stated, 'For me, Jesus Christ is my life and my salvation. The feast of Christmas only has real meaning to people who believe in Christ or accept him in some way'. In his prepared text he had pencilled in this aside: 'I state this as a fact

⁶⁹Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, par 4.

⁷⁰It was Pope John XXIII who, at his first Good Friday service in 1959, removed the word 'perfidious' from the long standing call to prayer: 'Let us pray for the perfidious Jews.'

⁷¹Information supplied by Dr Michael Trainor, September 2011.

⁷²*Southern Cross*, December 2015, 2; December 2016, 2; December 2017, 11 and 14-15.

⁷³*Southern Cross*, November 2015, 3

and in due reverence for those of the Jewish faith among whom are some of my friends who are here today.’ Gleeson’s sensitivity was clearly evident here.⁷⁴

Islam

Islam, the Arabic word meaning ‘to submit totally to the will of Allah’, is a monotheistic and Abrahamic religion that originated in Arabia in the seventh century through the prophet Mohammed. Numerically, as a world religion, it is second only to Christianity.⁷⁵ In a homily, delivered at a Missioning Mass in Adelaide in 1991, Gleeson manifested his respect for Islam. Two Sisters of Mercy, Bernadette Marks and Gabriel Jennings, and a married couple, Mary and Matthew Coffey, were being commissioned by the Sisters of Mercy in Adelaide and Melbourne to be a presence in Pakistan. Their task was to staff the Notre Dame Institute of Education in Karachi. This institute resulted from the commitment of the bishop of Karachi who had studied in the United States of America and saw education as the way to assist the poor. He sought the assistance of a Sister of Mercy, Deirdre Jordan, Chancellor of Flinders University in Adelaide. The aim of the institute was to form teachers who would be able to provide education, especially for Catholic children, who were among the poorest.⁷⁶ Gleeson told those assembled that the missionaries were going to Pakistan, a nation of over 100 million people, where Islam was the state religion. As Sunni Muslims made up 97.2 per cent of the population, and Hindus and Christians were 1.4 per cent each, Gleeson counselled the missionaries: ‘You go to join and support the life and work of a Church which is truly a “little flock”, you go in respect for the Muslim people and their

⁷⁴ Complete address, Series 128, ACAA.

⁷⁵ The major Abrahamic religions are Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Lesser religions that claim to be Abrahamic are the Baha’i Faith, the Unitarian denomination, and Rastafarianism.

⁷⁶ *Conversations: an oral history project of the Australian College of Educators*. ‘An interview with Dr Deirdre Jordan AC, MBE, Chancellor of Flinders University’. Interviewer: Tony Ryan FACE, Archivist, Australian College of Educators, Adelaide 1995. Series 0166-0005, ACAA.

religion.⁷⁷ Gleeson then outlined beliefs that Christians and Muslims shared, at least to some degree. Both adored the one God and endeavoured to submit wholeheartedly even to his inscrutable decrees, as did Abraham with whom Islamic faith was pleased to associate itself. They revered Jesus as a prophet but not as God and they honoured Mary his virgin mother.⁷⁸

Gleeson quoted from the encyclical of Pope John Paul II dealing with the validity of the Church's missionary mandate. Issued on 7 December 1990, it pointed out the challenging truth that although the end of the second millennium approached this mission was 'still only beginning and that we must commit ourselves wholeheartedly to its service'.⁷⁹ Gleeson quoted one paragraph of the encyclical that stated some of the difficulties faced by missionaries:

I am well aware that many missionaries and Christian communities find in the difficult and often misunderstood path of dialogue their only way of bearing sincere witness to Christ and offering generous service to others. I wish to encourage them to persevere with faith and love, even in places where their efforts are not well received. Dialogue is a path towards the Kingdom and will certainly bear fruit, even if the times and seasons are known only to the Father.⁸⁰

Clearly Gleeson was aware of the difficulties the four missionaries would be facing. Dialogue with non-Christian religions has continued though not as consistently as with the people of the former covenant. On 29 October 2015, in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, there was an Interfaith Service with representatives from the Muslim, Jewish, Baha'i, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist and Christian faiths.⁸¹ Gleeson made his contribution to the 'wave' that ultimately enabled this gathering.

⁷⁷ 'Homily for the Missioning of Sisters of Mercy and Lay People to Pakistan' Series 128, ACAA. There were 5-20 per cent of the Muslims in Pakistan who were Shia: Gleeson did not acknowledge this.

⁷⁸ Homily for the Missioning.

⁷⁹ Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II on the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate (*Redemptoris Missio*), par 1.

⁸⁰ *Redemptoris Missio*, par 57.

⁸¹ *Southern Cross*, November 2015, 3.

Gleeson's ecclesiology modified

It is appropriate at this point to consider some aspects of Gleeson's ecclesiology and how it had developed from the time of his seminary training. From about 1550 to 1950 the dominant paradigm for the Catholic Church was that it was primarily an institution. This view led to an emphasis on the Church's visible structures, especially the rights and powers of its officers. At Vatican II, Bishop Emile De Smedt of Bruges, Belgium, spoke against the existing pyramidal pattern of the Church where 'all power is conceived as descending from the pope through the bishops and priests, while at the base the faithful people play a passive role and seem to have a lower position in the Church'.⁸² However, it seems that early in his ministry, even in his seminary days, Gleeson began to adopt, at least in part, the image of the Church as 'a community of disciples'. He may not have used those words but his actions demonstrated this conviction. He was conscious of the fact that this community was not perfect: Vatican II taught that this community 'at once holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of penance and renewal'.⁸³ As noted earlier, Gleeson, during his time in the seminary, learned from Fr Charles Mayne, the importance of empowering the laity. After ordination he was involved with the Young Christian Students and Young Christian Workers, organisations that aimed to form leaders among young people.⁸⁴

This view of the Church, as 'a community of disciples', was implicit in the address delivered by Gleeson at a luncheon of the Commonwealth Club in Adelaide Town Hall in August 1971. The Commonwealth Club was founded in 1910 with the aim of keeping members and those who attended their luncheons up-to-date by

⁸²Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (Expanded Edition), (New York: Image Books, 1987), 39.

⁸³Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*), par 8.

⁸⁴For imagining the Church as 'Community of Disciples' see Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (Expanded Edition), Chapter 13; Denis Edwards, 'Imaging the Church as the Community of Disciples', *Compass Theology Review*, vol 17 (1984), 5-10.

providing speakers who were leaders in their fields.⁸⁵ It was an important forum as its membership and luncheon attendees included many of the professional and business leaders of Adelaide.⁸⁶ Gleeson had received an invitation to address the gathering from the president, W P Wright, and was advised that he could select his own topic. Since the invitation had been extended to him as the incoming Catholic archbishop of Adelaide, Gleeson spoke on what that office meant to him and in the process provided a view of the structures and human resources of the Adelaide Church.⁸⁷

He first acknowledged that he had many co-workers: 100 diocesan priests; 107 priests from religious orders; more than 90 religious brothers; 670 religious sisters from 19 communities; full-time lay workers in areas such as education and social welfare. He also pointed out that since the Second Vatican Council there had been a growth of supportive bodies at the parish, regional and diocesan levels. As the leader, Gleeson saw his task as being a ‘creator of unity and a promoter of initiative’.⁸⁸ Furthermore, he was expected to be involved in the overall work of the wider Church together with his fellow bishops around the world and the pope. In Australia he was active in Australian Catholic Relief and the Justice and Peace Commission. This vision of Church was a far cry from the model presented in the theology manuals of his seminary days.

Gleeson’s philosophy of life

At the Commonwealth Club Gleeson also spoke in more detail of his personal commitments. His first calling was a religious one: to love God with all his being and subsequently to effectively love his neighbour. He quoted the title of Pope Paul VI’s peace message for 1971,

⁸⁵Gleeson’s predecessor, Archbishop Beovich, addressed the Commonwealth Club on 28 May 1940, shortly after becoming Archbishop of Adelaide and again on 1 December 1955.

⁸⁶In 2013 the club had a membership in excess of 150 which included professional and business people both working and retired.

⁸⁷For the full text of the speech see Series 128: Archbishop James Gleeson – Pastoral Letters, Homilies and Talks, ACAA. See also *Southern Cross*, 3 September 1971, 4.

⁸⁸Address to Commonwealth Club of Adelaide.

‘Every Man is my Brother’, and asserted that this meant that there was no cut-off point for love of neighbour. He expanded on this by mentioning the needs of refugees from ‘man-made’ and natural disasters. The promotion of social justice and human rights were expressions of love of neighbour. He spoke of justice in the field of education, his concern for public morality, and in defence of the lives of the unborn and the aged. He dealt with racism, the rights of Aboriginal people and dishonesty in the world of commerce. As part of loving one’s neighbour, Gleeson asserted, a bishop must speak out on these matters. He reminded the gathering of the link between proclaiming the good news of Christ and his salvation, and the lives of those to whom it was proposed. He concluded his address with the words: ‘This is the philosophy of my life and one that I am promoting for others.’

Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens, archbishop of Mechelen-Brussel in Belgium, was a leading voice at Vatican II. He said that if genuine *aggiornamento* (renewal) was to be achieved by the Council there had to be an ‘architectonic theme or central vision’: he suggested this could be the Church explaining how it conceived its relation to the world of today.⁸⁹ This was achieved in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*) that commenced with the words:

The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing that is genuinely human fails to find an echo in their hearts.⁹⁰

This statement was far removed from the idea of the ‘sectarian Church’ discussed in Chapter 2. Gleeson clearly had embraced the new vision. He now saw the Church as committed to ‘compassionate dialogue with modern men, to peace, to social justice, to whatever concerns the dignity of man and the unity of mankind’.⁹¹

⁸⁹ Donald R Campion, ‘The Church Today’, Abbott ed. *The Documents of Vatican II*, 184.

⁹⁰ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 1.

⁹¹ Abbott, ‘Opening Message’, *The Documents of Vatican II*, 2

Gleeson's ecclesiology changed (or developed) partly as a result of Vatican II: no longer was Christian unity to be achieved merely by other Christians re-joining the Catholic Church. He saw the eventual outcome of dialogue with other Christians as the 'prerogative of the Lord of the Church', not something to be achieved solely by human effort. Non-Christian religions are to be shown respect: the 'Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions'.⁹² Gleeson made a considerable contribution to ecumenism and to outreach to the Jewish community, and to a lesser extent to other religions. Ecumenical and inter-faith striving was considerably assisted by the Church's new style that expressed and promoted a shift in values and priorities:

...a style willing to seek out and listen to different viewpoints and to take them into account, a style eager to find common ground with "the other", a style open and above board, a style less unilateral in its decision-making, a style committed to fair play and to working with persons and institutions outside the Catholic community.⁹³

Gleeson put this into practice.

⁹² Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, par 2.

⁹³ O'Malley, *What Happened*, 307-8.

Chapter 6

GLEESON THE EDUCATOR

Education was a constant concern for Gleeson from the time of his ordination to the priesthood until his retirement as archbishop at the age of 64. He was inspector of Catholic primary schools in the archdiocese in 1948-52 and Director of Catholic Education in 1952-58. Then, as assistant bishop and coadjutor archbishop, he supported Beovich with regard to Catholic education. Finally, as archbishop of Adelaide in 1971-85, Catholic education was one of his main responsibilities. He was forthright in his proclamation of the purpose and claims of the Catholic and independent education systems. At Vatican II he supported the written intervention of Archbishop Beck on the question of Christian education (*Gravissimum Educationis*). Gleeson lived to see his and the Council's attitude to Catholic and independent schools accepted in Australia. He also contributed to the process that led to this unexpected outcome.

Accordingly, it is appropriate to treat in one section Gleeson's contribution to education. The following list of awards indicated widespread acknowledgement of his efforts. Queen Elizabeth II, on 12 June 1958, appointed Gleeson a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG), 'for service as Director of Catholic Education in South Australia'. A fellowship of the Australian College of Education (FACE) was conferred on Gleeson at the College's annual conference in Hobart in May 1967. The College, formed in 1959, aimed to gather those involved in education from primary to tertiary level to promote the total educational project – the name was changed in 2002 to the Australian College of Educators. In 1958 Gleeson was a member of the provisional council of the Australian College of Education that was instructed to 'use the amended statement of aims and organisation as the basis for a Constitution and

to take all necessary steps to found the College'.¹ Gleeson was also a founder member of the College.² On 26 January 1979 Gleeson was made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for 'service to religion and social welfare'. These were significant acknowledgements of Gleeson's contribution in the field of education.

Gleeson's philosophy of Catholic Schools

South Australia celebrated Education Week for the first time in August 1957. At the time Gleeson was auxiliary bishop and Director of Catholic Education. He preached the sermon at a Mass in the cathedral, celebrated by Archbishop Beovich, on Sunday 11 August as part of the Education Week celebrations. An analysis of his words revealed his philosophy concerning education in general and Catholic education in particular, a philosophy that was to be modified later.³ To fully appreciate Gleeson's words it is important to note the composition of the gathering, not all of whom were Catholics. The director of the State Education Department, Evan Mander-Jones, attended, along with representatives from state and local governments and the legal profession. Representatives from Catholic schools and colleges, parents' organisations, and Catholic societies were also in attendance.

Gleeson declared that the Church received the authority to teach from Christ himself and quoted the commission given to the disciples to 'make disciples of all nations' (Matthew 28:18-20). He spoke of the three societies to which people belonged: the family, ordered to the procreation and education of children; the state, concerned to 'protect and to promote' the temporal welfare of the community, 'not to absorb the family or the individual, nor to take their place'; the Church, entered through baptism, concerned with teaching people how to 'know, love and serve God on this earth and to

¹ Information provided by Jessie McFarlane, Executive Assistant and Administration Manager, Australian College of Educators, email 4 February 2016.

² Quarterly Newsletter Australian College of Education SA Chapter, March 2000, 3.

³ Gleeson, 'Sermon – Education Sunday', Series 128, ACAA. See also *Southern Cross*, 16 August 1957, 1 and 3; *Advertiser*, 12 August 1957, 2.

be happy with Him in heaven'. Church and state possessed all the means to fulfil their roles; the family needed the assistance of both Church and state.

Here Gleeson was proclaiming the received ecclesiology which viewed the Church as a 'perfect society' standing apart from the other 'perfect society', the state. Faithful to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, Gleeson was to change this aspect of his ecclesiology and to view the Church as being at the service of the human family. As the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*) expressed it: 'the Council, relying on the inspiration of Christ, the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, proposes to speak to all men in order to unfold the mystery that is man and cooperate in tackling the main problems facing the world today'.⁴

In his sermon Gleeson declared that the Church must be a vigilant mother, 'protecting her children against the danger of imbibing poison that may corrupt pure doctrine or pervert true morals' – this function of the Church was of 'great value to order and progress in family and state'. He defined the people that Catholic education aimed to develop – they were those 'who will live and judge and act consistently in accordance with the dictates of right reason enlightened by the example and teaching of Christ'. He expressed the opinion that 'whenever Christian principles and morals are no longer accepted and put into practice, the very foundations of our society are in danger'. All of this was derived from the manuals then in use in seminaries in Australia and indeed the Catholic world.

Gleeson upheld the primary right and responsibility of parents in the area of the education and formation of their children. On this he quoted the law of the Church: 'Parents are bound by a very grave obligation to care for the religious, moral, physical, and civic education of their children to the best of their power, and also to provide for

⁴ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 10.

their temporal welfare'.⁵ He also referred to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by the United Nations in 1948: 'Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.'⁶

Gleeson then addressed the question of aid to denominational and independent schools by quoting from an encyclical of Pope Pius XI, *On the Christian Education of Youth* (1929):

It is obviously the duty of the State, in furthering public and private education ... not only to respect the inherent rights of Church and family in regard to Christian education, but also to observe distributive justice. It is therefore unlawful for the State to claim such a monopoly of education and instruction that families are physically or morally constrained to send their children to State Schools, against the dictates of a Christian conscience or against their legitimate preferences.⁷

There was a clear message to state parliamentarians (and the federal government) that the Church regarded the denial of state aid for private schools as an injustice that needed to be reversed. Gleeson concluded with the following:

Conscious that no greater contribution could be made to Australia and to the world, the Catholic Church, at great effort and sacrifice on the part of her members and in spite of failures, is endeavouring to develop such people through her educational works. She seeks, not to divide, but to unite her children with their fellow citizens, to build up a great Australia where God will be honoured and served and people will be free. In this task we are encouraged by the goodwill of our fellow citizens...

Here Gleeson confronted the allegation of some sections of society that private schools were divisive and that all children should be taught in the public education system, undivided by religion or wealth. Such an education system was deemed to help social cohesion. But this opinion, if accepted, would remove the right of parents to choose the kind of education they wanted for their children.

⁵ Code of Canon Law (1917), Canon 1113.

⁶ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 (3).

⁷ Encyclical Letter of Pope Pius XI, *Divini Illius Magistri* (On the Christian Education of Youth), 1929, par 48. Code of Canon Law (1917), Canon 1113.

Two years earlier Gleeson, not yet a bishop but Director of Catholic Education, made the appeal for donations to assist with the cost of new classrooms, called the Marcellin Champagnat Wing, at Sacred Heart College, Somerton Park.⁸ In his address he recalled past students who had qualified for trades, worked on the land, or entered various professions, and who were giving devoted service to both Church and country. He also mentioned the Honour Roll inside the main hall of the college that listed the names of those who served their country in war and exclaimed: ‘How empty is the criticism that Catholic schools divide the country?’

On this occasion Gleeson gave four reasons for generously supporting this project of the Marist Brothers. First, donations for the new building were tax-deductible. Gleeson suggested that the federal government gave this concession ‘to reduce the amount of injustice which was inflicted upon the Catholic people in the matter of education’.⁹ Second, by supporting non-government schools, parents were asserting their right to choose the type of education their children received. Third, by supporting financially the work of the brothers they were showing appreciation for men who had devoted their whole lives to the education of youth. Fourth, supporters were acknowledging the product, the majority of former students who were a credit to the school, loyal to sovereign and country, and to God. Gleeson appears to have been constantly concerned about the view of some that independent schools were the cause of divisions in society.

Among the guests was Baden Pattinson, state Minister of Education. Pattinson, although not a Catholic, was an old scholar of Christian Brothers’ College in Wakefield Street. He stated that he was more than a friend of the college – he was a ‘fervent

⁸ Appeal for Marcellin Champagnat Wing, Sacred Heart College 19 June 1955. Series 128, ACAA. *Southern Cross*, 24 June 1955, 1 and 15.

⁹ *Southern Cross*, 24 June 1955, 1.

admirer of the work done by the brothers'.¹⁰ He noted Gleeson's expressed respect for the State Education Department and assured his hearers that this respect was reciprocated by the state government. This friendship and harmony between the two was something he was 'happy about, and which he hoped would long continue'. Gleeson, as chaplain to Catholic students at Adelaide Teachers College, was able to develop relationships that promoted this harmony. He associated with the staff at a professional level in bodies such as the Australian Council of Educational Research. Such relationships facilitated dialogue and sharing between the two sectors.

An unexpected manifestation of this mutual respect occurred in November 1959. The State Education Department was in need of classrooms due to a series of fires. Gleeson, with the approval of Beovich, offered the department the use of unoccupied church buildings at Morphettville.¹¹ The offer was not taken up. The author's parish priest at Brighton was unimpressed by this act, deeming it to be unnecessarily cooperative. This comment was a reminder of the struggle that parish priests were experiencing at that time to provide for parish schools. Pattinson made the following statement during his address, which admitted the obvious, that Catholic schools (and the independent schools) were an indispensable sector of the educational project in the state: 'Putting it on the lowest level, they [governments] would find it absolutely impossible to provide all the schools and teachers necessary if it were not for the work done by the religious schools and their teachers.'¹²

For those who knew the history of the struggle for state aid for Catholic schools in Australia, Pattinson's words would have reminded them of the stance of a former

¹⁰ *Southern Cross*, 8 June 1962, 1. Baden Pattinson was knighted in 1962 together with another old scholar of CBC Wakefield Street, Harry Alderman QC.

¹¹ Beovich Diaries, 18 November 1959. Series 0175, ACAA.

¹² *Southern Cross*, 24 June 1955, 1.

archbishop of Adelaide, John O'Reily, in his day a vocal advocate for state aid.¹³

O'Reily noted that the state sometimes built roads itself and at other times paid private contractors to do the work. In a similar way the state wisely decreed that all children were to receive the 'elements of secular education' and this could be achieved either by a government official or a private teacher. The private teacher like the private contractor deserved to be paid from the public purse.¹⁴ The logic of this position was not accepted at the time.

St Paul's School, Strathmont

Despite the stress on finances and personnel experienced in the 1950s, Catholic education took some bold steps.¹⁵ In 1955 Beovich had asked the Catholic Education Office to review the needs of Catholic education. One recommendation was the provision of a school in Adelaide's northern-eastern suburbs. This resulted in the development of St Paul's School, Strathmont. The *Southern Cross*, in July 1958, carried an invitation to members of the archdiocese to attend the solemn blessing of the foundation stone of St Paul's Boys School, Strathmont.¹⁶ The invitation was signed by the parish priests of the five parishes that would be required to provide the finances and Brother T B Garvey, Provincial of the Christian Brothers (Southern Province).¹⁷ The invitation contained the following: 'Economically, we have not followed the text-books very literally, and, for most of the parishes concerned, young and debt-ridden, St Paul's

¹³ Archbishop John O'Reily, in 1888, became the first bishop of the newly formed diocese of Port Augusta (later Port Pirie). In 1895 he was transferred to the see of Adelaide. He died in 1915.

¹⁴ Robert Rice, 'Archbishop John O'Reily: first bishop of Port Augusta and second archbishop of Adelaide – some aspects of his theology and practice', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 84, no 2 (2007), 181.

¹⁵ Laffin, *Matthew Beovich*, 206.

¹⁶ *Southern Cross*, 25 July 1958, 1. St Paul's was listed in the Official Directory of the Catholic Church in Australia as a school until the 1966-67 edition when it was listed as a college.

¹⁷ The parish priests were: E. Reardon (Northfield); T O'Rourke (Walkerville); M J Dunne (Clearview-Enfield); P Walsh (Kilburn); J McCann OMI (Hillcrest).

will be sheer crucifixion.’¹⁸ By a happy coincidence, the foundation-stone ceremony for the new school occurred in the centenary year of the dedication and opening of Adelaide’s St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral on 11 July 1858, which was reported in the first edition of the *South Australian Advertiser* on 12 July that year.

At the celebration some historical facts were recalled. Gleeson said that when the site for the school was selected, the South Australian Housing Trust agreed to consider its sale, and then declined to sell, before eventually agreeing to sell at book value. The Christian Brothers had agreed to be involved in the project. Brother J A Carroll, Deputy Provincial (Southern Province) recalled: ‘When we first saw the site I was inclined to be dubious about it. Where were the boys to come from? However, as the years go on, the population around here will grow, and I have been told by Brother Dally that the roll call for next year already numbers 200 boys.’¹⁹ Carroll also said that this was his fourth visit to South Australia and each time he departed ‘with a sense of great satisfaction that something big was being undertaken’. This outline of the genesis of St Paul’s clearly indicated that a strong lead was required to see the project through to completion and Gleeson was seen as the one who steadfastly promoted it, frequently in the face of severe questioning and complaints. Many thought the college should be near Gepps Cross, but Gleeson championed the Strathmont site. Gleeson’s contribution to the establishment of the college was acknowledged by Peter Shanahan, the principal, at the time of Gleeson’s death, in an undated sympathy note to Faulkner: ‘St Paul’s was founded due in no small way to the dedicated work of Archbishop Gleeson, who as Director of Catholic Education worked closely with Brother Tony Dally in the planning and creation of St Paul’s.’²⁰

¹⁸ *Southern Cross*, 25 July 1958, 1. The Southern Province embraced Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania. The brothers are now in the Province of Oceania which includes Australia, New Zealand, Philippines, Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and Papua New Guinea.

¹⁹ *Southern Cross* 1 August 1958, 2

²⁰ Shanahan to Faulkner, undated. Series 21, Box 9, ID 27, ACAA.

Financial strain on Catholic schools

Gleeson witnessed the near collapse of the Catholic education system before state aid came. When, seven years after ordination to the priesthood he became Director of Catholic Education, he was faced with an ‘almost staggering’ increase of students in the system. In an address to the Catholic Luncheon Club in 1953, he outlined the problem.²¹ He took 1939 as the base year, the year Beovich became bishop-elect of Adelaide. In that year there were 8245 children in Catholic schools in South Australia: 7218 in the archdiocese and 1027 in the Port Augusta diocese. In 1951 the figures were 13 041 students: 11 634 in Adelaide and 1677 in Port Pirie.²² The enrolments for 1953 were just over 15 000. This sudden increase was caused mainly by the arrival in Australia of large numbers of displaced persons and migrants following the Second World War.

On the Catholic Hour programme on station 5KA in February 1954, Gleeson spoke at length regarding Catholic education in South Australia. He stated that there were 16 000 children in 110 Catholic schools and this was a 100 per cent increase in the previous 15 years. From this he deduced that the Catholic school system saved the state government £500 000 annually, not including building costs. Catholic parents in Australia, Gleeson asserted, had made a ‘superhuman effort’ to maintain their schools and had succeeded mainly due to the presence of religious teachers who provided their services for a fraction of the cost of lay teachers.²³ He listed the impressive number of religious congregations involved in Catholic schools in the archdiocese: nine of religious women, three of religious brothers, and three of religious priests. He then expressed his profound regret that some parents did not consent to their children giving their lives to God in the religious life. At the annual Catholic teacher’s conference in

²¹ *Southern Cross*, 29 May 1953, 1.

²² The diocese of Port Augusta became the Diocese of Port Pirie in 1951.

²³ *Southern Cross*, 12 February 1954, 1.

1954, Beovich said that those who wished to become religious sisters should be motivated by a 'supernatural motive' not just because the Catholic schools needed more sisters.²⁴ Gleeson was the director of Catholic education and his attitude to religious vocations appears to have been more pragmatic. At this time bishops aimed to provide a place for every Catholic child in a Catholic school, which they saw as the best way to hand on the faith. The sociologist, Helen Praetz, claimed that in Catholic thinking, 'The dominant ideology of the 1940s portrayed society at large as secular, hostile or indifferent to the truths of religion guarded by the Catholic Church and transmitted to the rising generations through a network of schools.'²⁵ The bishops of New South Wales in a joint pastoral in 1879 condemned secular schools as 'seed plots of future immorality, infidelity, and lawlessness, being calculated to debase the standard of human excellence, and to corrupt the political, social and individual life of future citizens'.²⁶ This attitude was the reason why Catholic bishops, Gleeson included, placed so much emphasis on Catholic schools.

In the 1940s, the author attended the Catholic school at Terowie, a town in the mid-north of the state, 220 kilometres from Adelaide, conducted by the Sisters of St Joseph. A photograph of pupils in 1944 showed that there were thirty-three enrolled. Two sisters shared the teaching, which covered year one to intermediate, while the third sister taught music. The sisters also conducted, in the convent, a boarding school for two Aboriginal girls. This was an heroic commitment and was not an isolated case.²⁷ Sister Maureen Joseph, the principal, would ask the children for their school money each week, which was a coin, not a bank note. The Catholic people organised bridge and euchre evenings to raise funds for the sisters.

²⁴ Laffin, *Matthew Beovich*, 218.

²⁵ Helen Praetz, *Building a School System: a sociological study of Catholic education* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1980), 143.

²⁶ Quoted by Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community*, 184.

²⁷ Photograph in author's possession, see appendix.

Lay staff replace religious teachers

Gleeson, as Director of Catholic Education and as a bishop, had to cope with the gradual replacement of religious teachers by lay staff, as shown by the following tables:

Teachers in Catholic Schools in the Archdiocese of Adelaide South

Australia 1955²⁸

Full Time	Religious Teachers 386	Lay Teachers 22
Part Time	Religious Teachers 45	Lay Teachers 133

Selected Years²⁹

Year	Lay Teachers		Religious Teachers	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1969	537	53.5	466	46.5
1972	587	59.4	402	40.6
1975	746	66.2	381	33.8
1978	1017	75.6	328	24.4
1981	1252	83.8	242	16.2
1984	1720	89.8	196	10.2
1986	1712	91.3	164	8.7

The number of religious teachers declined because fewer persons were entering religious life, some religious returned to civilian life, and following the Second Vatican Council, some embraced other forms of apostolic work in preference to teaching.³⁰

During the 1970s, lay teachers moved into administrative positions in schools and also into central administration. This seems to have happened in Adelaide earlier

²⁸ *Southern Cross*, 7 January 1955, 1.

²⁹ Vincent Thomas, 'The Role of the Laity in Catholic Education in South Australia from 1836-1986'. PhD thesis, Flinders University, 1989, 305.

³⁰ For a comprehensive view of religious life in Australia, see Robert Dixon, Stephen Reid, Noel Connolly eds, 'See I am Doing a New Thing: the 2009 survey of Catholic Religious Institutes in Australia', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 88, no 3 (2011), 271-83. Also Christine E Burke, 'Religious Life: its implications for today', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 79, no 1 (2002), 5-63.

than in other dioceses. According to the historian Vincent Thomas, ‘Archbishop Gleeson was a principal reason for this. He was much more prepared than his counterparts to promote lay people in important positions.’³¹ A striking example of this was Gleeson’s appointment of John McDonald, then aged thirty-four, as Director of Catholic Education from 1 October 1972. McDonald, who had taught in the Education Department of South Australia for twelve years, in 1971 successfully applied for the position of Coordinator of Secondary Education in the Catholic Education Office. The following year he succeeded Fr Edward Mulvihill as Director of Catholic Education and became the first layman to hold such a position in any Australian capital city.³² Clearly Gleeson was prepared to break with tradition, a courageous move. Just how courageous became clear on the occasion of the Conference of Catholic Educators held in Armidale, New South Wales, in 1972. At that time it was customary for a triennial meeting of diocesan directors of education and inspectors of schools to precede the conference. For a number of years it was basically the same group that met, all monsignori and clergy, ‘an old boys club’. At this meeting Mulvihill announced that he was resigning his position and that he would be replaced by a layman. This caused all sorts of ructions and some senior monsignori said: ‘How can we continue to have a triennial meeting of priests when there’s a layman now appointed to the Adelaide Archdiocese?’³³ The meeting decided to abandon any further triennial meetings. At the conference, McDonald received a chilly reception. So unwelcoming was the attitude of some older monsignori that, to compensate, some younger priests took McDonald out for an evening meal at the Armidale RSL Club and introduced him to poker machines.³⁴

³¹ Thomas, ‘The Role of the Laity in Catholic Education in South Australia from 1836-1986’, 310.

³² *Southern Cross*, 11 August 1972, 1. There had been a layperson heading Catholic education in the Ballarat diocese.

³³ *Conversations, an oral history project of the Australian College of Educators, S.A. Chapter*. John McDonald interviewed by Tony Ryan, Archivist of the Australian College of Education, August 1996. Series 0166, ACAA.

³⁴ *Conversations, an Oral History*, Tony Ryan interviews John McDonald.

The process, or lack thereof, in the appointment of McDonald reveals a surprising aspect of Gleeson's management strategy and indicates a lapse into autocratic control. When McDonald was first employed by the Catholic education office he was interviewed by Mulvihill, and Doug Anders, a former inspector of schools with the state education department (and later deputy director). Early in 1972, consideration was given to a scheme that would combine the resources of the three colleges in the city, Christian Brothers' College, Saint Aloysius' College, and Saint Mary's College. At the completion of one of the meetings to consider this, Gleeson asked McDonald to join him and Mulvihill in Gleeson's vehicle. Gleeson pointed out that Mulvihill had not been in good health and had submitted his resignation, and that he [Gleeson] would like McDonald to become Director of Catholic Education. There was no advertising of the position, no interviews, no consideration of conditions of employment and no contract. After consulting his wife Elaine, McDonald accepted the position. Later, McDonald said he viewed the appointment as a vocation and noted that 'the spirit that Archbishop Gleeson engendered into the whole Archdiocese meant that you felt part of his team'.³⁵ Clearly Gleeson did not always observe the consultation process he professed. Yet his appointment of a lay person as director of Catholic education revealed a shift from the time when he saw Catholic education as dependent on the teaching orders.

When McDonald was appointed to head Catholic education in the archdiocese, the bishop of Port Pirie, Bryan Gallagher, was more than happy for him to be given state-wide responsibility, and so McDonald assumed the title of State Director of Catholic Education. Port Pirie, as a small diocese, could not support its own bureaucracy. The move ensured that it did not miss out when consideration was given to

³⁵ South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project: Conversations with Dr John McDonald: Interviewer: Mr David Shinnick. 21 October 1996. Transcript, Tape 1, 22. Adelaide Catholic Education Office Archives.

such matters as capital and recurrent grants, and professional development of teachers when government funding was available.

A 'Revolution' concerning state aid to independent schools

Gleeson, unlike those who had gone before him, lived to see the rights and claims of Catholic and independent schools accepted. In the years from 1872 to 1893 the Australian colonies decided to discontinue state aid to denominational schools and adopted the educational slogan 'free, compulsory and secular'. In 1937, G V Portus, Professor of Political Science and History in the University of Adelaide, said: 'In my judgement it will take nothing short of a religious revolution to alter the minds of Australians on this question [state aid]. And I see no signs of a religious revolution in Australia.'³⁶

But a revolution did come, even if it was not exclusively or mainly religious. On 13 July 1962, six Catholic schools in Goulburn closed and their pupils were instructed to enrol the following Monday in the government school system. About 2000 pupils from the Catholic schools applied for admission but there were only 640 vacancies. The immediate cause of the protest was the withholding of a Certificate of Efficiency from Our Lady of Mercy Preparatory School because of the inadequacy of the school's toilets. The diocese claimed it did not have the funds to supply the extra toilets and was unwilling to reduce enrolments to satisfy the requirement. The Goulburn 'strike' was called off after a week but the point had been made; the government schools could not cope without the independent schools.³⁷

It was the opinion of B A Santamaria that Prime Minister Robert Menzies valued independent schools and accepted their claims for a share in public funds:

³⁶ G V Portus, *Free, Compulsory, and Secular: a critical estimate of Australian Education* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), 26.

³⁷ See *Goulburn School 'Strike': the inside story* (Canberra: Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, 1989).

... it became politically feasible, and, after his near defeat in the 1961 Federal election, politically necessary. The 'split' in the Labor Party, the emergence of the DLP, the dislodgement of many Labor votes from their traditional loyalty, the backing given to the DLP by a large group of Catholic votes, the necessity to consolidate DLP preferences for the Liberals – this was the major factor in the 1963 'breakthrough'.³⁸

An editorial in the Melbourne Catholic weekly newspaper, *The Advocate*, in 1966

made the same point:

The changed attitude of the Liberal and Country Parties, it may be freely admitted, is due more to an enlightened perception of economic and political facts than any great zeal for educational justice. They perceived that this further expansion for State aid proposals is an excellent means of winning the votes of Catholics and others involved in support of the denominational school system.³⁹

The *Advertiser*, in July 1969, revealed an appreciation of independent schools and declared in an editorial that, 'education is indivisible': 'A breakdown in the private sector must inevitably affect the whole State system, and in turn the nation'.⁴⁰ The president of the Federation of Parents' and Friends' Associations of South Australian Catholic Schools, L R Pridham, was quoted as saying that all Roman Catholic schools were in 'desperate straits' and some may have to close unless substantial government aid was provided. The editorial was aware that if Catholic and independent schools closed, more children would be 'thrown upon the strained capacity of the State system'. The economic pressures on non-Government schools were so acute that 'the principle that parents can be free to choose the kind of education they want for their children is threatened'.⁴¹ Having noted this, the editorialist said that Catholics were in a special category as many of them possess strong religious conviction but were in a weak financial position.

³⁸ B A Santamaria, "*State Aid*" in *Perspective* (Melbourne: Hawthorn Press, 1966), 2-3.

³⁹ *Advocate*, 17 February 1966, 8.

⁴⁰ *Advertiser*, 2 July 1969, 2.

⁴¹ Note the reference here to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 (3).

Australian government support

Support for Catholic schools from federal and state governments was crucial, because of the rising number of students and the surge in the number of lay teachers in the system. Before 1964 the Australian Government did not provide direct funding for education in the states. It was responsible for education only in the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory and Australia's overseas territories. Indirect assistance was given in the form of taxation concessions for school fees and donations towards school buildings. The Liberal Party in coalition with the Country Party ruled Australia in 1949-72. This conservative government was the initiator of pivotal change. The *States Grants (Science Laboratories and Technical Training Act 1964)* provided grants for the construction of science facilities in government and non-government secondary schools. Prime Minister Menzies, speaking at the annual Cardinal's Dinner in Sydney, said, with regard to the science grants: 'To discriminate in making a grant in aid between Government and non-Government schools would open a world of discrimination.'⁴² This was certainly a dramatic departure from the accepted wisdom of the previous hundred years with regard to state aid for independent schools.⁴³ In the same address Menzies observed that of the 674 000 secondary school students in Australia, 492 000 were in government schools, 120 000 in Catholic schools, and 62 000 in other independent schools. Clearly the independent schools were making a massive contribution to the education project. The *States Grants (Secondary School Libraries) Act 1969* extended Australian Government capital assistance to the financing of library facilities in both government and non-government secondary schools. The *States Grants (Capital Assistance) Act 1971-72* authorised \$20 million for capital expenditure on

⁴² *Southern Cross*, 21 August 1964, 3. The Cardinal's Dinners were instituted by Cardinal Gilroy. They were held at major venues in Sydney with guests of honour such as Sir Robert Menzies and Governors General. They were indications of involvement with the civic community and of Gilroy's high profile in society.

⁴³ For an outline of the State Aid question see Joshua Puls, 'The Goulburn Lockout', *The Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 81, no 2 (2004), 169-83.

government primary and secondary schools. From 1973, these grants were extended to non-government schools.⁴⁴

Recurrent funding—\$35 per primary school student and \$50 for each secondary student—came with *States Grants (Independent Schools) Act 1969*. The rationale for this initiative was the need to assist the struggling Catholic schools. In December 1971 Prime Minister William McMahon announced that Commonwealth per capita grants for independent schools would increase, from \$35 to \$50 for primary schools and from \$50 to \$68 for secondary schools.⁴⁵ From 1973 the rate was fixed by the Whitlam government (1972-75) at the equivalent of 20 per cent of the cost of educating a child in a government school.

In December 1972, the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission was established by the newly-elected Whitlam Labor government. Chaired by Professor Peter Karmel, it advocated needs-based funding to ensure all schools reached a minimum acceptable standard. The result was the extension of recurrent funding to government schools in 1974. In the same year special funding programs were introduced for disadvantaged schools, special education, teacher professional development and innovation. The Australian Schools Commission (1973-78) recommended payments to states providing general and capital grants and grants for ‘targeted programs’. These were to be authorised on a triennial basis by means of annual *States Grants (School Assistance) Acts*.⁴⁶

Although there was no explicit provision in the Australian Constitution for the Australian government to grant funds for education in the states, Section 96 stated:

⁴⁴ Parliament of Australia – Department of Parliamentary Services – Parliamentary Library. ‘Australian Government Funding for Schools Explained’.

<<http://www.aph.gov.au/binaries/library/pubs/bn/sp/schoolsfunding.pdf>>. Accessed 28 January 2016.

⁴⁵ *Southern Cross*, 17 December 1971, 3.

⁴⁶ Parliamentary Library: ‘Australian Government Funding for Schools Explained’

<http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/BN/2012-2013/schoolsfunding#_Toc350508901>. Accessed 9 March 2016.

‘During a period of ten years after the establishment of the Commonwealth and thereafter until the Parliament otherwise provides, the Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State on such terms and conditions as the Parliament thinks fit.’ It was by using this power that the Commonwealth was able to make payments to states and so influence their education policy.

State government support

On 4 July 1967 a group of parents concerned for the future of Our Lady of Grace Catholic School, Dunleath Gardens (later Glengowrie), met to discuss how to obtain funding for independent schools from the state government. The author, as administrator of the Glenelg parish, was approached by the group to discuss their plans and give support. The support was given but without the expectation of success. Despite these doubts, the Federation of Parents’ and Friends’ Associations of South Australian Catholic Schools was formally constituted on 15 November 1967.⁴⁷ Assisted by sound legal and political advice, the federation lobbied members of parliament from both sides of the House and achieved its aim. Gleeson regarded the formation of the Federation of Parents’ and Friends’ Associations of South Australian Catholic Schools a milestone in South Australian Catholic history.⁴⁸

South Australian government recurrent funding for independent schools commenced in 1969. At the Sacred Heart College speech night in November 1967 the state premier, Don Dunstan, promised \$10 annually for children in independent schools during the life of the next parliament.⁴⁹ The director of Catholic Education, Fr Edward Mulvihill, said that the amount pledged was insufficient but he was pleased that a

⁴⁷ Margaret E. Mills, *Woman: why are you weeping?* (Melbourne: News Weekly books, 1997), 125. The Federation of Catholic School Parent Communities, “*The Federation*” A ‘*Potted History*’. <http://www.parentfederation.catholic.edu.au/_files/f/2796/FEDhistory%20October%202014.pdf> Accessed 9 March 2016.

⁴⁸ *Southern Cross*, 23 February 1968, 2.

⁴⁹ *Southern Cross*, 17 November 1967, 1.

‘principle has been recognised’.⁵⁰ The following month, at the speech night of St Aloysius College, the principal, Sr Mary Campion (later Sr Deirdre Jordan, AC, MBE), acknowledged Dunstan’s ‘courageous move’ in offering aid to independent schools. It came at a time when the state’s economy was hard pressed, and the climate of public opinion had only begun to accept the idea of state aid as a ‘possibility to be countenanced’.⁵¹ In March 1968 the Dunstan government was defeated by the Liberal and Country League (LCL) led by Raymond Steele Hall. Since both major parties, in the pre-election period, had pledged the \$10 per capita grant, it became effective from the beginning of the school year in 1969.

In April 1969, Gleeson led a delegation to Hall requesting that the \$10 grant be raised that year to \$30 and by a further \$10 in both 1970 and 1971. The delegation included Mulvihill and L R Pridham, president of the Federation of Parents’ and Friends’ Associations of South Australian Catholic Schools.⁵² In June, Hall replied to Pridham advising that the government, at that time, could not increase assistance to independent schools.⁵³ However, a month later, Hall increased the aid to secondary independent schools to \$20 per capita, applicable from the third term of the current year.⁵⁴ The primary schools, many of which were in greatest need, were not included.

In August 1970, the Minister of Education in the second Dunstan government (1970-79), Hugh Hudson, announced an additional \$250 000 grant to independent primary schools, to be distributed on a needs basis, commencing in 1971. A committee comprised of representatives of independent schools and chaired by the Rev R A Cook, headmaster of King’s College, was to allocate the funds on a needs basis.⁵⁵ This appears

⁵⁰ *Southern Cross*, 17 November 1967, 2.

⁵¹ *Southern Cross*, 15 December 1967, 3.

⁵² *Southern Cross*, 10 April 1969, 1.

⁵³ *Southern Cross*, 13 June 1969, 1.

⁵⁴ *Southern Cross*, 4 July 1969, 1.

⁵⁵ In January 1974 King’s College and Girton Girls’ School amalgamated to form Pembroke School.

to have been the first time in Australia that funds were distributed on a needs basis.⁵⁶

The committee divided the 118 schools into four categories. The neediest received an extra \$20 per student and the least in need of assistance received no extra payment.

About 93 per cent of the money went to Catholic primary schools which demonstrated beyond doubt 'their acute need for additional financial assistance in order to improve their educational standards'.⁵⁷

The author was an assistant priest in the Brighton parish from December 1956 to 1962. During 1961, he was administrator of the parish during the absence of the parish priest. He remembers situations that placed intolerable burdens on the religious sisters teaching in the parish schools. One teacher had ninety pupils in a class for year one. Given such a setting, it is no wonder the Catholic schools needed to improve standards. He recalls also that during his time as administrator of the Glenelg parish, from January 1966 to January 1974, he mentioned to Mulvihill that there would be a backlash from people when they discovered their children had not received an adequate education. Mulvihill responded that this was happening already.

Additional grants to independent secondary schools for 1972 were announced by Hudson in June. The Cook Committee was allocated \$300 000 to be distributed on a needs basis. Five categories of independent schools were determined, ranging from A to E, category A being the neediest. Category A received \$30 per student and category E \$10.⁵⁸ These 'graded grants' were in addition to the 'flat rate' per capita payments already made to independent secondary schools.

Hudson then announced new grants to come into effect from 1 February 1973. These were seen as a further step along the way of the government's target of providing assistance to independent schools equal to 20 per cent of the cost of conducting

⁵⁶ *Southern Cross*, 7 August 1970, 1.

⁵⁷ *Southern Cross*, 5 March 1971, 1.

⁵⁸ *Southern Cross*, 16 June 1972, 1.

government schools with the same number of students. To non-government primary schools \$810 000 was allocated and to non-government secondary schools \$525 000. The new allocation would not affect the annual flat rate of \$10 per primary student and \$20 per secondary student introduced in 1969. The Cook Committee was to distribute the funds.⁵⁹ The Director of Catholic Education noted that all together the state government had distributed \$1 855 000 to independent schools for 1973 which was a 50 per cent increase on the amount allocated in 1972.⁶⁰

Providing grants to independent schools on a needs basis was initially opposed by the executive of the Federation of Parents' and Friends' Associations of South Australian Catholic Schools.⁶¹ The needs-based grants were opposed by those who considered they might lose out in the allocation of funds. When McDonald explained to a meeting of the National Council of Independent Schools, how the needs policy operated in South Australia, a Jesuit priest from St Ignatius College, Riverview stood up and said: 'You have sold Catholic Schools down the river! This is an abomination!'⁶² Consistent with his views on social justice, Gleeson was committed to the needs-based policy. He held that if there were limited resources those in the greatest need should benefit most from government funding.⁶³

Accountability

The advent of state aid to independent schools rightly required accountability from the recipients. Beovich had announced that school boards were to be established in every parish in the archdiocese by November 1968.⁶⁴ This announcement came whilst the

⁵⁹ *Southern Cross*, 2 February 1973, 1.

⁶⁰ *Southern Cross*, 2 February 1973, 1.

⁶¹ The Australian Parents Council and the National Council of Independent Schools also opposed the idea of needs based grants.

⁶² Transcript of, South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project, Part 3, Shinnick interviews McDonald, Tape 1, 32. Adelaide Catholic Education Office Archives.

⁶³ Transcript of, South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project, Part 3, Shinnick interviews McDonald, Tape 1, 31-3. Adelaide Catholic Education Office Archives.

⁶⁴ *Southern Cross*, 4 October 1968, 1-2; Editorial, 4.

Diocesan Pastoral Council was working on its recommendation that a trust would be preferable to a board as the way of administering school finances.⁶⁵ Clearly the council ‘was only advisory and lacked participation in any real decision making’.⁶⁶ Apart from the need for accountability, the task of running a Catholic school had become too complex a responsibility for just two persons, the school principal and the parish priest. At the state level, the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools (SACCS) was established in November 1973 by Gleeson and the bishop of Port Pirie, Bryan Gallagher. The commission was a ‘policy making and reviewing body’ in matters relating to Catholic schools where co-ordination and rationalisation were concerns. The bishops were presidents of the commission and retained their pastoral authority in educational matters but the chairman was to be elected by the members. The commission was instructed to respect the independence of schools owned by religious communities. Its members were appointed for a period of two years.⁶⁷ The commission had also to facilitate responses to Church and governments on various issues that would arise. McDonald recorded that Gleeson was not only ‘a *member*, but a *very active member*’ of the commission: ‘he did his homework, and would make a contribution to all the discussions; and then would go along with decisions that were taken’.⁶⁸ McDonald said that he felt fortunate to be working in the Adelaide archdiocese with both Gleeson and his successor, Leonard Faulkner: ‘When I’d go interstate, I’d come back feeling that I was very lucky to be working in the Archdiocese of Adelaide, because of the relationships which existed in some of the other States.’⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Laffin, *Beovich*, 274-5.

⁶⁶ Laffin, *Beovich*, 274.

⁶⁷ *Southern Cross*, 9 November 1973, 1 and 11.

⁶⁸ Transcript of, South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project, Shinnick interviews McDonald, Tape 4, page 4.

⁶⁹ Transcript of South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools, Shinnick interviews McDonald, Tape 4, page 4.

The commission was a representative body in accordance with Gleeson's consistent policy.⁷⁰ Members were drawn from the ranks of primary and secondary principals, priests, parents and friends, school boards and administrators in the education field. In January 1974 the Australian Episcopal Conference established the National Catholic Education Commission, as 'a general policy-making body for Australian Catholic education, and an answering organisation to the Australian Schools Commission'.⁷¹ The commission would be involved in consultation and negotiation with the Australian government.

A new catechetical approach

Central to the mission of Catholic schools was the handing on of the Catholic faith. Gleeson was involved in the promotion of a new way of presenting religious knowledge. When he attended his first Australian Episcopal Conference in 1958, he was appointed to the bishops' committee for education and soon became its secretary. During his time at the Sisters of Mercy Teachers' Training College at Ascot Vale in 1947, Gleeson was encouraged by Fr (later Monsignor) John F Kelly, who had also attended this college and was at the time inspector of Catholic schools in Melbourne.⁷² These two were to be involved in the production of a new way of presenting the Catholic faith and practice to primary school children and junior secondary pupils.

In March 1959, Kelly, now director of Catholic education in Melbourne, was asked by the Australian Episcopal Conference to prepare an Australian catechism. For six months he toured Europe and the United States, during which time he visited major catechetical centres and interviewed some of the leading theologians of the day. Then, with the assistance of experienced educationalists, he prepared books for pupils and

⁷⁰ Transcript of, South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools: Oral History Project, Part 1. David Shinnick interviews James Gleeson, page 19.

⁷¹ *Southern Cross*, 17 May 1974, 5.

⁷² Kelly was the third director of Catholic Education in Melbourne (1955-69) following Fr Dan Conquest (1940-55) and Matthew Beovich (1930-39).

teachers. Gleeson, on behalf of the bishops, was given the task of coordinating the efforts of all involved.⁷³ The coordinating involved considerable time assisting in the editing of the books and attending meetings. Gleeson received drafts of the proposed texts, and his secretary, Marie Shevlin, typed ‘endless pages’ containing Gleeson’s responses. At times she sat at his bedside in hospital while Gleeson dictated his comments and suggestions. She later presented the typed pages for him to sign. Even ill health did not slow Gleeson down.⁷⁴

The new books were produced because of dissatisfaction with the dogmatic presentation of the faith to school-children, exemplified by the traditional ‘penny catechism’, with questions and answers to be learned by rote. The new approach, based on the kerygmatic (Greek for proclamation) method, presented the Good News of Jesus and invited the students to respond. *Catholic Catechism Book One* for senior primary pupils (1962) and *Catholic Catechism Book Two* for junior secondary pupils (1963), each with a *Handbook for Teachers*, were published. In 1964, a series of books for junior primary pupils, *My Way to God*, became available, each of them with a *Teacher’s Book*. This method of presenting the Catholic faith survived for a relatively short time, about ten years. Teachers increasingly wanted to develop their own ways of presenting religious education and eschewed the use of textbooks in favour of an emphasis on ‘the life centred approach’, encouraged in the early 1970s by the controversial text *Come Alive*. Gleeson was disappointed that *My Way to God* was not retained.⁷⁵ However, he noted that: ‘When used with faith, understanding and perception, all these new books were effective tools for the Kingdom. When used without this approach, they became obstacles to proclaiming the Good News and a source of division among bishops,

⁷³ For a full discussion of the new catechetical books see: Robert Pascoe, *The Feasts & Seasons of John F Kelly* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2006), Chapter 9.

⁷⁴ Interview with Marie Shevlin, at Kensington Park, SA, 6 April 2016.

⁷⁵ Transcript of, South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools: Oral History Project, Part 1, pages 26-7.

priests and religious.’⁷⁶ He expressed his regret: ‘It is with sadness that I look back on those post-Vatican years in the Church and the years of revolutionary changes in society when we, as a Church, failed to share our faith with our young people in an authentic way which would have met their very special needs at that time and also since.’⁷⁷

The South-West Region scheme

Gleeson’s involvement in the establishment of this scheme revealed his authoritarian side. The enrolments in Catholic schools and colleges in the south-west metropolitan region of Adelaide fell by 13.7 per cent in the five years 1969-1974.⁷⁸ This led to a decline in funding from government grants and, in consequence, difficulty in providing teaching aids and equipment. The decline in the numbers of religious staff had already caused financial stress. The South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools appointed a Task Force in June 1974, with the remit of determining the needs of Catholic schooling in the area. The South Australian Council for Educational Planning and Research (SACEPR) was commissioned to undertake research to provide the information on which the rationalisation of the region would be based.⁷⁹ The report of the Task Force was formally accepted by SACCS on 13 February 1975. It recommended the formation of a ‘mini-system’ in the south-west region, and ‘suggested the continued and increasing involvement of all interested groups in decision-making processes and the actual implementation of the scheme’.⁸⁰ The laity were to be involved through the Catholic Education Office (CEO), SACCS, a regional board, and local school boards. The region’s thirteen schools would provide a three-tiered system: junior, middle and senior. The nine parish schools were to cater for years one to five;

⁷⁶ James William Gleeson, ‘The Church in Adelaide during my Years as a Priest and Bishop’, *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 94, no 4 (2017), 299.

⁷⁷ Gleeson, *The Church in Adelaide*, 299.

⁷⁸ Peter Donovan, and Bernard O’Neil, *In the Marist Tradition: Sacred Heart College Adelaide 1897-1997* (Adelaide: Sacred Heart College, 1997), 213. See also Helen Louise Northey, ‘The South West Region Development 1974-1982: a case study in rationalisation of Catholic schooling in Metropolitan Adelaide’. MEd thesis, Flinders University, 1983.

⁷⁹ Northey, *South West Region Development*, 41-2. SACEPR was a statutory authority.

⁸⁰ Northey, *South West Region Development*, 43 and 52.

Cabra, Marymount, and Saint Joseph's, years six to nine; Cabra and Sacred Heart College (SHC) years ten to twelve.⁸¹ There were 3700 pupils in the region and 5 different religious orders conducting the schools.

These proposals were released in July 1975 and a public meeting was arranged by SACCS later in the month in Brighton Town Hall to enable parents and others involved in the schools to express their ideas and concerns. The meeting was attended by 800 people who voted in favour of proceeding with the recommended South-West Region Scheme (SWR). Three committees were set up to assist implementation of the scheme by studying finance, curricula, and the structure of a regional 'mini-system'. Gleeson was unable to attend this meeting but sent a message expressing his strong support of the recommendations of the Task Force that had been accepted by SACCS. He saw the proposal as a viable proposition for the region.⁸²

Consideration of and preparation for the SWR scheme occupied three years (February 1975-February 1978). The announcement that the scheme would go ahead was made in the *Southern Cross* in July 1976.⁸³ Reorganisation was to be phased in with small differences in 1977 and more significant changes in 1978. A small body was established by SACCS, a steering committee, to plan the implementation of the scheme. The members of this committee were: Gleeson; John Steinle, Deputy Director General of Education; E G Dunne, chairman SACCS; John Hayball, Deputy Headmaster of Sacred Heart College; and John McDonald, Director of Catholic Education.⁸⁴ As part of this select committee Gleeson was clearly in a strong position to promote the scheme.

The scheme with minor variations went ahead but not before the Group of Concerned Parents, a self-styled 'ginger' group, made its opposition known. Their

⁸¹ *Southern Cross*, 23 July 1976, 1.

⁸² *Southern Cross*, 1 August 1975, 6.

⁸³ *Southern Cross*, 23 July 1976, 1.

⁸⁴ Northey, *South West Region Development*, 77.

concerns were mainly for Sacred Heart College. Former scholars, such as the president of the Old Collegians' Association, Jim Butler, and Tom Sheridan, at the time South Australia's Deputy Under-Treasurer, were prime movers. The group produced a newsletter detailing the financial disadvantages of the scheme, a response to the forthcoming brochure detailing the scheme's advantages.⁸⁵ The group was also concerned about SHC becoming co-educational, and losing some of its independence by becoming systemic and receiving Commonwealth government funds as part of the block funding arrangement.⁸⁶ Others opposed the separation of campuses since some of their sons, already enrolled at SHC, would have to transfer for a time to St Joseph's at Mitchell Park. It was alleged that some of these parents were motivated by snobbery, objecting to their children attending school in what was regarded as a working-class locality.⁸⁷ A meeting of the group and representatives of the CEO, the executive arm of SACCS, was arranged and held in the parlour at SHC. Before the meeting began, a taped message from Gleeson was played 'conveying his support for the scheme and urging obedience to what was the wish of the Church in Adelaide'.⁸⁸ The 'ginger' group was left little room to move, especially when advised, presumably by the representatives of the CEO, that their view was tantamount to 'rebellion and virtual apostasy'.⁸⁹ This call for obedience revealed Gleeson's determination to stay the course once a decision had been made. It was also a return to the authoritarian model of leadership rather than the consultative way encouraged by Vatican II.

Gleeson's sending a message to the Brighton Town Hall meeting and a taped message to the meeting with the 'ginger' group suggest he was uncomfortable with

⁸⁵ See 1977 Information Brochure, prepared by the steering committee at the behest of SACCS. Northey, *SWR Development*, Appendix II.

⁸⁶ Grants from the state government were paid directly to the schools.

⁸⁷ Donovan and O'Neil, *Marist Tradition*, 227.

⁸⁸ Donovan and O'Neil, *Marist Tradition*, 227.

⁸⁹ See 1977 Information Brochure, prepared by the steering committee at the behest of SACCS. Northey, *SWR Development*, Appendix II.

⁸⁹ Donovan and O'Neil, *Marist Tradition*, 227.

emotional confrontation. He was deeply hurt when he learned some had branded him a communist because of his support of the scheme. On the other hand, he was delighted when, at a later date, his grand-niece Katrina Senyszyn attended Sacred Heart College Senior School.⁹⁰ Interviewed by Nicholas Kerr in 1982, Gleeson admitted: 'I become distressed when I am attacked.' And: 'I have to admit at times I become so distressed that I do not always handle situations of conflict as well as I should, with the spirit of gentleness, forgiveness and understanding Christ is asking of me – as he asks of others too.'⁹¹

Catholic children in state schools

In the first twenty years after the Second World War, the number of children in Catholic schools in the archdiocese grew from just over 8000 to 23 000. But in the same period the percentage of all Catholic children attending Catholic schools dropped from 80 per cent to almost 40 per cent, a decline probably greater in Adelaide than elsewhere in Australia.⁹² Archbishop Beovich realised that it was unrealistic to increase the load on already overburdened religious teachers, that there was insufficient finance to employ more qualified lay teachers, and there were no funds to build more schools. So there was increased urgency to reach out to Catholic children in state schools.

Gleeson shared the concern of his predecessor Matthew Beovich for the religious formation of Catholic children in state schools. Beovich thought that one of his greatest achievements was his contribution to the process that led to an act of the state parliament in 1940 granting the 'right of entry' to each religious denomination to provide religious instruction for its children in state schools.⁹³ The author was a pupil in the state school at

⁹⁰ Interview with Margaret Senyszyn, Gleeson's niece, at Bellevue Heights, 20 November 1915.

⁹¹ *Southern Cross*, 3 June 1982, 15.

⁹² James Gleeson, 'The Church in Adelaide', 297.

⁹³ Laffin, *Matthew Beovich: a biography*, 290-91. See also P C Almond and P G Woolcock eds, *Dissent in Paradise: religious education controversies in South Australia*, 2nd ed, (Adelaide: Murray Park College of Advanced Education, 1978), 21 and 34.

Wolseley, near the Victorian border, when the 'right of entry' became effective in 1941. Fr Thomas O'Reilly came to the school and assisted a small group of Catholic pupils to learn by rote answers to questions in the catechism.⁹⁴ The scheme worked well in small schools but from the start it struggled in Adelaide and regional cities. Brian Condon wrote:

What characteristically happened was that an untrained instructor confronted for the half-hour a class of up to 80 children of all ages squeezed into one room. He was left to his own devices (and theirs) to make what he could of the opportunity.

He added, unsurprisingly, 'results were often chaotic – no one pretended that much was achieved',⁹⁵

As an ordained priest, the author found the half-hour instruction period for Catholic children in state schools the most dreaded task of the week. Lacking teacher training and often with several levels in the one room, the task was daunting.⁹⁶

In February 1959, Gleeson, as auxiliary bishop, opened a training day for lay catechists in St Cecilia's Hall, Angas Street, part of St Aloysius' College. This was the first time such assistance was provided for lay catechists and was the commencement of an annual commitment. Gleeson told the gathering: 'One of the obligations of the Archbishop of the diocese is to make sure that the children are instructed in the knowledge of their faith.'⁹⁷ The gathering of about 200 women and men was informed that there were some 20 000 Catholic children in Catholic schools and nearly 10 000 in departmental schools.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Fr Thomas O'Reilly was assistant priest in the Naracoorte parish but resided in Bordertown and cared also for the Catholics in Wolseley.

⁹⁵ Brian Condon, 'All at Work in the Lord's Garden, the 1940 Act and beyond, in PC Almond, P G Woolcock, (eds) *Dissent in Paradise: religious education controversies in South Australia*. 39.

⁹⁶ For the experience of Methodist ministers, see Arnold D Hunt, *This Side of Heaven: a history of Methodism in South Australia* (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1985), 389-90. For the Anglican situation see David Hilliard, *Godliness and Good Order: a history of the Anglican Church in South Australia* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986), 125- 6.

⁹⁷ *Southern Cross*, 13 February 1959, 3

⁹⁸ *Southern Cross*, 13 February 1959, 1 and 3.

At the conference of lay catechists, held in St Cecilia's Hall in January 1963, it was reported that about 460 lay people, mainly women, were teaching 16 000 Catholic children in state schools. The conference was told that the Catholic Education Office was always in need of more catechists.⁹⁹

Late in 1967 the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) was established in Adelaide, with Fr Barrymore Hynes as director. It was a new department of the Catholic Education Office, dedicated to increasing the effectiveness of the outreach to Catholic children in state schools and their parents. In February 1968, Hynes announced a ten-week course for voluntary catechists in the southern area of Adelaide, to be conducted at Cabra Convent. The children who were to benefit from this initiative were not to be deemed 'second-class Catholics'. At this time Gleeson made an appeal for business men to become lunch-hour religion teachers. He also indicated that in the future the religious women who conducted the Motor Mission would devote their time to training and forming the catechists who would do the teaching. The Motor Mission, staffed initially by the Sisters of St Joseph, had commenced in rural areas in 1956. The sisters involved in the Motor Mission had taught the weekly half-hour periods in the state schools and contacted students' parents. Hynes reported in 1968 that there were eleven Motor Missions in the archdiocese involving twenty religious – twelve Sisters of St Joseph; four Dominican Sisters; two Sisters of Mercy, and two Brigidine Sisters.¹⁰⁰ In the archdiocese of Adelaide, the first Motor Mission car set out from St Joseph's Convent, Aldgate at the beginning of 1956. In the Port Pirie diocese the first Motor Mission vehicle began operating in 1960.

⁹⁹ *Southern Cross*, 18 January 1963, 3.

¹⁰⁰ Box 404 – Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Folder 1. ACAA

Adelaide parishes were to be divided into four regions, northern, eastern, western and southern and the Elizabeth and Salisbury parishes would constitute another group. This would enable the ten-week course, begun in the southern area, to be replicated in the other groupings. It was clear that Beovich and Gleeson were dedicated to reaching out to the families and children not involved in the Catholic education system. In 1968, Hynes reported to Archbishop Beovich that there were 22 598 Catholic children in Catholic schools and 28 676 Catholic children in state schools. So 45 per cent of Catholic children were in Catholic schools and 55 per cent were in state schools.¹⁰¹

In March 1971, six weeks before becoming the archbishop of Adelaide, Gleeson celebrated Mass for catechists in Holy Cross Church, Goodwood. Following Mass there was an informal ceremony opening the new centre for the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine at 31 Victoria Street, Goodwood. Gleeson said the opening signified that the CCD was now a fully developed department of the Catholic Education Office and ‘stands as a further pledge of the Archdiocese of Adelaide to do everything possible to ensure the proper teaching of the faith, and formation for Christian living, among the pupils in the State Schools’.¹⁰² Gleeson underlined that parents had the primary responsibility for the religious education of their children and that the CCD and the catechists aimed to assist them in the task. Eight months later, Gleeson, now the archbishop, issued a *Statement of Policy Regarding Religious Instruction in State Schools*. It called for backing up the ‘right of entry’ with all possible resources but also for the ‘whole programme of parental education and catechetical instruction for the young people in parishes and regions be renewed and developed’.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ At the beginning of each school year priests and catechists took the names and addresses of all the children in their classes. Hence it was possible for Hynes to provide accurate numbers for the archbishop.

¹⁰² Southern Cross, 19 March 1971, 3.

¹⁰³ Southern Cross, 19 November 1971, 1

The massive effort to reach Catholic children in departmental schools by exercising the 'right of entry' gradually became too great a burden and ended in 1973. The project had relied mainly on an inadequate number of catechists, most of them (like many of the priests) lacking teacher training. The Methodist Church 'delivered a virtual *coup de grâce*' to the project when it withdrew from the scheme in 1968. According to the historian of Methodism in South Australia, the 'right of entry' was seen in 1940 as a great evangelistic opportunity but it had ended in a 'morass of futility and frustration'.¹⁰⁴

When the denominational instruction of students in state schools ceased, the Heads of Christian Churches, encouraged by the state government, worked together to prepare a course of non-denominational religious education to be taught by suitably trained departmental teachers. This new Religious Education Syllabus commenced in 1975 and was trialled experimentally in thirty-eight primary and secondary schools. There was a clear distinction between this syllabus and Christian education which was seen as the responsibility of the individual churches. This move was opposed by the Humanist Society and especially by the activist group Keep Our State Schools Secular (KOSS).¹⁰⁵ The new subject 'spread tardily' and only a minority of schools introduced the new subject.

¹⁰⁴ Hunt, *This Side of Heaven*, 390

¹⁰⁵ For the correspondence of those for and against the Religious Education Syllabus see Almond and Woolcock, *Dissent in Paradise*, Chapter 3.

Gleeson as a young priest had promoted another way of influencing Catholic children in state schools. He called on Catholic teachers in state schools to be a beneficent influence on their students. In March 1952, the Assisian Guild, which had been founded fourteen years previously for the benefit of Catholic teachers in departmental schools, gathered for its annual Mass in the cathedral. Gleeson, as the spiritual director, celebrated the Mass and preached the sermon. He asserted that teachers were dedicated to 'educating the next generation of citizens of this world' and helping them to become good men and women.¹⁰⁶ He underlined the dignity of their calling by quoting St John Chrysostom (349-407): 'What is greater than to rule souls, to mould the conduct of youth? I consider him who knows how to form the souls of the young more excellent than any painter or sculptor.'¹⁰⁷ Gleeson conceded that those present were 'barred by the regulations of a secular system of education' from using 'all the means available for character training' [religious instruction] but urged them to be faithful to Mass, the sacraments, prayer and penance, so that their lives would be models for their students and so their influence would transcend that attributed to high degrees and special professional skill.¹⁰⁸ Do we see here a reflection of the negative attitude of the Church to university degrees? Or was he just indicating that the human qualities of the teacher were at least equally important?

In March 1981, Mrs Maxine Hogan, a staff member of the Centre for Continuing Religious Education, reported that 300 people were attending catechetical courses of eight weeks duration in seven regional centres. The culmination of the project would be Mass in the cathedral, celebrated by Gleeson, during which the graduates would each receive a Catechist's Insignia.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ *Southern Cross*, 14 March 1952, 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Southern Cross*, 14 March 1952, 1

¹⁰⁸ *Southern Cross*, 14 March 1952, 1.

¹⁰⁹ *Southern Cross*, 19 March 1981, 8.

The same edition of the Catholic paper contained ‘A Letter from the Archbishop to the Catechists of the Archdiocese of Adelaide’. He assured his addressees that ‘your work in educating in faith adults and children is one of the concerns that is closest to my own heart’.¹¹⁰ Gleeson said that the ministry of the Word was very much at the centre of his ministry and that it was shared with priests and catechists. The archbishop emphasised that the first and most important leaders in faith are the parents of a child and that the Virgin Mary was a ‘living catechism’ and the ‘mother and model of catechists’.¹¹¹ Here Gleeson was quoting from the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II following the fourth general assembly of the Synod of Bishops held in October 1977 which had dealt with catechesis. The pope quoted the words of St Augustine that Mary was both mother and disciple of Jesus and so merited these accolades.¹¹²

Gleeson was involved in the field of education for forty years. During this time he witnessed the Catholic education system undergo extreme stress and then, with the coming of federal and state government grants, survive and indeed flourish. Male and female religious were, in a short period of time, largely replaced by lay persons.

Gleeson’s decision to allow SAACS to be a decision-making body was a step forward in the collegial government, promoted by Vatican II. These were seismic changes which required considerable adjustment in attitudes and procedures. The attitude of those monsignori in other dioceses who could not abide a lay person as the head of Catholic education in South Australia was a reminder of what had been the norm.

¹¹⁰ *Southern Cross*, 19 March 1981, 9.

¹¹¹ *Southern Cross*, 19 March 1981, 9; 30 April 1981, 5.

¹¹² Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* of Pope John Paul II on Catechesis in Our Time (16 October 1979), par 73.

New structures were required to account for public money flowing into non-government schools and Catholic parents needed time to adjust to lay persons, not religious, staffing schools. The author remembers some Catholic parents asking what was the point in patronising Catholic schools if their children were not taught by religious. New ways of reaching out to Catholic students in state schools, and their parents, became important as their number began to exceed the number in the Catholic system. Gleeson as priest and bishop devoted much time and energy to the Catholic education system and to efforts to bring religious education to Catholic children in state schools. Significantly, they were not to be deemed 'second-class Catholics'.

Chapter 7

GLEESON'S INVOLVEMENT IN PUBLIC ISSUES

From the time he became a bishop, Gleeson had to come to terms with the changing shape of South Australian society and especially the political, social and religious upheaval that occurred during the 1960s. Some of the contributing factors to this decade of change require attention. It has been asserted that the 1960s was a time of 'dirty words' – authority, capitalism, Establishment, status quo, conservative, sexism, racism, pollution, 'But the dirtiest word of all was Vietnam.'¹ It was a time when those born during the 'baby boom' following the Second World War rejected 'bourgeois morality' and 'petite-bourgeois values'. The former President of the South Australian Conference of the Methodist Church, Rev Vivian Seacombe, told ordinands in 1965 that they faced a 'disturbing time in the Church's history' – a time described by some as a 'ferment', a 'second reformation'. He added: 'There is not an area of the Church's life and faith that today is not being scrutinised, questioned and challenged.'² In addition to this, for Catholics, the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) ushered in a period of excitement, change, development and uncertainty.

A Decade of Change

A central figure in triggering the religious upheaval was Bishop John Robinson of Woolwich in south London, a Cambridge don before becoming a bishop. He wrote a bestseller, *Honest to God*, published in London in 1963.³ This book popularised a 'new theology' and a 'new morality' for a general readership.

¹ Robin Gerster and Jan Bassett, *Seizures of Youth: the sixties and Australia* (Melbourne: Hyland House, 1991), 43.

² *South Australian Methodist*, 22 October 1965, 1 and 3.

³ John A T Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1963).

Robinson claimed that, to effectively proclaim Christianity, more was required than a ‘restating of traditional orthodoxy in modern terms’— a ‘much more radical recasting’ was demanded which would involve ‘the most fundamental categories of our theology’ being reassessed.⁴ He said that the doctrine of the Incarnation and the Divinity of Christ, as stated at the Council of Chalcedon (451) was ‘not a solution [to understanding] but a statement of the problem’.⁵ Christian beliefs, such as the Atonement achieved on the Cross and the Resurrection, had to be ‘demythologised’ to be understood and accepted by people who, according to the Enlightenment, were ‘man come of age’. Forty years later, the Anglican bishop of Durham, Tom Wright, alleged that Robinson seemed to have ignored the popularity of writers and apologists who presented the case for Christianity in traditional terms and were enjoying ‘an enormous following’ at the time Robinson was writing.⁶ He cited two such writers, C S Lewis and Dorothy L Sayers. Wright also recalled that at this time Billy Graham, the American Christian evangelist, was drawing large crowds in England. The *South Australian Methodist*, in an editorial comment on *Honest to God*, said: ‘The book is essentially a contribution to a continuing discussion of what is often called “the problem of communication”. How is the Gospel communicated to modern man?’⁷

Robinson also approved of the ‘new morality’ that replaced absolute and objective moral values with love. The pioneer of this view of ethical conduct was Joseph Fletcher (1905-1991), an Episcopal priest, who in 1966 authored *Situational Ethics: the new morality*. Situational/situation ethics emerged as a part of liberal theology that holds that laws in the Bible require modification because of advances in human knowledge. Fletcher asserted: ‘Christian situation ethics is not a system or program of living according to a code, but an effort to relate love to a world of

⁴ Robinson, *Honest to God*, 7.

⁵ Robinson, *Honest to God*, 65.

⁶ Nicholas Thomas Wright, ‘Doubt about Doubt: Honest to God forty years on’, *Journal of Anglican Studies*, vol 3, no 2 (2005), 183. Both Wright and Robinson were New Testament scholars.

⁷ *The South Australian Methodist*, 26 April 1963, vol 77, no 3777, 2

relativities through casuistry obedient to love. It is the strategy of love.’⁸

Unsurprisingly, some found this ethical view liberating. *Honest to God* was widely read and encouraged discussion concerning the Christian view of life.

The Catholic Church rejected situation ethics as a guide for moral conduct. On 29 December 1975, the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (until 1965 the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office), issued a ‘Declaration on Certain Problems of Sexual Ethics’ (*Personae Humanae*), which reaffirmed the Church’s traditional moral teaching regarding human sexuality. Sex before marriage and homosexual relationships were declared to be contrary to right reason and the law of God. The attitude that denied there were absolute moral values and promoted relativism was declared to be unacceptable: ‘it is wrong to assert as many do today that neither human nature nor revealed law provide any absolute and unchangeable norms as a guide for individual actions, that all they offer is the general law of charity and respect for the human person.’⁹ This was the Church’s response to the permissiveness of the 1960s.

In the mid-1960s the popular television programme ‘The Mavis Bramston Show’, an Australian-produced comedy series, satirized politicians, churches and authorities in general. Telecast from Channel 7, it was shown nationally from 1965. The Catholic bishop, Thomas Muldoon, an auxiliary bishop of Sydney, known for his belligerent style, announced that he would sell his shares in petrol retailer Ampol because it sponsored an ‘immoral show’. In its irreverence and satire the television program was closely allied with *Oz* magazine, first published in Sydney in April 1963 and continued until 1969. In the United Kingdom *London Oz* magazine was produced from 1967 to 1973.

⁸ Joseph Fletcher, *Situation Ethics: the new morality* (London: SCM Press, 1966), 30-31.

⁹ *Personae Humanae* (29 December 1975), par 4.

The magazine was involved in two celebrated obscenity trials, one in Australia the other in England, but the editors were acquitted on appeal in both cases. Richard Walsh, one of the editors of *Oz*, said that the magazine ‘showed a generation had come along with different values from their predecessors. Its starting point was that the church, the RSL and the monarchy were finished, and it spent a lot of time rubbishing all three.’... ‘We didn’t set out to be obscene, but we did set out to be iconoclastic in a big way and create a bit of mayhem, and we managed that.’¹⁰ He said the publication ‘gave a focus to young people who were trying to embrace new sexual values, new moral values, new ideas about patriotism, new ideas about Australia’s place in the world’.¹¹

Three other publications deserve mention in this context. The *Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan, first published in 1963, critiqued the common view that women were fulfilled as wives and mothers (the feminine mystique) and asserted that women were saying: ‘I need something more than my husband and my children and my home.’¹² Friedan was credited with effecting ‘second-wave feminism’ in the United States, which soon reached Australia.¹³ *Silent Spring*, by the ardent ecologist and conservationist, Rachel Carson, published in 1962, promoted the environmental cause and alerted the world to the dangers of the misuse of pesticides. One American editorial writer asserted that ‘a few thousand words from Rachel Carson and the world took a new direction’.¹⁴

¹⁰ *Weekend Australian*, 23-24 March 2013, Cover Story in Review section, ‘The Sum of OZ’, 6.

¹¹ *Weekend Australian*, 23-24 March 2013, ‘The Sum of OZ’, 6. ¹² Betty Friedan, *the Feminine Mystique* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1965), 32.

¹³ First wave feminism dates from 19th and early 20th centuries with women’s suffrage its main aim.

¹⁴ Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (London: Penguin Books, 1999), 258.

The unexpurgated edition of D H Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, which contained explicit descriptions of sex and then unprintable words, was published in the United Kingdom in 1960.¹⁵ The publisher, Penguin Books, was charged under the Obscene Publications Act of 1959 but found not guilty at the Old Bailey, 2 November 1960.

When in 1970, the Second United Nations Development Decade was declared, it noted that 'youth everywhere is in ferment'. That was true in most parts of the anglophone world, including Australia. When the contraceptive pill became available in Australia in 1961, women began to experience greater sexual freedom, were able to control their fertility, and could be free to pursue a career or work.¹⁶ This all added up to a culture in which the traditional moral teaching of the Church would be challenged.

Gleeson appears to have been well aware of the changes in society and the Church. Part of his *ad limina* visit to Rome in 1978 was the presentation of the Quinquennial Report to the Roman Pontiff, covering the years 1973-1977.¹⁷ Gleeson listed in Part II 'General Religious Situation': 'The most acute problem appears to be in the area of "The irrelevance of religion and of the Church in particular"'.¹⁸ He then expanded on this:

The constant pressure of a materialist and consumer-based society tends to make the 'things of the spirit' less real and reinforces a set of life values which are in constant conflict with Gospel-inspired values. This means that members of the Church are really called to that type of heroism in faith which is demonstrated so often in the life of the Church under persecution but is more difficult to create and maintain under the more insidious attacks of indifferentism.¹⁹

¹⁵ Lawrence, D H, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (London: Penguin, 1961).

¹⁶ Frank Bongiorno, *The Sex Lives of Australians: a history* (Melbourne: Black Inc, 2012), 227-35.

¹⁷ The 1983 Code of Canon Law included this traditional obligation: 'Every five years the diocesan bishop is bound to submit to the Supreme Pontiff a report on the state of the diocese entrusted to him, in the form and at the time determined by the Apostolic See'. Canon 399 § 1.

¹⁸ Quinquennial Report 1973-1977 Part II General Religious Situation. Series 1.20, Box 170, ACAA.

¹⁹ Quinquennial Report 1973-1977.

In the same section of the report Gleeson said: ‘Undoubtedly the problems relating to contraception have alienated many from the Church.’ He also noted the effects of a dated ecclesiology:

The heavily institutionalised image of the Church remains a continuing problem as people endeavour to reconcile the Scriptures and Vatican Council decisions with many of the procedures and decisions in the Church. The Revision of Canon Law could be disastrous in this area if it is not truly presented in the spirit of the Vatican Council.²⁰

Here Gleeson expressed his dissatisfaction with the persisting centralist attitude of Roman authority, despite the Second Vatican Council’s teaching on what came to be known as ‘collegiality’, that the bishops with the pope formed a college that possessed supreme authority in the Church.²¹

Pope John Paul II (1978-2005) became pope the year Gleeson presented this report. He disappointed those Catholics who believed that the papacy would be less monarchical and more collegial in style: under him the Church became more centralised, not less so.²² In Part XIII Other Pastoral Questions, Gleeson reflected on the impact of culture on the Catholic community:

Catholics are not noticeably different from other members of our community in public life. As they get older and more economically secure, they tend to get more and more conservative and become selfish in regard to personal needs of other people, eg the unemployed, the refugees, the Aborigines. Outstanding exceptions in this regard are the members of the St Vincent de Paul Society.²³

²⁰ Quinquennial Report 1973- 977.

²¹ Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, par 22.

²² Diarmaid MacCulloch, *All Things Made New: writings on the Reformation* (London: Allen Lane, 2016), 21. Richard P McBrien, ed, *Harper Collins Encyclopedia of Catholicism* (San Francisco, Harper Collins, 1995), 714-15.

²³ Quinquennial Report 1973-1977.

In 1983 Gleeson submitted the Quinquennial Report for the years 1978-1982. He noted more challenges facing the Church in the archdiocese. In Part XIV, Other Pastoral Questions, Gleeson said that the growing acceptance of a 'divorce mentality' presented a real problem for young Catholics entering marriage. He asserted: 'there is, in fact, little societal support for perseverance in marriage in the face of difficulties'. He also reported that contraception in various forms was 'used widely' in the general population and among Catholic people. He noted the acceptance of an 'abortion mentality' which 'will also lead easily to an acceptance of so called "mercy killing" of the aged and infirm'.²⁴ It seems that Gleeson was in touch with a changed and changing Western culture and was aware of the stresses within the Church coming from the Second Vatican Council.

²⁴ *Quinquennial Report 1978-1982 Part XIV Other Pastoral Questions. Series 1.20, Box 170, ACAA.*

Gleeson's sermon at the opening of the 1975 legal year

Gleeson was the preacher at this service which was held in St Peter's Anglican Cathedral, in February 1975. He presented what was a clear outline of his view concerning legal, moral and social evils, a view that remained constant throughout his life.²⁵ He asserted that too often the judiciary and the community failed to understand the 'underlying structural evils of our society' and that in consequence symptoms were dealt with but not the causes. He declared that the world needed a collective response from men and women with the 'vision that comes from the gospel of Christ'. He then listed some social sins, resulting from sinful structures that were in conflict with the 'proper interdependence of the person and society':

- The effective denial of the right to eat caused by one-third of the world, which included Australia, controlling 80 per cent of world income and resources.
- Imprisonment without just trial of so-called political prisoners by Communist and right-wing governments. He believed that Australia and Australians were 'selective' in their condemnation of this 'terrible crime against humanity'.
- The denial of the right to life and quality of life to millions of born and unborn caused by acceptance of abortion and by the developed nations' excessive consumption of food and other resources.
- The failure to recognise that truth, justice, integrity, and charity should govern relations between individuals, families, associations, and state and national governments.

²⁵ *Southern Cross*, 14 February 1975, 5

He then said that ‘action on behalf of justice and efforts to liberate people from oppressive structures is an essential element of the preaching and the living’ of the gospel of Christ. Gleeson’s prayer was that all men and women of good will would become:

- New men and women who would create new social conditions in the world.
- People who were really concerned for the basic rights of their brothers and sisters.
- Those who understood and endeavoured to resolve the fundamental ills of society.
- Men and women who would be ‘salt for all mankind’ preserving society from corruption and giving a new taste to the quality of life.
- People who having seen the light of Christ would become a light to the whole world.

In this address Gleeson clearly expressed the teaching of the Second Vatican Council that ‘Christians cherish a feeling of deep solidarity with the human race and its history’.²⁶ He forcefully presented the stance that the common good must be a concern of the human family by quoting the Council:

Because of the closer bonds of human interdependence and their spread over the whole world, we are today witnessing a widening of the role of the common good, which is the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily.

The whole human race is consequently involved with regard to the rights and obligations which result. Every group must take into account the needs and legitimate aspirations of every other group, and still more of the human family as a whole.²⁷

²⁶ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 1.

²⁷ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 26.

The Abortion Debate

Before discussing Gleeson's contributions to the debate on liberalising the availability of abortion, it is of note that the South Australian government indicated its intention to introduce legislation to this end in October 1968. This year has a claim to be at the centre of the social revolution of the 1960s. This was the year of student uprisings in the United States, Mexico, France, Germany and Czechoslovakia; the year of the assassinations of Robert Kennedy, the American presidential candidate, and of Martin Luther King, the civil rights leader; the premiere of the musical *Hair*, replete with sex, nudity, and drugs, and a time of growing dissatisfaction with the War in Vietnam, fuelled by the Tet Offensive and Battle of Khe Sahn.²⁸ Joseph Ratzinger (Cardinal 1977; Pope Benedict XVI, 2005-13), who was one of the 'theological young Turks leading the charge against the status quo' at the Second Vatican Council, was shocked by the student uprising in Germany, which was especially strong in the University of Tübingen where his students were chanting 'accursed be Jesus' as a revolutionary motto.²⁹

²⁸ Clare Parker, 'Abortion, Homosexuality and the Slippery Slope: legislating 'moral' behaviour in South Australia'. PhD thesis, Adelaide University, 2013, Chapter 3, 89.
<<https://digital.library.adelaide.edu.au/dspace/bitstream/2440/84102/8/02whole.pdf>> Accessed 9 July 2015.

²⁹ John L. Allen, *Cardinal Ratzinger: the Vatican's enforcer of the faith* (New York: Continuum, 2000), 46 and 49

From then on he became more conservative in outlook, departed from the prestigious University of Tübingen and relocated to the University of Regensburg in Bavaria, founded in July 1962. In 1981, Ratzinger was appointed prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith where he was ‘the enforcer’ of orthodoxy and supporter of Pope John Paul II’s ‘papal centralism’ and so had a powerful influence on the Church.

In December 1968, Robin Millhouse, attorney-general in the Liberal Country League government led by Raymond Steele Hall, introduced to the South Australian parliament ‘A Bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Law Consolidation Act’. Based on the British Abortion Act of 1967, its aim was to amend those sections of the act entitled ‘Attempts to Procure Abortion’. Under this heading the unlawful procurement of, or performance of, an abortion, was prohibited. The law left open the question of the possibility of a lawful procurement or performance of an abortion. In fact, a number of therapeutic abortions had been performed in Adelaide hospitals. The Royal Adelaide Hospital performed seventy-four such procedures between March 1963 and August 1968.³⁰ No prosecutions had resulted from these cases, but the concern remained that under the present law such prosecutions were possible. The bill before the South Australian parliament aimed to remove the ambiguity of the existing law and to accommodate the perceived willingness of the community to accept abortion in situations other than protection of the physical or mental welfare of the mother.

The Humanist Society of South Australia was a prominent supporter of abortion law reform. The society, an association of non-religious people, promoted a ‘rational’ approach to human affairs and claimed to offer a positive alternative to religions and

³⁰ Thérèse Nicholas, ‘Abortion Law Reform in South Australia’, B.A. Honours thesis, Flinders University, 1970, 2.

dogmatic creeds. A meeting in August 1968 recommended the formation of a steering committee to consider forming an organisation to promote abortion law reform. In September, the Abortion Law Reform Association of South Australia (ALRSA) was formed as an offshoot of the Humanist Society, to be headed by women. The first president, Lilo Weston, was a social worker and wife of an Adelaide psychiatrist, and three of the four vice-presidents were women.³¹

Catholics and Lutherans were at the forefront of organised opposition to the proposed abortion law reform.³² Archbishop Beovich, as the state's Catholic leader, provided a written submission to the parliamentary committee of enquiry, asserting: 'Every human being, even a child in the mother's womb, has a right to life directly from God and not from the parents or from any human society or authority'.³³ The abortion bill was passed by the South Australian House of Assembly on 5 November 1969 and by the Legislative Council in the early hours of 5 December the same year. Greater finesse in lobbying and more coherent organisation enabled ALRSA to achieve its aim.³⁴ Opponents of abortion reform were amateurs in their political lobbying and manifested a certain naivety, appearing 'unaware of the collision taking place between Christian and secular humanist philosophies'.³⁵

Gleeson, as auxiliary bishop, coadjutor archbishop, and after 1971 archbishop, was steadfast in his opposition to abortion in any circumstances. He was well aware that there was little chance of changing the new law but was conscious of the need for the Church to proclaim the rights of the unborn and the dignity of all human life. As previously noted, Gleeson in November 1969 attended the annual dinner for the

³¹ Jill Blewett, 'The Abortion Law Reform Association of South Australia 1968-73', in, Jan Mercer, ed, *The Other Half: women in Australian society* (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1975), 382-83.

³² For details of the public debate on abortion and of how politicians voted see, John I Fleming and Daniel Ch Overduin, *Wake Up Lucky Country!: a reflection on social issues during the past decade*, rev ed, (Adelaide: Lutheran Publishing House, 1982), Chapter 3.

³³ Laffin, *Matthew Beovich: a biography*, 294.

³⁴ Thérèse Nicholas, 'Abortion Law Reform', 107.

³⁵ Fleming and Overduin, *Wake Up Lucky Country!* 103.

Adelaide Jewish community, arranged by the Women's International Zionist Organisation. In his address he drew the attention of the gathering to the bill being debated in the South Australian parliament. Those opposed to the bill claimed it would lead to abortion on demand. Gleeson presented the Catholic Church's position that life was sacred from conception until natural death and asserted: 'The difference between the gas chambers of Belsen and Auschwitz and the operating theatres and incinerators of the abortionists is only one of capacity and rate of destruction.'³⁶ This comparison appears extremely tactless and a serious error of judgement. Gleeson also referred to the German theologian and Lutheran pastor, Martin Niemöller (1892-1984) who deemed all Germans but especially the leaders of Protestant churches to have been complicit, by their silence, in the Nazi imprisonment, persecution and murder of millions of people. Gleeson claimed that the same judgement might be applied to the parliament and citizens of South Australia if the proposed abortion reform legislation was passed.³⁷ This claim is also extravagant. The archbishop, in support of his stand against abortion, recalled the words of the state attorney-general: 'I myself think you must assume that there is a human being from the time of conception.'³⁸

In December 1971, Gleeson and Lilo Weston contributed articles to the *Herald*, the official monthly journal of the South Australian branch of the Australian Labor Party. Gleeson conceded that Catholic opposition to abortion was partly based on religious grounds but denied that Catholics were simply endeavouring to force their religious views on others because the Catholic position also aimed to avoid the 'vast threat to the social foundations of civil liberties'.³⁹ The abortion law in South Australia, he asserted, 'removes the protection of law and gives private citizens the power to set

³⁶ *Southern Cross*, 28 November 1969, 1. For the complete text of Gleeson's address see Series 128, ACA.

³⁷ See 'Holocaust Encyclopedia', <<http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10007391>>. Accessed 11 March 2016.

³⁸ *Southern Cross*, 28 November 1969, 1.

³⁹ *Herald*, vol 1, no 5, NS (Dec.1971-Jan. 1972), 9.

out to kill lives that medical science now knows are distinct individuals of our species, whether you like to call them persons or not'.⁴⁰

Weston's response was that 'our tradition is that the foetus is not a human person' and so in her view did not have rights. Gleeson was aware of this line of reasoning, hence his assertion that the unborn is a 'distinct individual of our species whether you like to call them persons or not'. Weston clearly expressed the view of the supporters of abortion law reform when she said: 'When abortion on request becomes a reality with us, and when contraception advice is freely available to all, we shall then have achieved the ideal of every child being a wanted child.'⁴¹ Significantly, Weston referred to 'abortion on request' because she deemed the common expression 'abortion on demand' to be a 'loaded phrase'. For her the decision to proceed with an abortion should be made by the patient and the medical professional after due consultation.

Gleeson did not let the issue die. He wrote a letter to the editor of the *Advertiser* in December 1971, noting that in the Catholic Church, 28 December was the Feast of the Holy Innocents, children killed by King Herod (Matthew 2:16-18), and calling on all citizens to 'observe a day of prayer in atonement and sorrow for the unborn who have died as a result of abortion in South Australia'.⁴² Here Gleeson was continuing and expanding the initiative of Beovich, who the previous year had called on Catholics to observe this day as a time of special prayer for children who had died as a result of abortion.⁴³ The state attorney-general, Leonard King, himself a Catholic, stated that as a private citizen, he would respond to the request. The Anglican bishop, Dr Thomas Reed, expressed his personal concern at the rising number of abortions in the state but claimed

⁴⁰ *Herald*, vol.1, no. 5, 9.

⁴¹ *Herald*, vol. 1, no. 5, 8.

⁴² *Advertiser*, 27 December 1971, 2.

⁴³ *Southern Cross*, 24 December 1970, 1.

he would not be able to contact the whole diocese at such short notice.⁴⁴ The president of the South Australian Methodist Conference, R Kyle Waters, replied: 'We do not favour abortion on demand. Neither is our attitude one of total opposition.'⁴⁵ It was obvious that there was not a united response of the Christian community to the question of abortion. Clearly Gleeson failed to sound out the heads of churches in adequate time before making this public appeal.

Gleeson's impetuosity in this matter revealed that he had not fully absorbed the wisdom he claimed to have learned from Beovich. Speaking on the occasion of the celebration of the silver jubilee of Beovich's episcopal consecration in 1965, Gleeson said that Beovich always endeavoured to get the necessary facts and background before deciding on the many situations and questions he had to face. To Gleeson, this often seemed to cause needless delay but he claimed the experience of years confirmed for him the wisdom of the practice.⁴⁶

The Right to Life Association

The Right to Life Association was established on 4 April 1972. It was an ecumenical organisation supporting the rights of the unborn child. The Lutheran pastor, Daniel Ch Overduin, was the organising secretary and on the council were committed Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans and an agnostic. Gleeson appealed to all Catholics to give moral and financial support to the association. He pointed out that the answer to Question 8 of the association's brochure was not a satisfactory statement of Catholic belief because it said that the right to life was not absolute and could be called into question if the mother's life was in serious danger. However, he conceded that the footnote which said that some members may hold a personal view which was more restrictive was

⁴⁴ When the ecclesiastical Province of South Australia came into existence in 1973, Thomas Thornton Reed became the first Archbishop of Adelaide.

⁴⁵ *Advertiser*, 28 December 1971, 10.

⁴⁶ *Southern Cross*, 2 April 1965, 4.

satisfactory.⁴⁷ A fortnight later, Gleeson said that there was no room for negativity. ‘We must positively help those who have problems, whether married or unmarried.’ He warned that because abortion was legal did not mean it was morally acceptable and rejected the claim that a woman had ‘a complete right over her body’⁴⁸

The association held its first public meeting in the Adelaide Town Hall on Monday, 29 May 1972. Two thousand people gained entry to the Town Hall and an estimated two thousand remained outside. A second public meeting, to provide for those who could not gain entry to the Town Hall for the first gathering, was set for 19 June. This time the crowd was smaller but even so not all were able to gain entry. The previous evening there had been an ecumenical service of Christian witness in St Peter’s Cathedral to pray for the success of this meeting. The association declared its intention to establish a telephone counselling service for women with unwanted pregnancies.⁴⁹ The headquarters of the telephone counselling service, Birthline, situated on South Road at Everard Park, was officially opened in September by Leonard King, acting as a private citizen,

On 3 August 1972 the ALP member for Adelaide in the State parliament, Jack Wright, was reported by the *Advertiser* as having stated that a bill introduced by the Labor member for Playford, T M (Terry) McRae, aimed to restrict abortions in ‘almost a cruel way’.⁵⁰ Some held that the effects of McRae’s ‘highly convoluted amendments’ would have restricted abortion to cases of rape and potential deformity.⁵¹ Gleeson addressed a letter to Wright pointing out that his political party was known for its concern for defending the basic rights of all. Despite this historic tradition, Gleeson deemed that not only was Wright failing to protect the lives of the unborn, ‘the most

⁴⁷ *Southern Cross*, 12 May 1972, 4.

⁴⁸ *Southern Cross*, 26 May 1972, 1.

⁴⁹ *Southern Cross*, 12 May 1972, 4.

⁵⁰ *Advertiser*, 3 August 1972, 3.

⁵¹ Jill Blewett, ‘The Abortion Law Reform Association of South Australia 1968-73’, 381.

helpless of humans', but he appeared to be joining in the attack on their right to life. Gleeson expressed his distress at being represented in parliament by one with such opinions.⁵²

Wright replied, stating that he was not surprised by the sentiments expressed as he was well aware of the teaching of the Catholic Church on the matter of abortion. However, if a person did not express and defend his views he would be deemed a coward. Hence he had presented his personal viewpoint. Mindful of this, he asked Gleeson to respect his views, just as he himself respected the views of Gleeson.⁵³

This exchange of letters raised a question of considerable importance. How was an elected member of parliament to represent the members of his or her constituency? In the Adelaide electorate there would have been a considerable numbers of voters who supported the bill and a significant number opposed to it. It would appear that Gleeson and the Catholic Church were reluctant to accept that they were only one voice in a diverse community; that although they believed that their viewpoint represented the will of God and was therefore valid for everyone, they could proclaim but not enforce it. The Church had yet to adjust fully to a pluralist society.

The Anglican bishop of Adelaide, Thomas Reed, appeared to have better grasped this need to adjust. Writing in the December 1969 issue of the *Adelaide Church Guardian*, shortly before the abortion bill was passed by the Legislative Council in the South Australian parliament, he accepted that it was a difficult time for Christians. They could not compel acceptance of Christian standards but they had two clear duties. These were to do all in their power to bring about the acceptance of Christian principles in the community, and at all times to adhere to these principles, even though the law of the land might permit them to act otherwise. One of these principles was the right of an

⁵² *Southern Cross*, 11 August 1972, 3.

⁵³ *Southern Cross*, 18 August 1972, 3.

unborn child to live and develop. Gleeson would have accepted the bishop's statement so far but would have rejected his solution in the case where the rights of the unborn and the rights of others were in conflict. In such cases, said the bishop, 'competent and impartial persons' should make the decision as no single person should be given the right to terminate the life of an unborn child for his or her own personal benefit.⁵⁴

Gleeson's position was absolutist: no person had that right.

In 1978, Alison Gent, a member of the Women's Liberation Movement, responded to letters to the editor in the *Advertiser* from Archbishop Gleeson and the Anglican assistant bishop, Bishop Lionel Renfrey:

It is, I think, a pity that Church leaders who make public statements on abortion do not recognise more clearly that it is a feminist issue.

Christ, whose attitudes to women in the Gospels are strongly feminist, may well be far less ready to condemn modern women for having abortions than some Christians who are so very sure that in doing this they are acting in His name.

At the least, Catholic archbishops and bishops, whether Roman or Anglican, need to use a little more logic. If they are prepared to praise one woman, the Blessed Virgin Mary, for a free, positive decision about what was to take place in her own body, they surely ought to accept the right of less highly favoured women to make decisions – even if negative – about what takes place in theirs.

Also, total opposition to abortion must accept an inevitable tie with total pacifism, since the underlying moral principle is that no one may take up arms, or cause them to be taken up, in defence of their own territory.

What is abortion? Whatever else it is or is not, it is a drastic end to one set of possibilities in a given man-woman relationship. In the process of achieving such an ending, woman is, after the foetus, the greatest sufferer.

Because of the physical immunity which men (male) by nature enjoy in such matters, let them keep somewhat more silent!

It saddens me that church leaders so often take the 'soft option': why thunder to or at women against abortion rather than preach to their own sex against irresponsible sexual activity by men (male)? For example rape?⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *Adelaide Church Guardian*, December 1969, 7. The article was also reported in the *Southern Cross*, 12 December 1969, 3.

⁵⁵ *Advertiser*, 3 January 1978, 5.

Gent, the wife of an Anglican priest and a faithful member of that denomination, argued from religious principles and logic, a broader platform than Lilo Wilson. Gleeson would not accept the arguments of either woman. For him, abortion was the deliberate and unjustifiable destruction of a human being and that was that.⁵⁶

At the 1982 observance of the Feast of the Holy Innocents, Gleeson spoke of an ‘abortion mentality’ in South Australia and called on the whole community to reflect on its collective guilt: ‘Society as a whole must accept the guilt of creating an “abortion mentality”, of creating a climate where abortions are freely available and socially acceptable.’⁵⁷ Gleeson then outlined steps to be taken in opposing the prevalent ‘abortion mentality’:

- Assist the Right to Life Association and the Birthline counselling services.
- Support the work of the Daughters of Charity at St Joseph’s Centre, Fullarton, where unmarried pregnant women were cared for.
- Encourage and support parents and others involved in educating the young with regard to human sexuality.
- Pray for healing and peace for those who have had an abortion.
- Pray also for those facing difficult situations that they might have the strength to face the truth about life and love.

Early in 1983 Gleeson addressed a luncheon of the Rotary Club of Adelaide. He noted with approval the community’s concern for fauna and flora but contrasted this with the apparent decline in respect for human life before birth and in old age: ‘For reasons I cannot understand or accept, our community seems to condone the destruction by abortion of over 4000 unborn infants in SA every year’.⁵⁸ Later in the year, Gleeson

⁵⁶ McLean, Yvonne Lesley, ‘No Coward Soul: a biography of Alison Gent: radical feminist and activist for the ordination of women’, PhD thesis, Flinders University, 2013.

⁵⁷ *Southern Cross*, 6 January 1983, 3.

⁵⁸ *Southern Cross*, 17 February 1983, 7.

referred to the 4059 abortions conducted in 1982 and observed that those ‘young lives in SA were destroyed by men and women professionally committed to saving life’.⁵⁹

Gleeson’s defence of the rights of the unborn was recognised in the semi-official newspaper of the Holy See, the *L’Osservatore Romano*.⁶⁰ The newspaper praised two Australian archbishops for observing a day of reparation for the sin of abortion on the feast of the Holy Innocents.⁶¹ The archbishops were James Freeman of Sydney and Gleeson although, as noted above, it was Gleeson’s predecessor Matthew Beovich who had instituted the day of reparation in 1970. The international Catholic weekly, *The Tablet*, under the heading ‘Death of a great archbishop’, said of Gleeson: ‘The archbishop, who was not afraid of the media, publicly opposed legislation which he considered detrimental to family life, such as abortion and extended working hours.’⁶²

An interesting postscript to the discussion on the liberalisation of the availability of abortion in South Australia appeared in the *Advertiser* in August 2014. Interviewed by the journalist Rex Jory, Robin Millhouse said: ‘I deeply regret that the medical profession – and the lawyers – interpreted the law too widely. It has become abortion on demand. I did not intend it to be that....We’ve got abortion on demand. I have taken the rap for it. It is something I regret’.⁶³ In the interview Millhouse, who was raised as a ‘devout and traditional Anglican’, revealed that he had become a member of the Roman Catholic Church. This occurred when he was chief justice in Kiribati, a microstate in the central Pacific Ocean. He said he felt he belonged to two clubs, the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church, and that he endeavoured to attend Mass twice a week, once in the Catholic Church and once in the Anglican Church. Gleeson had never hidden his

⁵⁹ *Southern Cross*, 20 October 1983, 1.

⁶⁰ *L’Osservatore Romano*, the daily newspaper of Vatican City State, is classified as the semi-official newspaper of the Holy See.

⁶¹ Reported in the *Southern Cross*, 14 January 1977, 1.

⁶² *Tablet* (London), 25 March 2000, 430.

⁶³ *Advertiser*, 16 August 2014, sa weekend, 14.

annoyance with Millhouse, who was regarded by the community as ‘the architect and major proponent’ of the legislation.⁶⁴

Homosexual Law Reform

On 17 September 1975, the Dunstan Labor Government became the first Australian government to decriminalise male homosexuality. Before this there was the legal inconsistency that adultery, fornication and lesbianism were not considered criminal acts whereas homosexual acts between consenting adult males were. The drowning of the homosexual, Dr George Duncan, in the River Torrens on 10 May 1972 was the trigger, ‘the tipping point’, that led to the decriminalising of homosexuality in the state. Duncan, a lecturer in law at the University of Adelaide, was thrown into the water by a group of men, believed to have been members of the South Australian Police Force, though no convictions were ever achieved. The journalist Stewart Cockburn reported that the murder shocked the South Australian community ‘into an ashamed realisation of the extent to which homosexuals were being threatened and persecuted’.⁶⁵ A few weeks after Duncan’s death, Murray Hill, a member of the Liberal and Country League in the ultra-conservative Upper House, introduced a bill for the decriminalisation of homosexuality. It was passed in a truncated form on 25 October 1972, retaining the illegality of homosexual acts but allowing a defence if the act was done in private by consenting adults over the age of twenty-one.

⁶⁴ *Advertiser* 16 August 2014, 14.

⁶⁵ Dino Hodge, ‘The Okayness of Gayness: Don Dunstan’s record in homosexual law reform’ in Yorick Smaal and Graham Willett, eds, *Out Here: gay and lesbian perspectives VI* (Clayton: Monash University Publishing, 2011), 36. See also Tim Reeves, ‘Dr Duncan Revisited’, *Journal of the Historical Society of South Australia*, no 44 (2016).

An editorial by Fr Robert (Bob) Wilkinson in the *Southern Cross*, shortly after the death of Dr Duncan, spelled out the Catholic Church's attitude: 'Homosexual conduct, sodomy, like adultery, fornication, bestiality, masturbation, incest and every other use of erotic powers other than in normal marriage relationships is an offence against the purpose of God for mankind.'⁶⁶ The editorial questioned why homosexuality between consenting males was the only sexual morality enforced by law; held that the civil rights of homosexual citizens needed greater protection but not at the price of injury to other community standards; asserted that it was wrong to approve homosexual conduct as human or rewarding; and stated that homosexual drives were temptations to be resisted even to the point of heroism. Gleeson would have agreed with the editorial as it was the teaching in the moral theology manuals he, and the author, studied in seminary days.

Peter Duncan was a successful ALP candidate in the March 1973 state election. He viewed homosexual law reform as a civil rights issue and introduced a private member's bill to that effect in September of that year. The bill was narrowly rejected in the Legislative Council. Following the state election in July 1975, Duncan re-introduced the bill which was passed on 17 September.⁶⁷ According to the political scientist, Allan Patience, the bills in 1973 and 1975 received only lukewarm support in Caucus, but the Dunstan Cabinet's support for the measures prevailed and their incorporation into the criminal law statutes 'was a triumph for progressive social reform'.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ *Southern Cross*, 14 July 1972, 4. Wilkinson was appointed editor of the *Southern Cross* on 1 January 1960 and retained this position until 1974. Also known as Bob Wilkinson.

⁶⁷ Dino Hodge, 'The Okayness of Gayness', 37.

⁶⁸ Dion Hodge, 'The Okayness of Gayness', 37.

Duncan, who became a minister in both state and federal governments, gave the opening address at the Homosexual Histories Conference held in Adelaide, on 13-14 November 2015. He mentioned several public figures whom he deemed to have played important roles in the passage of the bill – Sir Robert Helpmann, the journalist Des Colquhoun, and Archbishop James Gleeson. Regarding Gleeson he said:

This is a somewhat strange plaudit from me an avowed atheist however James Gleeson's refusal to issue a pastoral letter opposing the Homosexual Law Reform Bill was an important factor in its passing. He was under great pressure from conservative Catholics to do so. If a pastoral letter of opposition had been issued it would have put the then Attorney General Len King, Deputy Premier Des Corcoran and other Catholics [sic] under great pressure. I remember him saying to me when we met subsequently that 'these poor souls will be under enough pressure come judgement day without subjecting them to the temporal law'.⁶⁹

Duncan was of the opinion that the 'overwhelming majority of the population opposed decriminalisation' of homosexuality. If this was correct, Gleeson may have been encouraged by some to issue a pastoral letter condemning the move but there is no evidence that such was the case.⁷⁰ It probably would appear that Gleeson acted wisely in not writing a pastoral letter or issuing a statement opposing the Homosexual Law Reform Bill. However, his pessimism regarding such persons' fate in the life after death appeared to bypass the primacy of conscience that was Church teaching and was re-affirmed by the Second Vatican Council: ... 'conscience is a man's most secret core, and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths'.⁷¹ It was possible to hold some action to be immoral while recognising only God would know how responsible the person was for committing that action.

⁶⁹ Peter Duncan, 'My Speech to the Homosexual Histories Conference, Adelaide', 13-14 November 2015. Copy in Author's possession.

⁷⁰ Peter Duncan was not a relative of Dr George Duncan.

⁷¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 16.

Another acknowledgement from a politician is germane. Don Dunstan, then premier of South Australia, in 1967 accepted an invitation to speak at the end of year ceremony at Sacred Heart College, Somerton Park. He had received the approval of his cabinet, to provide per capita grants on a basis of need to non-state schools. He rang Archbishop Beovich to advise him that he would announce this decision at the ceremony at Sacred Heart College. Dunstan recalled that Beovich had responded with emotion at the historic breakthrough for his people. He noted the curious fact that he was often invited to attend these celebrations at Catholic schools but never at his own school, St Peter's College, which was in his own electorate, the most heavily endowed school in the state, and the home of the 'children of the Establishment'. He then added:

I must say, that although we have had our occasional differences in public policy, I always admired the goodness and kindness of Archbishop Beovich and his successor, Archbishop Gleeson, who went out of their way to show me real understanding and concern at times of personal tribulation, as I know they have to so many others.⁷²

This was a ringing endorsement of both Beovich and Gleeson from one who entered parliament with a reformist agenda and at times met opposition from members of his own party.

⁷² Don Dunstan, *Felicia: the political memoirs of Don Dunstan* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1981), 151-2.

Gleeson's response was comprehensive. He quoted from the Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World that 'every type of discrimination, whether social or cultural, whether based on sex, race, colour, social condition, language or religion', must be rejected.⁷⁴ But he reaffirmed the teaching of the Catholic Church that homosexual acts were 'objectively, morally wrong' and added that the community may be led to believe that 'homosexual acts are now not only not unlawful but also not immoral'. Such a result, Gleeson claimed, would be damaging to society. The penultimate paragraph of the letter was clear and unambiguous: 'I would be less than honest if I were not to indicate clearly to you that I will not and cannot recognise with approval the desire of homosexuals as groups to have their conduct and life-style accepted as a normal, though alternative, form of sexual expression.'⁷⁵

Given this strong expression of his views, it is surprising that he did not enter the public debate on the proposed legislation. However, it is questionable if his dissenting voice would have been effective. David Hilliard was of the opinion that the support of the Anglican Archbishop Keith Rayner in 1975 for the decriminalization of homosexual behaviour 'probably influenced the outcome of legislation.'⁷⁶ But he viewed this as an exception as the days had gone when churches were 'the sole voice and only conscience' of the community.⁷⁷

⁷³ The Festival of Light was a conservative Christian organisation promoting what it claimed to be true family values.

⁷⁴ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 29.

⁷⁵ Gleeson to Harris, 25 September 1973. Copy in author's possession.

⁷⁶ David Hilliard, *Godliness and Good Order: a history of the Anglican Church in South Australia* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 1986), 148.

⁷⁷ Hilliard, *Godliness and Good Order*, 148.

Apartheid in South Africa

Gleeson spoke against racism as exemplified by the policy of apartheid in South Africa.⁷⁸ What brought this to the immediate attention of Australians was the proposed tour of the South African rugby union and cricket teams to Australia in 1971. In an article in the *Southern Cross*, Gleeson posed the question: 'How Can We Play All- White Teams?'⁷⁹ He quoted the words of the prime minister of South Africa, H F Verwoerd, who in 1963 stated that the government's aim was to keep South Africa white and that meant 'white domination'. The Catholic bishops of South Africa, Gleeson said, clearly understood this policy and they insisted that the basic principle of apartheid was the 'preservation of what is called white civilisation' which is identified with 'white supremacy'. This, they said, must be rejected as it meant that only white persons enjoyed 'full political, social, economic and cultural rights'. The bishops bluntly claimed: 'It is a sin to humiliate one's fellow man.'⁸⁰

⁷⁸ The 'ghastliness of apartheid' is well depicted in Nelson Mandel's autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom* (London: Abacus, 2013). First published by Little, Brown and Co, in 1994, it was published in paperback by Abacus in 1995. Since then Abacus has reprinted the book fifty-four times.

⁷⁹ *Southern Cross*, 11 June 1971, 1.

⁸⁰ *Southern Cross*, 11 June 1971, 1.

Gleeson claimed that to accept visiting all-white teams from South Africa or to send teams to play there was to accept 'white domination' and the consequent denial of the rights of those described by the South African government as Black, Indian, or Coloured. The case of the 'Cape Coloured' cricketer, Basil D'Oliveira, who left South Africa to play cricket in England, showed that Gleeson was not alone in this judgement. A talented cricketer, D'Oliveira was selected in the England team for the 1968-69 tour of South Africa. The government of South Africa, headed by John Vorster, refused to allow him to play in South Africa and the tour was cancelled.

A summary of Gleeson's article appeared in the *Advertiser* and resulted in a mixed reaction.⁸¹ A correspondent referred to the 'emotive statement' of my archbishop and asked that if watching a cricket match can be so wrong, did Doctor Gleeson regard it as acceptable for a pope to conclude an agreement with a monster like Adolf Hitler who almost 'eliminated the Jewish problem'?⁸² Two days later a letter appeared supporting Gleeson's stand but another asked if Archbishop Gleeson chose to visit some country, would he resent opposition to his visit from the citizens because 'Australia had given a shabby deal to her Aborigines'?⁸³ Four days later the criticism was more barbed. One correspondent claimed that to be consistent the archbishop should have protested against the visit of the Moscow Circus otherwise it could be assumed that he approved of Russia's 'rape of Hungary and Czechoslovakia'. Another writer doubted the sincerity of church leaders who criticised the South African government's policy while ignoring the fact that down the centuries churches and religion had been 'ruthless in their policy of discrimination'. The writer then advised the church leaders to put their own houses in

⁸¹ *Advertiser*, 12 June 1971, 3.

⁸² *Advertiser*, 16 June 1971, 2.

⁸³ *Advertiser*, 18 June 1971, 2.

order lest the people ‘regard their outward expressions as sheer hypocrisy’.⁸⁴ Critical letters also appeared in the *Southern Cross*. Mark J Posa, the founding president of the National Civic Council in South Australia, a vocal anti-communist, wrote to the *Southern Cross* expressing his opinion that it was inconsistent to protest against welcoming sporting teams from South Africa whilst accepting sporting and cultural bodies from China and the Soviet Union.⁸⁵ This letter, like some of the others, pointed out the obvious inconsistency of a focus on South Africa while being less concerned with other countries that had poor records regarding the civil rights of their citizens.

The South African rugby union team, the Springboks, toured Australia for six weeks in the winter of 1971. Australian opinion polls revealed strong support for the tour but as it progressed it had to cope with union bans and ‘levels of civil demonstration and violence previously unknown in Australia’.⁸⁶ The Springboks versus South Australia rugby union match was played at Norwood Oval on 30 June 1971. Some members of the clergy, including Catholic priests, were among the anti-Springbok protesters. One Catholic priest asked Gleeson if it would cause embarrassment if he entered the oval during the game to disrupt it and was assured that it would. However Gleeson did not forbid the priest to be part of the protest outside the oval.⁸⁷ This was in harmony with his statement that while ‘rejecting violence and personal contempt’, he supported attempts to prevent Australian teams playing white-supremacy teams from South Africa.⁸⁸ This may have been the first occasion in Adelaide when clergy took part in a political demonstration. They had not done so during the Vietnam War. Gleeson speaking out against discrimination and injustice appears to have encouraged the Catholic clergy to involve themselves in public protests. A letter to the editor of the

⁸⁴ *Advertiser*, 22 June 1971, 2.

⁸⁵ *Southern Cross* 18 June 1971, 11. Note Posa’s obituary in *News Weekly*, 18 August 2012.

⁸⁶ Australia and the issue of apartheid in sport – Fact sheet 255. National Archives of Australia.

⁸⁷ Interview with Fr Denis Edwards at Thebarton, 2 April 2014.

⁸⁸ *Southern Cross*, 11 June 1971, 1.

Southern Cross expressed amazement that forty clergymen could spare the time to protest because a few coloured people failed to gain a place in a football team.⁸⁹ In the writer's opinion they would have been better employed at devotions, instructing the young and those preparing for marriage, helping the poor, and visiting the sick. The proposed cricket tour of Australia by a South African team, planned for the summer of 1971-72, was cancelled. Sir Donald Bradman, chairman of the Australian Cricket Board, stated that there would be no further cricket tours involving South African teams as long as those teams were chosen on racial grounds.

In December 1971, Gleeson, Bishop Thomas Reed and Rev R Kyle Waters featured on the Sunday afternoon radio programme 'Focus' broadcast from Maughan Methodist Church. They were interviewed by the Rev Keith Seaman, superintendent of the Central Methodist Mission.⁹⁰ Gleeson was asked about the negative responses to his statement on apartheid. He staunchly defended the church's duty to speak out against discrimination and injustice; Reed and Waters agreed.⁹¹

Civil and Political Rights for Northern Ireland

Gleeson supported the 'End the Internment' Campaign, a petition against internment without trial in Northern Ireland. In August 1971, the prime minister of Northern Ireland, Brian Faulkner, introduced internment at a time when civil unrest and paramilitary violence were increasing. It was also a pivotal time in the Troubles, the 30-year conflict dating from the civil rights march in Londonderry on 5 October 1968 until the Good Friday Agreement on 10 April 1998.

In October 1974, Doctor J P Kerins, chairman of the local campaign committee, wrote to Gleeson, thanking him for allowing prayers for the people of Northern Ireland

⁸⁹ *Southern Cross*, 16 July 1971, 11.

⁹⁰ Rev Keith Seaman was governor of South Australia in 1977-82

⁹¹ *Southern Cross*, 24 December 1971, 3

after Mass and asking permission to seek signatures on a petition. He pointed out that the appeal was initiated by the literary and political magazine, *Hibernia*, and was sponsored by Amnesty International. He noted further that Fr John Fleming would discuss the petition in his radio programme on station 5AD on Sunday 27 October.⁹² Gleeson wrote on the letter: ‘Bishop Kennedy what do you think of this?’

The archbishop, seemingly after hearing Kennedy’s opinion, replied to Kerins declaring that there was ample evidence that the people of Northern Ireland were deprived of liberty contrary to articles 4 and 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.⁹³ Such people, he said, had the same rights as the Palestinian Liberation Organisation to put their case to the United Nations. Gleeson stated that he and Kennedy had publicly protested about the continuing oppression of the Baltic peoples by the USSR and, on United Nations Human Rights Day, sermons were preached in the archdiocese on the evils of oppression, with particular emphasis on South Africa and the Baltic States.⁹⁴ Permission was given to collect signatures after Mass but not in the church or church porch, and the petition had to make it clear that it did ‘not indicate support for the completely immoral bombing attacks being made by the protagonists on both sides who try to give respectability to the gun and the bomb in place of that form of political and moral seeking of justice which now readily win world sympathy and support’.⁹⁵ In March Kerins thanked Gleeson for the permission to gather signatures for the petition and reported that some priests who had commended the petition from the pulpit subsequently ‘received abusive telephone calls’.⁹⁶ Clearly Gleeson’s support of the End the Internment Campaign reminded many of the long struggle for Irish independence, dated by some from the conquest of Catholic Ireland by

⁹² Kerins to Gleeson, 24 October 1974. Box 240: Campaigns Various 1963-1973, ACAA.

⁹³ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by the General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966.

⁹⁴ Human Rights Day, 10 December each year, commemorated the day in 1948 when the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

⁹⁵ Gleeson to Kerins, 24 December 1974. Box 240, ACAA.

⁹⁶ Kerins to Gleeson, 3 March 1975. Box 240, ACAA.

Oliver Cromwell in 1649-50.⁹⁷ The 1916 armed rebellion against British rule in Ireland (the Easter Rising) during the First World War and the belief that Australian Catholics in large numbers had voted No in the two conscription referenda in 1916 and 1917, re-ignited tension between the Irish and their fellow Australians: some deemed the No vote of Catholics to be a sign of their lack of patriotism and loyalty to the British Empire.⁹⁸ Clearly Gleeson was aware of the sensitivity of the Campaign; hence his restrictions on where the petition could be signed.

United Nations Year to Combat Racism

The United Nations General Assembly declared 1971 'The Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination'. Pope Paul VI gave the title 'Every Man is my Brother' to his World Day of Peace statement for 1971. Gleeson used this heading for his address to the Adelaide Rotary Club at the Hotel Australia in October of that year.⁹⁹ He noted that Australia was already a party to some conventions concerned with the elimination of racial discrimination. These were: the *Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide* (ratified by Australia in 1949); the 1956 *Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery* (ratified by Australia in 1958); *UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education* (accepted by Australia in 1966); *International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination* (ratified by Australia in 1975). Gleeson observed that this final convention was still under 'careful examination' by the

⁹⁷ There was also a rebellion in Ireland in 1798 coming after the Declaration of Independence by the colonies in America in 1776 and the French Revolution in 1789.

⁹⁸ O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community*, 334-40.

⁹⁹ *Southern Cross*, 29 October 1971, 2.

Australian government and suggested that the delay was due to discriminatory legislation in some states.¹⁰⁰

Gleeson then backed up his anti-racism theme by quoting some recognised authorities. He recalled Article 1 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights: ‘All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.’ The Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, held at Uppsala, Sweden, in July 1968, condemned racism as a ‘blatant denial of the Christian faith’. Gleeson also adopted the Assembly’s description of ‘white racism’: ‘the conscious or unconscious belief in the inherent superiority of persons of European Ancestry which entitles white peoples to a position of dominance and privilege’.¹⁰¹

Turning his attention to the question of racism in Australia, he first questioned the attitude of Australians to Aboriginal people. He said words like ‘lazy’, ‘unhygienic’ and ‘shiftless’ were applied to them, seemingly without any awareness that it was through our acts or failure to act that they had been deprived of opportunities for education and social development. Gleeson said words used to describe Displaced Persons who came to Australia following World War II were too shameful to be repeated. He was of the opinion that the attitude of Australian professionals to immigrant professionals was hard to justify on any Christian or humane standards. He was referring to the frequent refusal to recognise the qualifications and expertise of these people and also to the requirement of long periods of additional study before, on the rare occasions, accreditation was granted.

Gleeson summarised the racism he was condemning as follows:

¹⁰⁰ Countries that ‘ratify’ a convention are granted the necessary time-frame to obtain the required approval on the domestic level and to enact any necessary legislation to give domestic effect to the convention.

¹⁰¹ *Southern Cross*, 29 October 1971, 2.

- When Aborigines are denied access to swimming pools, cinemas, hotels and hospital wards because they are Aboriginal.
- When individuals are denied entry to Australia because of the colour of their skin.
- When equal rights and privileges in housing and employment are denied to any section of the community because of their racial origin.
- When Australia takes part in sport with teams chosen on a racial basis
- When people believe that because they have white skin they are superior to a people with a dark skin, and that they are therefore justified in behaving in an arrogant and discriminatory way towards them.¹⁰²

Gleeson told the gathering that he knew his views would not be shared by all in attendance. This awareness showed his courage in proclaiming what he held to be gospel values.

In August 1972, Gleeson sent a telegram to the Liberal prime minister, William McMahon, requesting that Everard Park Station, in the remote north-west of South Australia, be purchased by the Australian government and given to the Aboriginal people. Gleeson was then president of the South Australian Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, the state counterpart of the National Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, constituted by the Australian bishops in 1972.¹⁰³ Rumour had it that Everard Park had been sold to a private buyer. Gleeson held that the Aboriginal people had a 'strong moral right' to the property because it had tribal and religious significance for them.¹⁰⁴ The land in question was known to Aboriginal people as *Mimili* but, when white settlement arrived, a cattle station named Everard Park was established in the area and the neighbouring hills were named the Everard Range. The site was part of the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands (APY Lands). A few days later Gleeson was able to send a letter to McMahon, congratulating him on the purchase of the

¹⁰² Southern Cross, 29 October 1971, 2.

¹⁰³ In June 1969 the ACR National Advisory Committee became the Interim National Catholic Justice and Peace Commission. The South Australian Commission for Justice and Peace held its first meeting on 20 March 1971 in the Catechetical Centre, Wakefield Street, Adelaide.

¹⁰⁴ Southern Cross, 11 August 1972, 1.

property for the Aboriginal people. He declared himself to be ‘one who considers this matter of the rights of Aborigines to be an extremely important one’.¹⁰⁵

Early in 1972 Gleeson celebrated Mass in Our Lady of Victories Church, Glenelg. In his homily he stated that he was ‘amazed’ by the attitude of some Catholics in the archdiocese. Some had reacted to his promoting the rights and dignity of every human being by calling him a communist and other offensive names which he would not mention in the sanctuary. He reminded his hearers that the Second Vatican Council had stated that if anyone in the world is deprived of justice and peace no Christian may be satisfied.¹⁰⁶

Ian Smith’s white minority government in Rhodesia

Patrick O’Farrell was of the opinion that the ‘greatest and most promising changes in episcopal government’ following the Second Vatican Council occurred outside Australia’s two biggest cities. He said Adelaide was a case in point where Gleeson ‘furthered the task of Catholic social criticism in a fashion so forthright and public as to embarrass some of the more establishment-minded of his co-religionists’.¹⁰⁷ Gleeson’s support of Donal Lamont, bishop of Umtali in Rhodesia (later Zimbabwe), seems to be one such case. Lamont was an outspoken critic of Ian Smith’s white minority government and was an object of hatred among most Rhodesian whites. In 1976 he was brought to trial under the Law and Order Maintenance Act, accused of allowing mission workers to give medical treatment to wounded guerrillas and not reporting their whereabouts to the authorities in Salisbury. He was given a ten-year gaol sentence. He never went to gaol but was deported back to Ireland.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ *Southern Cross*, 18 August 1972, 3.

¹⁰⁶ *Southern Cross*, 7 January 1972, 1.

¹⁰⁷ O’Farrell, *Catholic Church and Community*, 419.

¹⁰⁸ Obituary for The Right Reverend Donal Lamont—*Telegraph* 6 September 2003.

<<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1440688/The-Right-Reverend-Donal-Lamont.html>>. Accessed 11 March 2016.

Gleeson asked people to pray for Lamont and to send him telegrams of support.¹⁰⁹ Interviewed on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation programme ‘AM’, by Trevor Watson, Gleeson said he was not involving himself in the politics of another nation but standing up against racism; this was a moral question. He denied he was supporting terrorists, declaring those involved to be motivated by concern for their country and the welfare of its people.¹¹⁰ Then at the annual Monastery Sunday Procession (3 October 1976), he asked the crowd of about 3000 if they would support his intention to send cables to Lamont and Smith. The cables would offer support to Lamont and send a protest to Smith over the sentence handed down to him. The gathering indicated approval by applause.¹¹¹ Gleeson revealed that a few days earlier he had received ‘hate mail’ accusing him of supporting terrorism, violence and murder. It was ironic that when Zimbabwe gained independence under Robert Mugabe in 1980, Lamont was disillusioned by the ‘government-sponsored violence and overt corruption’ in the immediate aftermath of independence.¹¹² He was deeply disturbed when the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission in Zimbabwe felt obliged to expose the genocidal attacks on the people of Matabeleland by government forces in the 1980s.

De-Christianising influences in Australian Society

In 1976 the Australian Catholic bishops, meeting in conference, expressed their ‘grave concern’ at the presence and spread of certain de-Christianising influences in the

¹⁰⁹ *Southern Cross*, 17 September 1976, 3.

¹¹⁰ *Southern Cross*, 24 September 1976, 1.

¹¹¹ *Southern Cross*, 8 October 1976, 1.

¹¹² Obituary for The Right Reverend Donal Lamont – *Telegraph*, 6 September 2003.

Australian society. They claimed that their concern was shared by many in the community, especially parents of young and growing families. Gleeson received a draft copy of the proposed statement early in 1976. He responded in a letter to the bishop of Wollongong, William Murray, expressing appreciation of the effort required to produce the statement, apologising for his late intervention, but expressing some objections to the document.¹¹³

His basic objection was the assumption that ‘influences’ in the community can be discussed in isolation from their causes: these causes being urbanisation, industrialisation and the whole economic structure. In this scenario, Gleeson claimed, society is viewed as a ‘struggle between good influences and bad influences, with no understanding of how these influences arise, or of the objective dilemmas in which people of good will find themselves’.¹¹⁴ He urged that if communism was seen as a threat to society, the ‘un-Christian individualism that permeates every aspect of our society’ should also be mentioned. He added that the Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI to Cardinal Roy of Quebec provided a model of a more sophisticated treatment of both Marxism and Liberalism.¹¹⁵ The final document of the Australian bishops was clearly influenced by Gleeson’s intervention and possibly the criticisms of others.¹¹⁶ Gleeson possessed a broad awareness of the forces shaping society and of the need for Christians to endeavour to influence these forces so that the common good might be achieved.

¹¹³ Gleeson to Murray, 19 March 1976. Box 264, Archbishop Gleeson’s Files, ACAA.

¹¹⁴ Gleeson to Murray, 19 March 1976.

¹¹⁵ Gleeson received written advice from Fr Peter Travers to assist him in his reply. The letter of Paul VI *Octogesima Adveniens*, to Cardinal Roy, the president of the Council for the Laity and of the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace, came on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. < <https://www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/p6oct.htm> >. Accessed 30 March 2016.

¹¹⁶ See Nicholas Kerr, comp, *Australian Catholic Bishop’s Statements since Vatican II* (Sydney: St Paul Publication, 1985), 68-71. Also *Southern Cross*, 21 May 1976, 2; 28 May 1976, 4-5.

The Age of Consent

In December 1971, the Criminal Law and Penal Methods Reform Committee of South Australia was set up with Justice Roma Mitchell as chair, to examine, report on, and make recommendations on all aspects of criminal law. One matter being considered was whether to lower the age of consent, which in South Australia was seventeen years of age. The age of consent was the age at which a person was considered capable of legally informed consent to sexual acts with another person. It was a question on which people were divided. Gleeson was asked by a *Sunday Mail* reporter for a response to the debate. He prepared a written reply and advised that it was to be printed in full or not at all. Gleeson stated that to lower the age of consent in South Australia ‘would not promote more responsibility or better relations between young people’.¹¹⁷ He asserted that it was necessary to distinguish between what was moral and what was legal. On this issue he believed that the law should provide a guideline for the community. He deemed sexual relations between unmarried persons to be ‘against the nature of human love and against the law of God’. He strongly opposed the lowering of the age of consent because the moral standards of a community can assist young people as they grow to maturity. Clearly Gleeson was concerned that young people should not be exploited and that the young should learn to respect others with whom they related.

However, Gleeson appeared to have missed the main thrust of the suggestion that the age of consent should be lowered from seventeen to sixteen. Fr Peter Travers, Director of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau, wrote to Bishop Kennedy providing the view of the social workers at the bureau regarding the proposed change to the law.¹¹⁸ Travers said that the general feeling of the social workers at the bureau was that the age of consent could be lowered without any detriment to the community. In support of this contention, Travers said that unless the girl signed a complaint no action was taken and

¹¹⁷ *Sunday Mail* (Adelaide), 3 August 1975, 35.

¹¹⁸ Travers to Kennedy, 25 July 1975. Copy in author’s possession.

that if a complaint was made the girl was subjected to an ordeal in court. If the offender was found guilty the penalty was often a very light fine. The suspicion was that the number of girls under seventeen who had sexual intercourse was high, and in view of the fact that very few complaints were made, 'We feel this is an instance where the law is so far out of touch with community practice that it serves no useful purpose but, on the contrary, is itself being brought into disrepute.'¹¹⁹ Gleeson referred this letter to the lawyer, Kevin Duggan, for comment.¹²⁰ However, as Gleeson's statement to the *Sunday Mail* appeared on 3 August 1975 without any acknowledgement of the facts provided by Travers, it is clear that the advice, if considered, was not accepted.

The plight of seafarers

Bishop Miles McKeon of Bunbury in Western Australia wrote to Gleeson on 25 October 1974 in response to Gleeson's reaction to the annual report of the Apostleship of the Sea, for the year ending 30 June 1974.¹²¹ The report claimed that, except for the Japanese, most seafarers on ships visiting Australia were from developing countries in Asia. Besides ships of their own flag, they were to be found on 'Flag of Convenience' ships and in very many instances, especially on Greek-owned vessels, they were exploited. McKeon advised that the point raised by Gleeson in his letter was 'extremely complicated' and had been discussed frequently at national and international meetings and that approaches had been made to shipping companies seeking justice for seafarers. McKeon reported that Australian unions had encouraged the seafarers to stand up for their rights but one of the effects was that those men who did so, when returning to their base, were paid off and failed to obtain re-employment. For these men coming from

¹¹⁹ Travers to Kennedy, 25 July 1975. Copy in author's possession.

¹²⁰ Duggan later became a judge on the Supreme Court in South Australia; he retired in 2011.

¹²¹ Bishop Myles McKeon was chairman of the Committee for Missions and president of the National Missionary Council, established in 1971. McKeon's letter is in Box 260: Archbishop Gleeson's Files, AEC, ACAA.

impoverished backgrounds, ‘half a loaf was better than no bread’; it was better to have almost any job, despite poor working conditions, rather than none at all.

It is clear that Gleeson’s concern for justice was far from myopic; it was all-embracing. Significantly, Gleeson noted in the margins of his copy of the Apostleship of the Sea report that George Nader, the Catholic priest heading the Adelaide branch of the Apostleship of the Sea, questioned the report. Nader claimed that many did not lose their employment for claiming their rights and that the reason some vessels were detained as a result of union intervention was because they were un-seaworthy.

‘Pastor’s Path lit by passion for Justice’ was the heading for Gleeson’s obituary by James Murray, the *Australian’s* religious affairs editor and an Anglican priest.¹²² A similar note was sounded by Archbishop Francis Rush, president of the Australian Bishops’ Conference, at the meeting immediately prior to Gleeson’s retirement. Rush said: ‘The thing I shall always remember most about James Gleeson is his great passion for justice.’¹²³

Gleeson ministered in the Catholic Church and contributed to the civic community during a time of ferment and change. The Church, in the spirit of Vatican II, wanting to manifest its ‘solidarity and respectful affection for the whole human family’, sought to enter into dialogue concerning the challenges faced by the women and men the world over.¹²⁴ Therefore Gleeson was involved in combatting injustice in whatever form it took in Australia and elsewhere in the world. The broad spectrum of moral issues that concerned Gleeson transcended the divide of ‘left’ and ‘right’. His courage and commitment was consistent. At times he may have been impulsive. His grasp of the situation may have needed a more nuanced approach, but he showed that:

¹²² *Australian*, 11 April 2000, 14.

¹²³ *Southern Cross*, 30 May 1985, 8.

¹²⁴ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 3.

the 'joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men [and women] of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way', were his concern.¹²⁵

¹²⁵ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 1.

Chapter 8

GLEESON'S CONCERN FOR THE DEVELOPING WORLD AND REFUGEES

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*) was the last document to be dealt with by the Council and was approved by a vote of 2307 to 75.¹ It was the longest of the sixteen council documents, 23 335 words, and unique in being the only major document resulting from a request from the floor of the Council. Here the Church 'resolutely addresses not only the sons of the Church and all who call upon the name of Christ, but the whole of humanity as well, and it longs to set forth the way it understands the presence and function of the Church in the world of today'.²

The Second Vatican Council was the first ecumenical council to produce a decree on the lay apostolate. Apart from the actual Decree on the Apostolate of the Lay People (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*), other documents of the Council that have reference to the laity are the Constitution on the Church, the pronouncements on Ecumenism, Missionary Life, Christian Education and Liturgy, and most of all, the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. The 'laity are made to share in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ; they have therefore, in the Church and in the world, their own assignment in the mission of the whole people of God...it is exercised too when they endeavour to have the Gospel spirit permeate and improve the temporal order'.³ Pope Paul VI stated that the laity are the Church's 'bridge to the modern world'.⁴

¹ The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World was the only Pastoral Constitution in the sixteen documents of the Second Vatican Council.

² *Gaudium et Spes*, par 2.

³ Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, par 2.

⁴ Quoted by Martin H Work, 'Laity', in Abbott ed, *The Documents of Vatican II*, 488.

The Church ‘believes it can contribute much to humanizing the family of man and its history through each of its members and its community as a whole.’⁵ The constitution calls for solidarity with the poor and marginalised (par 43); for every effort to be made to promote peace among the nations (par 77-82); for support for economic and social development in the developing world (par 65-66, 85-90); for the rich nations to use their resources to facilitate this development (par 9); and for human rights to be supported (par 41). The Church, as individuals and as a community, is called on ‘to be a leaven and, as it were, the soul of human society’.⁶ The constitution acknowledged that while the ‘teaching presented is that already accepted in the Church, it will have to be pursued further and amplified because it often deals with matters which are subject to continual development’.⁷ The ultimate result of the document was to widen the horizons of Catholic social teaching and to give a new impulse to its implementation.

⁵ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 40.

⁶ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 40.

⁷ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 91. Note the vast corpus of social teaching from Pope Leo XIII to Pope Paul VI.

Development of Australian Catholic Relief Agencies

The first of these initiatives was the Freedom from Hunger Campaign (FFHC), launched by Binay Ranjan Sen, Director General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (1956-67), on 1 July 1960. Its main purpose was to promote awareness of the plight of people in Third World countries where hunger, disease and poverty were rampant and to highlight the causes of this unacceptable situation, deemed to be the political and trade practices of the First World. In 1961 FFHC was launched in Australia and in January 1962 the Australian Episcopal Conference (AEC) resolved to join the FFHC. It established the Catholic Church Relief Fund (CCRF) to liaise with the FFHC and submit projects to it for funding. Members of the fund were Archbishop Eris O'Brien (Canberra and Goulburn), Bishops Thomas McCabe (Wollongong) and John Thomas Toohey (Maitland). The Australian Council of Churches (ACC) also sought involvement and, together with the AEC, was represented on the National Committee of FFHC. The FFHC allocated £106 207 from its 1963 funds to eight Catholic projects.⁸

⁸ A question from the National President of the Federal Council of Catholic Women concerning the participation of the Church in the Freedom from Hunger Campaign was a catalyst for the Church joining the FFHC.

In March 1964, the AEC changed the name of the Catholic Church Relief Fund to the Episcopal Committee for Catholic Overseas Relief (COR); there was no change of membership. Later in 1964, the bishops set up the Catholic Overseas Relief Executive Committee, a permanent sub-committee of the lay people, under the direction of Mgr George Michael Crennan, to manage the routine business of the Episcopal Committee.⁹ In April 1965, membership of the episcopal committee for COR was expanded to six bishops with Gleeson as chairman, his first official involvement. At its meeting on 17 August 1966, the Bishops' Committee for Social and Charitable Works re-constituted COR as Australian Catholic Relief (ACR). The COR Executive Committee became the National Advisory Committee. In June 1968 Gleeson advised the ACR Committee of further changes. One was the appointment of a full-time National Executive Director. This occurred in September 1968 when William (Bill) Byrne, who had been a full-time employee for the Newman Institute of Christian Studies in the Adelaide archdiocese, became the first lay National Executive Director.¹⁰ The other change was a broadening of the membership of the National Advisory Committee which became effective in June 1969. This committee performed the preliminary work for the establishment of the National Commission for Justice and Peace that was constituted in its own right in 1972 and also assisted in the preparation for and the follow-up to the 1970 Action for World Development conference (AWD) and the subsequent national AWD Study Programme in August 1972.¹¹

⁹ George Michael Crennan was born in Mount Gambier in 1900. He received an OBE in 1967 for his work as Director of the Catholic Immigration Committee. In 1989 he was made an Officer of the Order of Australia for his contribution to migrant welfare. In 1998 he received the Austcare Paul Cullen Award.

¹⁰ William Byrne, in 1967, became the secretary of the new national Catholic Federation of Christian Families and Social Apostolate Organisations and was one of three Adelaide delegates to the Third World Conference of the Lay Apostolate, held in Rome in October 1967.

¹¹ For details of Australian Catholic Relief see David John Shinnick 'New Wine, New Wineskins', *Collected Works*, vol, 11. ACAA.

On 1 July 1996 the name of ACR was changed to *Caritas Australia* which then became part of *Caritas Internationalis* which had been established in 1954 and comprised a network of some 165 Catholic ‘relief aid, development and social service organisations’ in over 200 countries and territories.¹² Gleeson was honoured for his contributions over many years when *Caritas Australia* in 2008 developed the Gleeson Courtyard in his memory at its headquarters in Sydney.

The idea of ‘development’ was not something new in the social doctrine of the Church but the emphasis on it was. Commencing with Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) ‘On the Condition of the Working Man’, the Church ‘began to articulate in a consciously systematic manner, a theology of social justice and all that this implies’.¹³ In the archdiocese of Adelaide, Matthew Beovich in 1948 had established the Newman Institute of Christian Studies (NICS) ‘to equip Catholic men and women with knowledge of industrial and economic problems based on the social teaching of the Catholic Church’.¹⁴ In fact it was ‘a cloak for the education wing of the Movement’ but it was under the control of Beovich and not Santamaria.¹⁵ During the first decade of NICS, 417 people attended classes and received instruction concerning ‘industrial relations, capitalism and socialism, trade unions and working conditions.’¹⁶

¹² Caritas Australia, *Our History*. <http://www.caritas.org.au/about/at-a-glance/history>. Accessed 29 November 2015.

¹³ Richard P McBride, *Catholicism* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Winston Press, 1981), 938. For some further Church teaching regarding social justice see: Pius XI’s *Quadragesimo Anno* ‘Reconstructing the Social Order’ (1931); John XXIII’s *Mater et Magistra* ‘Christianity and Social Progress’ (1961) and *Pacem in Terris* ‘Peace on Earth’ (1963); Paul VI’s *Populorum Progressio* ‘The Progress of Peoples’ (1967). Also the Documents of the Second Vatican Council and the encyclical of Pope Francis *Laudato Si* ‘On care for Our Common Home’ (2015).

¹⁴ *Southern Cross*, 16 April 1948, 7.

¹⁵ Laffin, *Beovich*, 175.

¹⁶ Laffin, *Beovich*, 175.

The author was present at a meeting of the clergy on 12 March 1958 when Beovich announced that the Movement would be reconstructed in the Adelaide archdiocese. Rome had been asked to adjudicate on the dispute between the Australian bishops concerning the functioning of the Movement.¹⁷ In accord with the resulting instructions and following clarification from Cardinal Pietro Fumasoni-Biondi, Prefect of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, in May and July 1957, it was to be an organisation to promote Catholic social and moral teaching and ‘exclude from its program all direct or indirect action on unions or political parties’.¹⁸ In practice this meant that the Newman Institute expanded the work it had been doing during the previous decade. Some of the priests present, who had devoted much time and energy to supporting the Movement, were unhappy with the announcement. A similar move in Sydney saw the emergence of the Paulian Association with much the same purpose.¹⁹

The NICS conducted appeals during Lent in 1963 and 1964 to fund projects aimed at dealing with world hunger. The 1964 project was to assist Bathurst Island fishermen. About the same time, the Paulian Association was promoting similar ideas. The Wagga Wagga diocese conducted a Lenten appeal and the St Columban Mission Society distributed ‘mite boxes’ to fund its missionary work. All these efforts contributed to the launching of the first national Lenten appeal in 1965. At a meeting of the COR Executive Committee on 25 November 1965 the name *Project Compassion* was adopted for future national Lenten appeals.

¹⁷ Laffin, *Matthew Beovich*, 196-199. Duncan, *Crusade or Conspiracy?* Chapter 23. Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy: an obedient life* (Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 2017), 258-59

¹⁸ Laffin, *Matthew Beovich*, 198.

¹⁹ Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy*, 261.

The National Ecumenical Conference

The National Ecumenical Conference, Action for World Development, was held at Wesley College within the University of Sydney on 12-18 February 1970. This was jointly arranged by the Australian Council of Churches and the Catholic Bishops' National Commission for Justice and Peace. Gleeson attended the conference as the Australian bishops' delegate and heard much that would have strengthened his commitment to the needy in the world. Archbishop Angelo Fernandez of Delhi addressed the two hundred delegates from the various churches and states of Australia. He stated that for many non-Christians 'westernism, not to say imperialism and exploitation, are taken as part and parcel of Christianity'.²⁰ He accepted that governments would only do what public opinion supported and said that the 'unconcern' revealed by churches and Christians who tolerated injustice in the world as the greater evil. For this 'unconcern' they had to accept some responsibility for the divisions and hatreds in the world. At a subsequent interview he said that the conference's task was to create a 'tremendous social consciousness and to generate the will to get on with the job'.²¹

Malcolm Adiseshiah, deputy director of United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), also addressed the conference. He said that developed countries could assist the development of the Third World countries by giving preference to goods imported from them.²² He called for a follow-up to the Kennedy Round, the 6th session of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1964-67. On this topic Archbishop Fernandez asserted: 'Not all the aid in the world can compensate for the sin of

²⁰ *Southern Cross*, 20 February 1970, 1.

²¹ *Southern Cross*, 27 February 1970, 4.

²² *Southern Cross*, 20 February 1970, 1. The world population in 1970 was 3.7 billion.

stifling trade.²³ At the end of the conference most of the delegates, having been inspired by the speakers, pledged 1 per cent of their personal income to development programmes.

The conference proved to be a call for action. It strongly urged the formation of a joint secretariat to press for greater cooperation between Australia and its developing neighbours. In response, the AWD National Campaign Committee was formed with Archbishop Gleeson and Bishop David Garnsey, Anglican bishop of Gippsland, as co-chairmen.

Action for World Development Campaign

In August 1972 the AWD Campaign was conducted throughout Australia. This was significant as it was the first Australia-wide ecumenical effort and was sponsored jointly by the Australian Council of Churches and the Catholic Bishops' Justice and Peace Commission.²⁴ Gleeson promoted the National Study Campaign on Radio 5CL's 'Crossways' programme. He asserted that AWD should be an urgent concern for Christians. He acknowledged that some people were of the opinion that this was a political matter and that the Church should not intervene. But Gleeson pointed out that Jesus had sought out the unfortunate and the underprivileged; therefore, his followers should do likewise. The Church had the mission of proclaiming the Gospel, of assuring people of God's love for all, and the consequent requirement that there should be justice in the world. He realised that the Church was not competent to offer concrete solutions but it must proclaim justice on the national and international level and denounce situations where the rights of people were violated. The archbishop stated that in the world those who had adequate food, employment and security were the exception and that most of the poor were in Asia, Africa, and South America. Moreover, 'cold

²³ *Southern Cross*, 20 February 1970, 1.

²⁴ The Church and Life Movement (1966), the most extensive inter-church project launched in Australia to that time, was conducted under the auspices of the Australian Council of Churches.

statistics' revealed that in the developing world twenty-five people had to survive on what was the income of one Australian.²⁵

Second United Nations Development Decade, the 1970s.

On 24 October 1970, the General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The first Development Decade, launched in 1961, had not produced the hoped-for results but it was claimed that this should not stand in the way of development objectives being really ambitious. Each economically advanced country 'should endeavour' by 1972 to provide annually to developing countries financial resource transfers of a 'minimum net amount of 1 per cent of its gross national product at market prices in terms of actual disbursements'. In recognition of the special importance of development assistance, a major part of financial resource transfers should be in the form of official development assistance. Each economically advanced country should 'exert its best efforts' to reach a minimum net amount of 0.7 per cent of its gross national product as development assistance.²⁶ The words 'should endeavour' and 'exert its best efforts' indicated that it was up to each nation to decide their significance. Gleeson and Garnsey viewed them as required targets.

In February 1971, Gleeson and Garnsey expressed alarm at indications by the minister for foreign affairs, William McMahon, that Australian foreign aid might be reduced. A few days later, the prime minister, John Gorton, announced a \$3.8m cut in Australia's foreign aid commitment. The two bishops urged Christians and people of goodwill to call on their members of parliament and the federal government to provide

²⁵ *Southern Cross*, 30 June 1972, 2; 7 July 1972, 2; 14 July 1972, 4.

²⁶ Resolution adopted by the General Assembly 2626 (XXV). International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, par. 42-43. See <<http://www.un-documents.net/a25r2626.htm>>. Accessed 7 June 2016.

adequate provisions for under-privileged persons in Australia and overseas.²⁷ Speaking at the opening of a group of units for retired people, built by Southern Cross Homes, a project of the Knights of the Southern Cross, Gleeson admitted that Australia was in a period of inflation but: 'It doesn't seem to come home to us that we must look at luxuries first.' He then added 'The danger is that the luxuries will go untouched and that we'll hit the essentials.'²⁸

The Indo-Pakistan war in December 1971 lasted only thirteen days but caused considerable loss of life and many refugees and led to the emergence of East Pakistan as an independent state, Bangladesh. It was preceded by all-out civil war in East Pakistan which caused millions, mainly Hindus, to flee to India. Gleeson and Garnsey called on the federal government to increase aid by a million dollars a month while the refugee crisis continued. They spoke of the tragic plight of the ten million East Pakistan refugees in India and of the threat of famine among the fifty million inhabitants of East Pakistan.²⁹

In June 1971 Gleeson had written to Prime Minister McMahon asserting that the government's response to the needs of the East Pakistan refugees in India was 'most disappointing'. However, he delayed sending his letter until the government's decision on further aid had been made public. The government added \$500 000 to its original grant but Gleeson had hoped for more. He had also expected that donations made by private individuals and organisations, for the support of these refugees, would be deemed tax-deductible items but that had not happened. Gleeson was convinced that this was a worldwide appeal, for a specific refugee situation, and so fulfilled the required conditions for a tax concession.³⁰

²⁷ *Southern Cross*, 19 February 1971, 1 and 3.

²⁸ *Southern Cross*, 19 February 1971, 3.

²⁹ *Southern Cross*, 10 December 1971, 1 and 11.

³⁰ *Southern Cross*, 11 June 1971, 2.

McMahon, in his response, stated that the Australian government's contribution to the needs of the refugees was reasonable. He pointed out that normally tax deductibility was restricted to organisations or institutions carrying out work in Australia, which in this context, included the Territory of Papua and New Guinea. He made the further point that granting tax concessions for gifts by private citizens and non-government organisations would limit the government's ability to provide direct aid.³¹ McMahon's reasoning appeared to be that tax concessions limited the government's receipts and so reduced the funds available for overseas aid.

In August 1971 Gleeson and Garnsey wrote a letter that was critical of the federal government's allocation of \$186 million for development assistance. It appeared in both the *Adelaide Advertiser* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The bishops' letter asserted that if Australia was to reach its goal of giving 0.7 per cent of its gross national product to development aid by 1975, an annual increase of between \$30m and \$40m would be required. This had not been achieved in the 1971-72 federal budget and consequently the external aid provision in the budget should be reviewed.³²

Gleeson, as chairman of ACR, presented its annual report for 1974. The report included some critical observations, suggestions for the future, and challenges. It referred to an ecumenical conference in Tokyo in 1970 at which church leaders from Asian countries spoke of Australia as an 'underdeveloped country' and recalled the claim of Archbishop Fernandez of Delhi, who during his visit to Australia in 1970, had spoken of the 'poverty of affluence' that afflicted developed nations. These statements highlighted the fact that development did not only involve material matters but also the cultural and spiritual components of society. The report deemed that developed nations were deficient in these areas and consequently 'Paternalistic attitudes must be set aside

³¹ *Southern Cross*, 13 August 1971, 2.

³² *Advertiser*, 25 August 1971, 2; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23 August 1971, 6.

in our dealings with people from nations whose history and cultures precede Australia's by centuries.'³³

The report indicated that ACR had learned to change 'from working *for* people, through the stage of working *with* them to the present realisation that change must come *from* the people themselves and by their own efforts'.³⁴ The shift in emphases relating to assisting people in the developing world showed a growth in understanding of developmental aid. ACR deemed the 'greatest task in the second ten years of Australian Catholic Relief's activity will be to build up its education programme within Australia on the development issue'.³⁵ This was to be achieved especially with the promotion accompanying the annual Lenten appeal, Project Compassion.

In April 1976 Gleeson was a member of a delegation to Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and the foreign affairs minister, Andrew Peacock, to discuss overseas aid. The approach followed a telegram to the prime minister on 6 February, signed by the heads of ten churches and three officers of the Australian Council of Churches.³⁶ The delegation expressed concern that the Australian Government, in its budget for 1975-76, had cut or deferred \$21m from the overseas aid programme. The delegates urged that no such cuts to overseas aid be included in the budget for 1976-77 and that Australia should aim to achieve the United Nations target for developed nations – giving 0.7 per cent of gross national product in development aid. The preceding telegram had stated that inflation caused discomfort in Australia but in the developing countries it cost lives and also that

³³ *Australian Catholic Relief Annual Report 1974*, 4. Box 312, ACAA.

³⁴ *Australian Catholic Relief Report*, 3.

³⁵ *Australian Catholic Relief Report*, 5.

³⁶ *Southern Cross*. 15 April 1976, 3. The signatories represented the following churches: Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian, Armenian Apostolic, Greek Orthodox, Salvation Army, Congregational, Methodist, Quaker, and Churches of Christ. The president and general secretary of the Australian Council of Churches signed as did the secretary of the Division of World Christian Action of the Australian Council of Churches.

the poor of the world should not have to suffer in order to solve Australia's financial problems.³⁷

The worldwide economic environment at this time sheds light on both the telegram and the subsequent approach to the Australian government. On 15 August 1971, President Richard Nixon had declared the abandonment of the 'gold standard' in favour of a 'floating currency system'.³⁸ Some of the unforeseen effects were a rise in oil prices and worldwide inflation. Then in 1973 came the Yom Kippur War between Israel and the Arab states. Some Arab members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) imposed an oil embargo against the United States and its allies in retaliation for the United States decision to re-supply the Israeli military. This led to a shortage of petroleum products and a steep rise in their cost. For Gleeson, and those involved in this approach to the government, the world economic situation did not justify reduction of overseas development aid.

Austcare Humanity Week

Gleeson spoke at the launch in Adelaide Town Hall of Austcare Humanity Week in June 1977. Austcare (Australians Care for Refugees) was established in 1967 as a national association dedicated to promoting the rights of refugees and aimed to raise awareness in the Australian community and government of the growing number of displaced people in the world. Gleeson reminded those present that there were more refugees in the world then than in the late 1940s. These people, he said, were fleeing from tyrannical governments of the extreme left or the extreme right; from civil war and oppression; and from natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes and droughts. The immediate need was for food, medicine, clothing, and shelter, but as soon as possible the focus must change to development aid. By supporting the present appeal, donors

³⁷ *Southern Cross*, 15 April 1976, 3.

³⁸ The 'Gold Standard' was set at the Bretton Woods Conference in 1944.

would be able to have their money channelled through the various specialised agencies which made up Austcare. Gleeson called for special concern for those close to Australia: people of Indo-China (Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), people from East Timor, and also for victims of war and unrest in the Middle East, Africa and South America.

Two countries to Australia's north were of particular concern at this time. Indonesia, on 7 December 1975, had invaded East Timor, a Portuguese colony, on the spurious grounds that it opposed colonialism. The result was a violent quarter-century occupation and many refugees. Australians remembered the assistance provided for Australian troops by the people of Timor during the Second World War and were sympathetic to their plight. The Vietnam War, also known as the Second Indochina War, began in December 1956 and ended with the fall of Saigon on 30 April 1975. The victory of the communist north caused many to flee their land and seek asylum in neighbouring countries. Many of the first wave, known as the 'boat people', arrived in Australia and were granted asylum. Later more people arrived from Vietnam and were deemed to be United Nations-approved refugees.

In his address in Adelaide Town Hall, Gleeson also directed attention to the 'hundreds of thousands' within Australia who were in need as a result of unemployment, sickness or personal misfortune. He regretted that Australia had failed to give justice to Indigenous Australians and that Australia had not fulfilled its obligations with regard to aid for, and trade with, developing countries. By supporting Austcare Humanity Week, Gleeson declared, we manifest our belief that 'all people of every color and nation are one family that they are our brothers and sisters and have the same dignity that we enjoy as human beings'.³⁹ Did Gleeson cast too wide a net in this

³⁹ *Southern Cross*, 10 June 1977, 1.

address? If the task presented was too daunting there was a danger that the hearers would become weighed down with ‘compassion fatigue’.

Gleeson and the bishops of Oceania

Vatican II’s Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (*Christus Dominus*) taught:

Bishops, as legitimate successors of the apostles and members of the episcopal college, should appreciate that they are closely united to each other and should be solicitous for all the churches. By divine institution and virtue of their apostolic office, all of them jointly are responsible for the Church.⁴⁰

As a coadjutor archbishop Gleeson, in harmony with this directive, had contributed to the commencement of the quadrennial meetings involving bishops from New Guinea, New Zealand, the Pacific, and Australia. These meetings were to be held in developing countries with the aim of assisting their development. The recommendation to establish these meetings came from a subcommittee made up of Cardinal McKeefry (Wellington), Archbishop Gleeson, Bishops Rodgers (Tonga), Delargey (Auckland), Klein (Bereina, Papua), Guichet (Tarawa), A R E Thomas (Bathurst), and Ashby (Christchurch).⁴¹ The first meeting was held in December 1970 when Pope Paul VI visited Sydney: all the bishops were able to ‘seek his guidance and help’.⁴² Gleeson expressed his opinion: ‘We must develop and share more responsibility on a regional basis.’⁴³

In May 1976, a meeting of the bishops of Oceania was held in Sydney. Gleeson learned from the Catholic bishop of Tonga and Niue, Patelisio Finau, that Australia and New Zealand were debarring many would-be migrants from the Pacific Islands, using the dubious reason that the governments did not want to be accused of offering them

⁴⁰ Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, par 6.

⁴¹ *Southern Cross*, 4 December 1970, 5.

⁴² *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

⁴³ *Southern Cross*, 27 May 1982, 6.

only low-status jobs. This in the view of the bishop was to neglect the dignity of all work. He argued that the governments had shifted from a ‘color bar’ to a ‘job bar’, requiring certain standards of education and skills. Bishop Finau recalled that migrants from Europe to Australia had often accepted menial jobs as they saw them as a step, enabling them to build a better future for their children. He recognised that poverty in the Pacific Islands was not at the same starvation level as in parts of South-East Asia but it was still a ‘very real problem’. He said that a labourer in Tonga earned \$1.50 each day if he could obtain a job but most were unemployed. The bishop argued that as Australia and New Zealand were well-developed countries, they should be able to make concessions to those from the Pacific Islands seeking to enter these countries.⁴⁴

Gleeson and Finau shared the view that ‘political policies and actions touch on morality and human rights and the dignity of people as individuals’. Both of them believed they had a right to speak out on these matters, and both were labelled communists.⁴⁵ Gleeson had consistently argued that First World nations had a responsibility to assist nations of the Third World. He had constantly called on Australia to provide developmental aid to these nations, and he would have agreed with Finau’s assertion that Australia and New Zealand should show greater flexibility in dealing with would-be migrants from the Pacific Islands.

Gleeson and the Asian Bishops

Gleeson, ever mindful of Vatican II’s call for bishops to ‘be solicitous for all the churches’, had a particular interest in Asia, the largest continent, accounting for a third of world’s land surface and well over half its population. Archbishop Faulkner’s

⁴⁴ *Southern Cross*, 21 May 1976, 1. See also *Independent* obituary of Finau. <<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-bishop-patelesio-finau-1470113.html>>Accesse 4 April 2016. In 1978-93, Patelisio Finau was president of the Episcopal Conference of the Pacific (CEPAC).

⁴⁵ *Independent*, obituary of Finau.

homily at Gleeson's funeral Mass recalled Gleeson's involvement with the Asian bishops and his support of their ministry:

He [Gleeson] had a great interest in Asia and attended meetings of the Bishops' Institute of Social Action and was involved in many development projects in Asia. Over the years I have met Asian bishops. One of their first questions was 'How is Archbishop Gleeson?' They remembered him with affection, not only for his work on social justice but for the fact that at one meeting, he had organised them all into the kitchen to wash and dry the dishes – so the Sisters could have some time off!'⁴⁶

The first-ever meeting of Asian bishops, representing all the episcopal conferences, assembled in Manila, the Philippines, at the time of Pope Paul VI's visit to Asia, in November-December 1970. This Asian Bishops' Meeting (ABM) passed a resolution urging and supporting a permanent structure for the Bishops' Conferences of Asia. After due process, Pope Paul approved the statutes of the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) on 16 November 1972.⁴⁷ This body, in 1974, established the Bishops' Institute for Social Action where the bishops 'resolved, first of all, to be more truly "The Church of the Poor"'.⁴⁸ Gleeson attended some of these meetings. James Murray, the *Australian's* religious affairs editor, observed of Gleeson: 'Asian bishops were attracted to him for his abiding interest in them'.⁴⁹

Pontifical Council, Cor Unum

As noted in Chapter 1, Gleeson told an inspector to his primary school, 'I want to be a bishop of the world'. His youthful ambition was in a sense realised when in 1971 Gleeson was called on to contribute to the Church's worldwide efforts to reach the needy and marginalised. Pope Paul VI, in his Pontifical Letter *Amoris Officio*, dated 15 July 1971, established the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*. Its purpose was to promote

⁴⁶ Faulkner's homily at Gleeson's funeral Mass. Series 21, Box 9, ID 26. ACAA.

⁴⁷ FABC Paper 131 <<http://www.fabc.org/fabc%20papers/FABC%20Paper%20131.pdf>>. Accessed 2 December 2015. 2. See also FABC Paper. 139. <<http://www.fabc.org/fabc%20papers/FABC%20Papers%20139.pdf>>. Accessed 2 December 2015.

⁴⁸ 'Becoming the Church of the Poor and the Marginalised in Asia' 1.

<http://www.fabc.org/offices/ohd/pdf/BISA-VIII%20Message.pdf>. Accessed 2 December 2015.

⁴⁹ *Australian*, 11 April 2000, 14.

human and Christian development, not by raising funds but by providing a forum for dialogue and information. Paul VI appointed Gleeson a foundation member in 1971 and re-appointed by him for a second five-year term in 1977.⁵⁰ Gleeson described the work of the Council as having given ‘a new strength and harmony to all the Church’s attempts to make the loving hands and face of Christ present to those who are suffering’.⁵¹ As a member, Gleeson had to attend an annual meeting in Rome and keep abreast of areas of need in the world, especially in Australia’s vicinity. So prepared, he was able to be a contributor to the discernment of how the many Church agencies could best contribute to the welfare of developing nations. These appointments made Gleeson an influential international figure.

Lasting impact?

What continuing effect on Australian government policy has resulted from the energetic promotion of overseas aid? Australia has never reached the United Nations call for developed nations to give 0.7 per cent of gross national product to development aid: in 2016 an all-time low was reached when the budget reduced development aid to 0.22 per cent. Archbishop Fernandez’s view that governments will do whatever public opinion supports indicates the need to positively influence social consciousness. Some are of the opinion that the social justice energies in the Catholic Church have waned in recent years and claim that in Australia there is a lack of episcopal leadership in this regard. They recall, for example, that few Australian bishops took a strong stand against the invasion of Iraq in 2003, despite the strong opposition expressed by Pope John Paul II and many overseas bishops’ conferences.⁵² Such a criticism could not have been made of Gleeson. During his time as archbishop he received ‘hate mail’, was accused of being

⁵⁰ *Southern Cross*, 31 December 1971, 1; 15 April 1977, 1.

⁵¹ *Southern Cross*, 15 April 1977, 1.

⁵² Bruce Duncan and Sandie Cornish, ‘The Council’s Call to Renewed Social Engagement’, Neil Omerod et al, *Vatican II: reception and implementation in the Australian Church*, 114- 5.

a communist and deemed to be involving himself in matters that properly belonged to the government not the Church.⁵³ In the Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, Vatican II judged that,

...it would be in the highest degree helpful if in all parts of the world the bishops of each country or region would meet regularly, so that by sharing their wisdom and experience and exchanging views they may jointly formulate a program for the common good of the Church.⁵⁴

In the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, the Council summoned the Church to be fully involved in the 'earthly city' and noted that 'mankind substitutes a dynamic and more evolutionary concept of nature for the static one, and the result is an immense series of new problems calling for a new endeavour of analysis and synthesis'.⁵⁵ Gleeson exercised his ministry in harmony with these calls. He worked to raise awareness among the laity, the Church's 'bridge to the modern world'. Their faith must not be something theoretical: it must be a practical religion of deeds, of love of neighbour. His membership of *Cor Unum* made possible a global contribution to the thrust for development and a more just world.

⁵³ See Chapter 7, 'Gleeson's Involvement in Public Issues'.

⁵⁴ Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (*Christus Dominus*), par 37.

⁵⁵ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 5.

Chapter 9

GLEESON'S LEADERSHIP

On Saturday, 1 May 1971, James Gleeson succeeded Matthew Beovich as the archbishop of Adelaide and became responsible for the leadership of a large and complex archdiocese. This involved many different spheres of church life including liturgical reform, financial administration and the pastoral care of priests. An archbishop was also expected to represent the Church's viewpoint on public issues. This chapter examines Gleeson's role in directing and managing the affairs of his archdiocese.

Gleeson continued to live in Archbishop's House, West Terrace, where he had resided since becoming a bishop in 1957. His predecessor, Matthew Beovich, had initially lived at this address but as it was the residence of the priests attached to the cathedral, it was a busy centre with much coming and going. In 1943, Mary and John Fennescey, generous supporters of the archdiocese, purchased a gracious two-story house in the prestigious suburb of Medindie, to provide a separate residence for the archbishop. Beovich moved into the new dwelling in September 1943 and named it 'Ennis' after his maternal grandparents' home town in Ireland.¹ He continued to reside there until his death in 1981.

¹ Josephine Laffin, 'Matthew Beovich Archbishop of Adelaide', PhD thesis, University of Adelaide, 2006, 206-07.

The day before he took office Gleeson was interviewed by Nicholas Kerr for the *Southern Cross* and was asked to outline his normal daily programme. Gleeson said he rose between 6.00am and 6.15am and tried to spend an hour in prayer in addition to celebrating Mass. At breakfast he read the daily paper before moving to the Church Office to deal with correspondence and interviews.² He admitted that his desk was very untidy, but he tried to respond promptly to all correspondence. However, sometimes he had to consult others so as to be able to respond adequately to the questions or problems in some items of correspondence: 'If I didn't go in for consultation I could get it done much faster.' Gleeson aimed to keep the afternoon free for meetings and visits and tried to be in bed each night by 10.45pm. Gleeson modestly asserted: 'I don't think I work harder than most priests or my brothers who are married and have family responsibilities.'³ At the time of his retirement in 1985, Gleeson was again interviewed by Kerr and said of the modern requirement for consultation, 'It's ten times as hard for the bishop. But it's much richer for the life of the Church.' He compared the 'making' of decisions to ensuring that the correct ingredients were in the mix for a cake and the 'taking' of decisions to turning on the oven for the cooking.⁴

²The Church Office at the time was attached to the Archbishop's House, West Terrace, where Gleeson resided.

³*Southern Cross*, 30 April 1971, 3.

⁴*Southern Cross*, 16 May 1985, 8.

Some responsibilities demanded that this routine be interrupted. When Gleeson was appointed assistant bishop to Beovich in 1957 he was delegated to perform the visitation of parishes. Canon Law required the bishop or his delegate to visit each parish in the diocese every three years. In the case of city parishes this necessitated absence from the office for the best part of a day; a visit to a country parish could involve a weekend. As there were seventy-two parishes in the archdiocese, he aimed to visit twenty-four each year. In 1972 he was about to complete the fifth round. Gleeson viewed 'pastoral contact with priests and people through pastoral visitation' as his most rewarding episcopal duty.⁵ Administering the sacrament of confirmation also called for programme adjustments. About 80 confirmation ceremonies were celebrated each year involving some 4000 candidates. Gleeson concluded the interview by expressing his fondest hopes for the Church in words taken from Pope Paul VI's recent Palm Sunday homily:

To pass from a routine and passive Christianity to a Christianity that is conscious and active; to pass from a timid and inept Christianity to a Christianity that is courageous and militant; from an individual and private Christianity to a Christianity of community and fellowship; from an indifferent Christianity that is insensitive to the needs of others and our social duties to a Christianity that is fraternal and is pledged to the favour of those who are weakest and those who are in the most need.⁶

⁵ *Southern Cross*, 30 April 1971, 3.

⁶ *Southern Cross*, 30 April 1971, 4.

The *Southern Cross* regularly listed Gleeson's official appointments for the ensuing weeks. These provide further information on Gleeson's daily commitments. A typical list was in the *Southern Cross* on Friday 23 April 1976:

Friday 23 April: 7.30pm, Mass and Confirmation in the Rostrevor College Chapel.

Saturday 24 April: 5.30pm, Mass to mark golden jubilee of Sr Mary Alphonsa, superior of the Sisters of the Resurrection at St Stanislaus' Convent, Royal Park.

Monday 26 April: 8.15am, Annual Anzac Day Mass in the cathedral.

Tuesday 27 April: 6.00pm, Meeting of Conference of Major Religious Superiors and Mass at Kensington.

Wednesday 28 April: 9.30am, Meeting of Bishops' Senate of Priests, West Terrace. 7.30pm, Mass and Confirmation for St Paul's College in Tea Tree Gully parish church.

Thursday 29 April: 11.00am, Visitation and evening parish function at Norwood.

Friday 30 April: 9.00am Meeting of heads of diocesan offices at West Terrace. 2.30 pm Blessing St Brigid's school extensions at Gawler.

Sunday 2 May: 10am, Mass for the silver jubilee of the Immaculate Heart of Mary church at Brompton and morning tea. 3.00pm, Marian Procession at Saint Francis Xavier's Seminary.

Tuesday 4 May: 11.00am, Visitation and evening parish function, Albert Park.

Wednesday 5 May: 4.00pm, Meeting of Sites Development Committee, West Terrace. 7.45pm, Meeting of agenda committee of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, West Terrace.

Thursday 6 May: 11.00am, Meeting of the South Australian Commission of Catholic Schools, Nurses Memorial Centre.⁷

The list revealed a wide spectrum of interests and also a disregard for regular meal times. Perhaps it also manifests an unbalanced approach to daily living.

Once at the helm, Gleeson quickly indicated that he would be more consultative and outgoing than his reserved predecessor. Previous bishops chose a vicar-general without consultation. This was, and still is, the norm.⁸ Shortly after being installed as

⁷ *Southern Cross*, 23 April 1976, 2. If 25 April occurs on a Sunday, the public holiday is observed on Monday 26 April in South Australia, New South Wales, the Northern Territory, and Queensland.

⁸ The 1983 *Code of Canon Law* states: 'In each diocese the diocesan Bishop is to appoint a Vicar General to assist him in the governance of the whole diocese.' Canon 475 § 1.

archbishop, Gleeson invited the priests in the archdiocese to submit the names of three priests, over the age of thirty, deemed to be suitable for the office of vicar-general. He advised that he would select the vicar-general from among the three priests who gained the most votes.⁹ The voting was for a long list and then for a subsequent short list. At a meeting of the Senate of Priests in May, Gleeson announced that he had appointed Thomas Horgan, the candidate who gained most votes, as vicar-general for a term of two years.¹⁰ Later, when he resolved to seek an assistant bishop, Gleeson asked the priests to submit the names of three priests they considered suitable to receive episcopal ordination. He was unimpressed when he discovered that some priests had been canvassing for votes during this process.¹¹ In 1996 Gleeson was interviewed as part of an oral history project of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools. He said that as a bishop and archbishop, he had always favoured bodies such as councils or commissions being established on a representative basis. This was the case with regard to school boards, the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the different commissions in the archdiocese.¹²

In May, the *Southern Cross* reported that Gleeson had invited the diocesan education staff to a meal at the archbishop's official residence, 'Ennis'. The two newly appointed co-ordinators, John McDonald (secondary education) and William Clohessy (primary education) and their wives were among those present.¹³ Mindful of the expansion in personnel in the education office that came with state aid to independent schools, it is noteworthy that at this time there were only six on the staff. Six months later Beovich, the retired archbishop, noted in his diary that he had concelebrated Mass

⁹ *Southern Cross*, 7 May 1971, 1.

¹⁰ *Southern Cross*, 28 May 1971, 1.

¹¹ The author was present when Gleeson made this statement.

¹² South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools, Oral History Project. David Shinnick interviews Archbishop Gleeson at Medindie 22 October 1996, 19. Transcript, page 19, Adelaide Catholic Education Office Archives.

¹³ *Southern Cross*, 28 May 1971, 4.

with Gleeson and nine priests engaged in special works in the archdiocese. The congregation of about sixty comprised those employed by the archdiocese and their husbands or wives. Following the Mass all shared in a buffet meal in the grounds. Beovich noted in his diary: ‘This good initiative was Archbishop Gleeson’s idea.’¹⁴

Clearly there was no difficulty resulting from the retired archbishop remaining very much a visible presence. On 31 October 1970, Pope Paul VI decreed that ‘diocesan bishops of the Latin rite who resign were no longer transferred to a titular church, but instead continue to be identified by the name of the see they have resigned’.¹⁵ Beovich was one of the first to benefit from this new designation and on retirement became the ‘former or emeritus archbishop of Adelaide’. He deemed it a ‘capital idea’.¹⁶ Previously, retired bishops were assigned to one of about 1860 titular sees, dioceses mostly in North Africa and the Middle East that no longer existed. A document of the Vatican’s Congregation for Bishops, *The Bishop Emeritus*, originally published in Italian in 2008 (in English 2009), provided some reflections on this change. It said that the bishop emeritus retained a ‘certain bond of spiritual affection’ for the diocese he had ruled; the bishop emeritus and his successor should ‘live in mutual fraternity’ and ‘cultivate a spirituality of communion’; their fraternal relationship...will be edifying to the people of God and particularly to the diocesan presbyterate’.¹⁷ The document ended with the prayer of St Martin of Tours: ‘Lord, if your people still need me, I do not refuse the task: your will be done’. Beovich and Gleeson lived by the ideals outlined in *The Bishop Emeritus*. The fact that the Vatican’s Congregation for Bishops, thirty-eight years after the proclamation of the new position of ‘emeritus bishop’, issued this document, strongly suggests that its ideals were not being universally observed.

¹⁴ Beovich personal diaries, 3 November 1971.

¹⁵ *America: The National Catholic Review*, 22 March 2010, 17. See *Code of Canon Law* (1983), Canon 402.

¹⁶ Beovich personal diaries, 13 November 1970.

¹⁷ *America* 16-17.

In his diary, Beovich recorded his presence at a dinner on 3 May 1972 at Alden Manor, in the suburb of Glenelg, to honour Gleeson; in October he ‘went with Arch. Gleeson to the Monastery procession’; in November he gave out the prizes in the Town Hall at the speech night for Christian Brothers’ College. At the end of 1972, the first full year since his retirement, he noted that he had not been idle. He had attended sixty-one functions, which included a number of funerals, and had delivered twenty-five prepared speeches, mostly sermons.¹⁸ However, Beovich did not necessarily approve of every policy or decision that Gleeson made. When Gleeson was working towards the building of a large office block on church land on the western side of the cathedral, he advised Beovich of his plans in June 1973. Beovich recorded the event in his diary: ‘Arch. Gleeson called. Told me of the Cathedral land & bldg proposals. Following my “retirement” policy of non-intervention, I made no comment on the matter’.¹⁹ The harmony between Gleeson and the Emeritus Archbishop of Adelaide revealed their mutual respect and affection. It was also a relationship which impressed the Catholic community.

Liturgical Reform – The Council reaches into the heart of the parish community.

Gleeson continued the task of implementing the vision of Vatican II. He moved cautiously but as quickly as was prudent. He was especially committed to promoting changes that allowed greater involvement of lay people in the liturgy, ‘the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed...the fount from which all her power flows’.²⁰ The need for prudence was learned from the unrest that accompanied the gradual introduction of Mass in the vernacular from 1964, culminating in the new rite for the Mass on the first Sunday of Lent (15 February 1970).²¹ Special regional courses

¹⁸ Beovich personal diaries, 31 December 1972.

¹⁹ Beovich personal diaries, 2 June 1973.

²⁰ The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*), par 10.

²¹ *Southern Cross*, 16 January 1970, 1.

had been conducted to prepare lectors, commentators and cantors for the new rite. The earlier changes mainly involved the introduction of the vernacular into the existing structure of the Mass; the new rite involved structural modification. Some Catholics were very critical of the changes. Joe M Raggio from Brahma Lodge, in a letter to the *Southern Cross*, declared that he was ‘fed up with the chopping and changing that has been going on with the liturgy, especially in the Mass’. He claimed that the New Mass ‘smacks of the Church of England’, and he expressed his disdain for the new penitential rite: ‘to blazes with the “modern” act of penance’.²² The following week ‘Rebel’ expressed support for Raggio’s sentiments and opined, ‘For me the Mass has lost its dignity, meaning and holiness’²³ Cecilia Mary Brown stated: ‘The English Mass is the worst thing that has happened to the Church in Australia’, a sentiment shared by ‘Veritatem’ a month later.²⁴ A letter of support came from Charles Herzenak: ‘I think Mass in the vernacular is the best thing that has happened in Australia or any other country’ but weakened his case by adding that when attending Mass in Latin in a foreign country ‘one feels more or less at home’.²⁵ Some dioceses had commenced the new rite of the Mass in Advent 1969. Adelaide allowed more time to prepare but did not avoid the negative reaction from many of the faithful. The author recalled the unrest caused by the new rite of the Mass and learned just how difficult it was for people to accept the apparent dismantling of what had been the format for the Church’s central act of worship during the previous four centuries.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites, on 25 May 1967, issued the Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery (*Eucharisticum Mysterium*) which allowed for the Sunday Mass obligation to be satisfied by attendance at Mass the previous evening and

²² *Southern Cross*, 23 May 1969, 13.

²³ *Southern Cross*, 30 May 1969, 11.

²⁴ *Southern Cross*, 19 September 1969, 13; 24 October 1969, 11.

²⁵ *Southern Cross*, 3 October 1969, 13.

encouraged the reception of communion under both kinds. In a pastoral letter (15 August 1972) Gleeson encouraged the reception of communion under both kinds whenever possible.²⁶ He also announced that from Saturday, 4 August 1973, the Sunday Mass obligation could be satisfied by those attending Mass the previous evening, if the Mass was celebrated at or after 6pm. The Senate of Priests had recommended that this commence in February 1973 but the Diocesan Pastoral Council, by a majority of one vote, recommended the implementation be deferred mainly to allow time to determine if priests and parishioners wanted to take advantage of this privilege. Here we have Gleeson abiding by the advice of the DPC.²⁷

The Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship issued an 'Instruction on Facilitating Sacramental Eucharistic Communion in Particular Circumstances (*Immensae Caritatis*), on 25 January 1973. The instruction empowered local bishops to choose extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist as needed in the following order: 'lector, student of a major seminary, male religious, woman religious, catechist, Catholic man or woman'.²⁸ In July 1973, the *Southern Cross* published a letter from Gleeson empowering religious women and men to be extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist. The religious were free to accept or reject this role.²⁹ Gleeson prudently deferred delegating lay people to this ministry, preferring a gradual change from the tradition that only the priest could distribute communion. Lay ministers of the Eucharist were approved in the archdiocese in 1976.

The extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist were to approach the altar after the *Agnus Dei* prayer was completed and received the following blessing: 'May the Lord now bless + you to minister the Sacred Body (Blood) of Christ to your brethren

²⁶ *Southern Cross*, 1 September 1972, 1.

²⁷ *Southern Cross*, 29 June 1973, 1.

²⁸ *Immensae Caritatis*, par 4.

²⁹ *Southern Cross*, 6 July 1973, 3.

(sisters/brothers)’. There were some who queried why there was a special blessing for ministers of the Eucharist but not for the ministers of the Word since: ‘He [Christ] is present...in his Word, for it is he who speaks when the Scriptures are read in the Church.’³⁰ Possibly this resulted from the Church, at the time of the Reformation, downplaying the Word because of the *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture Alone) call of the reformers. The author learned at school that to satisfy the obligation of attending Mass on Sunday one must be present from the offertory until the priest’s communion. Consequently, a person could be absent for the scripture readings and sermon but still fulfil the Sunday obligation. The blessing of the Eucharistic ministers gradually disappeared.

There was considerable debate in the Catholic Church in Australia and throughout the world with regard to the possibility of people having the option of receiving communion on the tongue or in the hand. In May 1969, the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship issued an Instruction on the Manner of Distributing Communion (*Memoriale Domini*), in response to a request from a small number of episcopal conferences and some individual bishops seeking permission for placing the consecrated host in people’s hands. Pope Paul VI directed that all the bishops of the Latin Church should be asked if they approved. To the question of authorizing communion in the hand the voting was Yes: 597, No: 1233.³¹ However permission could be sought from the Holy See for this change, if a particular episcopal conference, in a secret ballot, secured a two-thirds vote in favour. Even when this was achieved each bishop in his own diocese was free to implement the change or reject it.³²

³⁰ Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery, *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, issued by the Sacred Congregation of Rites 25 May 1967, Chapter I, part E.

³¹ *Memoriale Domini*, (29 May 1969).

³² *Southern Cross*, 17 March 1972, 9.

Gleeson favoured receiving communion in the hand. He viewed this as being in accord with the practice of the early Christian communities and also as a more appropriate manner of providing food for adults sharing a sacred meal. But there was resistance within the Australian Episcopal Conference. In September 1973 Gleeson told the Adelaide Diocesan Liturgical Commission that a motion to seek the approval of the Holy See for administering communion in the hand had been defeated at the recent meeting of the conference.³³ In November, the *Southern Cross*, on its front page, reported that the bishops in the United States of America were likewise sharply divided on this question and, a week later, that they had rejected it.³⁴ Two years later, in December 1975 Gleeson was able to announce that, following an affirmative vote in the conference, and subsequent approval from Rome, the option of receiving communion in the hand would be available and requested parishes to submit names of suitable women and men to be commissioned as special ministers of the Eucharist.³⁵ When lay ministers of the Eucharist were introduced it became clear that some parishioners did not readily accept them. The author remembers those who would not receive communion from them; such people would move from the line approaching the lay minister to the line moving towards the priest.

Pope Paul VI in the ‘Apostolic Letter on First Tonsure, Minor Orders and the Subdiaconate’ (*Ministeria Quaedam*), 15 August 1972, stated that only two ministries were to be retained in the Latin Church – lector and acolyte. The lector was to read the word of God in the liturgical assembly, excluding the gospel; the acolyte was to assist the deacon and priest at the altar. These ministries (not orders), were reserved to men. The ceremony conferring these ministries was an installation, not an ordination. Gleeson rejected the installation of these formal, male-only ministries, in the

³³ *Southern Cross* 14 September 1973, 3.

³⁴ *Southern Cross*, 16 November 1973, 1; 23 November 1973, 1.

³⁵ *Southern Cross*, 12 December 1975, 1.

archdiocese, preferring to enable both lay men and women to read the lessons at Mass and to become extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist.

Gleeson's enthusiastic implementing of the call of Vatican II for renewal was a contrast to the cautious approach taken by Cardinal Gilroy. Gleeson, like 'The Cardinal', was 'a church manager rather than a scholar' but, unlike Gilroy, he embraced the changes. The difference was clear from T P Boland's observations:

He [Gilroy] implemented the decisions loyally, if generally without conviction or enthusiasm. He sanctioned the vernacular liturgy while confessing his own regret. He accepted the new impulse to Church unity, but remained eirenic rather than ecumenical. He saw many priests and religious leaving their roles, and wept. He became suspicious of theologians who debated what he took for granted. He could not cope with the reaction to Pope Paul VI's encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* (1968), on marriage and means of birth control.³⁶

Women and girls assisting the priest at the altar

The question of allowing women and girls to serve at Mass was to cause considerable controversy in the archdiocese of Adelaide, as it did around the world. From the time of Vatican II, some dioceses accepted girls as altar servers. In 1974, a young girl, Monica Clemow, from Elizabeth Grove, in a letter to the Five Star Club, a section for young readers provided by the *Southern Cross*, said she was an altar server in her parish. The editor responded favourably to the fact that she and other girls were now assisting the priest at Mass.³⁷ Apparently Gleeson was prepared to turn a blind eye to the practice. The spokesperson for the Adelaide Latin Mass Society, Mrs M F Wilkins, said her members had twice complained to Gleeson about this 'abuse' but had received no reply. Consequently, Roman authorities had been advised.³⁸ As a result, Gleeson was directed

³⁶ T P Boland, 'Gilroy, Sir Norman Thomas (1896–1977)', Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <<http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/gilroy-sir-norman-thomas-10308/text18241>>, published first in hardcopy, vol 14 (1996), accessed online 14 December 2017.

³⁷ *Southern Cross*, 15 November 1974, 13.

³⁸ *News* (Adelaide), 2 June 1983, 3.

by the authorities in Rome to put an end to the practice of having female altar servers in the archdiocese.

In obedience to the Roman directive, Gleeson wrote a letter forbidding female altar servers.³⁹ It was read at all Sunday Masses in the archdiocese on 29 May 1983 and published in the *Southern Cross* on 9 June. Gleeson quoted the relevant documents from the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship that prohibited ‘women (young girls, married women, religious) from serving the priest at the altar’ and that declared bluntly: ‘Women are not permitted to act as altar servers’.⁴⁰

Gleeson’s edict was taken up by the local media and some letters to the editor of the *Advertiser* were trenchant. One asked if this was the twentieth century or the fifteenth and suggested that if Jesus ‘visited us today’ he would be a little ashamed of this church edict. The letter concluded with the words: ‘I am a Catholic, and I hang my head in shame’.⁴¹ Another asked what credibility the Church could claim when it preached the equality in Christ of all its members but perpetuated the myth of the inferiority of women through its actions.⁴² In a letter to the *Southern Cross*, Senator Rosemary Crowley saw the decision as ‘very offensive and short-sighted’, claiming that it was ‘reinforcing the prejudice women and girls know exists for them in the institution’.⁴³ One correspondent asked: ‘Where Archbishop Gleeson did Christ say “suffer the little children (males only) to come to me”’; another said she was not hurt

³⁹ No record of the directive from Rome was discovered. Its contents are inferred from Gleeson’s response.

⁴⁰ *Liturgiae Instaurationes* (5 September 1970), par 7; *Inaestimabile Donum* (3 April 1980), par 18.

⁴¹ *Advertiser*, 7 June 1983, 6.

⁴² *Advertiser*, 8 June 1983, 6.

⁴³ *Southern Cross*, 16 June 1983, 15.

and disappointed – she was enraged.⁴⁴ Others called for efforts to have the ruling re-examined. Some walked out of Mass on the day Gleeson’s letter was read.⁴⁵

The following week the *Southern Cross* reported that the Diocesan Liturgical Commission would re-examine the prohibition and that Gleeson supported this move.⁴⁶ In 1984 Gleeson accepted and carried out the request of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission to ask the Australian Episcopal Conference to petition the Holy See to ‘allow in Australia that bishops in their own dioceses at the appropriate time extend this ministry of serving at the altar to include both male and female members of the faithful’.⁴⁷

Ten years later a circular letter, dated 15 March 1994, from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, to presidents of episcopal conferences, drew attention to a 30 June 1992 ‘authentic interpretation’ from the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts. This ‘authentic interpretation’ declared that Canon 230 § 2, in the 1983 Code of Canon Law allowed both lay men and women to perform service at the altar. Pope John Paul II, on 11 July 1992, confirmed the decision and directed that it be promulgated. Why it took almost two years for episcopal conferences to be notified is unknown. The notification said that the permission was permissive not prescriptive; each bishop could decide whether to allow female altar servers in his diocese.⁴⁸

This episode raised many questions. At the time, women were able to be extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist so it appeared illogical that they were banned from assisting the priest at the altar during Mass. Why were the prohibitions so absolute? Why did it take so long for the law to change and why was official

⁴⁴ *Southern Cross*, 9 June 1983, 4.

⁴⁵ *Southern Cross*, 9 June 1983, 2.

⁴⁶ *Southern Cross*, 16 June 1983, 3.

⁴⁷ *Southern Cross*, 21 June 1984, 1 and 15.

⁴⁸ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis: Commentarium Officiale*, vol 86, (1994), 541-2.

notification deferred two years following the ‘authentic interpretation’ of the new Canon Law? One reason appeared to be the belief that significant vocations to the priesthood came from the ranks of altar servers and that therefore this function should be reserved to males. Rome was also determined to give no room to those who campaigned for the ordination of women. Gleeson clearly saw female altar servers as a legitimate involvement of the laity in the liturgy and was prepared to allow the practice in the archdiocese.⁴⁹ The willingness of some people to refer their concerns to Rome and Rome’s willingness to act on these reports was also apparent. Rome wanted to enforce uniformity, not only in matters of faith and morals but also in what appeared to be marginal concerns. The author recalls asking Archbishop Faulkner if he was irritated by the way Rome intervened in the affairs of the local church, to which he replied ‘not as irritated as Jimmy Gleeson’. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the episode was an embarrassment and an irritant to Gleeson. When the media sought an interview on the subject in 1983, Gleeson escaped by handing the task to his priest secretary, Peter Sheedy.⁵⁰

The third form of the sacrament of reconciliation

The Second Vatican Council’s Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*) conceded that with the passage of time some features had crept into the celebration of the sacraments and sacramentals which ‘have rendered their nature and purpose far from clear to the people of today’.⁵¹ Referring to the sacrament of penance (confession) it laid down: ‘The rite and formulae of Penance are to be revised so that

⁴⁹ Regarding the position of women in the Church it is interesting that the 1917 Code of Canon Law, Canon 1262, said it was desirable that women be separated from men in the church and that women should have covered heads. It was not until 1976 that the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued the document *Inter Insigniores* which in section 4 removed the need for women to have covered heads in church.

⁵⁰ Interview with Fr Peter Sheedy, at Hallett Cove, 6 September 2013.

⁵¹ *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, par 62.

they more clearly express both the nature and effect of the sacrament.⁵² In December 1973, the Congregation for Divine Worship issued the new *Rite of Penance* which presented three forms of the sacrament, one of which allowed for general confession and absolution. Previously this form of the sacrament was reserved for special occasions such as for the benefit of troops about to go into battle.⁵³ In August 1975, the Australian bishops announced that the new rite of penance would commence in Australia on the first Sunday of Lent 1976. With regard to the third form, which allowed general confession with absolution, they agreed that it would be the responsibility of the diocesan bishop to decide when it could be used.⁵⁴

Archbishop Gleeson seems to have promoted the third form, and prepared for its implementation, more systematically and with greater enthusiasm than other Australian bishops.⁵⁵ Two sessions of a seminar for priests were conducted in August 1975, a seminar for religious was held in November, and in February 1976 Gleeson spoke to about 110 persons who were to be leaders of parish study groups. Finally, on Sunday 7 March 1976, homilies at all Masses in the archdiocese addressed the new rite of penance and encouraged attendance at the study programmes.⁵⁶

The third form of the Rite of Reconciliation was celebrated for the first time in the archdiocese during Lent 1976. Gleeson had explained the relevant pastoral guidelines to a conference of priests and these were subsequently published in the *Southern Cross*; they would be reviewed before the season of Advent.⁵⁷ The results of the review were published in the *Southern Cross* on 3 December.⁵⁸ The third form of

⁵² *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, par 72.

⁵³ See Christopher Dowd, *Faith, Ireland and Empire: the life of Patrick Joseph Clune CSsR 1864-1935 archbishop of Perth, Western Australia* (Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 2014), 178. Clune 'heard confessions and handed out general absolutions, papal pardons and plenary indulgences to troops about to go into battle'. 178.

⁵⁴ *Southern Cross*, 5 September 1975, 3.

⁵⁵ Interview with Archbishop Leonard Faulkner, Netley, SA, 12 November 2013.

⁵⁶ *Southern Cross*, 15 August 1975, 3; 5 December 1975, 1; 20 February 1976, 1; 5 March 1976, 1.

⁵⁷ *Southern Cross*, 23 April 1976, 1 and 3.

⁵⁸ *Southern Cross*, 3 December 1976, 1 and 7.

reconciliation was celebrated in the archdiocese, especially during the seasons of Lent and Advent, from 1976 until 1999.

The Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship specifically approved Gleeson's request for the use of the third form. Two letters from the congregation addressed to Gleeson were signed by James Cardinal Knox, Prefect, and provided some insight into Gleeson's negotiations with the congregation.⁵⁹ The first, dated 6 November 1976, thanked Gleeson for the 'amended set of Pastoral Guidelines for the priests of the Archdiocese of Adelaide in the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance' and added that the 'Congregation has examined the Guidelines and has no objection to the text forwarded'. The second, dated 27 November 1976, thanked Gleeson for his letter of 22 November 1976 and stated:

You express disappointment that the original guidelines were not approved. The basic issue is whether or not they conformed to the mind of the legislator. The competent authority found they did not and was consequently obliged to say so, without prejudice to the pastoral merit of your considerations. In any case I am sincerely grateful for the guidelines in their present form.⁶⁰

As a priest of the archdiocese at the time, the author well remembers attending the seminar for priests in August 1976. Many suggestions were given as to when the third form of penance might be celebrated. Seemingly Gleeson was prompt in submitting these recommendations to the Roman authorities. He was requested to amend these 'original guidelines' and approval was given for the amended version. This appears to be the best explanation of the incomplete records available.

In the Quinquennial Report 1973-1977, part of his first *ad limina* visit to Rome in 1978, Gleeson stated:

Whenever a general absolution has been celebrated, in accordance with the norms issued by the Holy See, there has been clear evidence of its pastoral value and of the fact that it helps people who have been away from the Sacraments for

⁵⁹ Letters held in the office of the archbishop of Adelaide.

⁶⁰ Letters held in the office of the archbishop of Adelaide.

a long time to come back to individual confession as the normal way of seeking the grace of this Sacrament.⁶¹

Gleeson's second and final Quinquennial Report 1978-1982 stated that the celebration of the rite of penance with general absolution was generally restricted to times of preparation for Christmas and Easter and was celebrated 'strictly in accord with the general norms issued by the Holy See and the Pastoral Guidelines issued for the Archdiocese of Adelaide after prior approval by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship'.⁶² There was no negative comment from Roman authorities in regard to these reports of the successful celebration of the third form of the sacrament of reconciliation in the archdiocese of Adelaide.

Bishop Bernard Wallace of Rockhampton, a delegate of the Australian Episcopal Conference to the seventh World Synod of Bishops in 1983, related that the third form of penance had been enthusiastically received in Australia. He hoped that the Church would do 'nothing to restrict the conditions at present governing its usage'.⁶³ Despite this appeal and Gleeson's two official reports of the success of the third form of penance in the archdiocese of Adelaide, at the end of the Australian bishops' *ad limina* visit in 1998, they were presented with the *Statement of Conclusions* which condemned the 'illegitimate use of general absolution' (the statement did not say the invalid use of general absolution). Archbishop Leonard Faulkner, who had succeeded Gleeson, visited the Apostolic Nuncio on 15 March 1999 to plead for the continuation of the third form but his efforts were unsuccessful.⁶⁴ The end result of severely restricting the celebration of the third form of penance has been that fewer Catholics now use the sacrament, at least on a regular basis. Churches were full for the celebration of the third form which was a public and communal acknowledgement of sin. Although Gleeson had retired by this time, his niece Margaret Senyszyn said he was bitterly disappointed by the action of

⁶¹ Quinquennial Reports, part IV, Sacred Liturgy. Series 1.20, Box 170, ACAA.

⁶² Quinquennial Reports, Series 1.20, Box 170, ACAA.

⁶³ *Southern Cross*, 20 October 1983, 9.

⁶⁴ Interview with Emeritus Archbishop Faulkner at Netley, 27 August 2013.

the Roman authorities in forbidding a celebration of penance that had proved so successful. He also said that Rome had no idea of the challenges facing the Church in Australia.⁶⁵ However, it seems that the third form of the sacrament is still used in some parts of the Church. In 2016 Bishop Emeritus of Portsmouth, Crispian Hollis, said that the wise bishop, knowing what was going on, would let sleeping dogs lie.⁶⁶

Gleeson and *Humanae Vitae* (On the regulation of birth)

On 25 July 1968, Pope Paul VI issued his encyclical letter ‘On the Regulation of Birth’ (*Humanae Vitae*). Before the third session of the Second Vatican Council commenced in 1964, Pope Paul announced that the Council would not continue its discussion of this matter. This move was not a good omen for what came to be termed ‘collegiality’, the idea that the bishops with the pope exercised leadership in the Church.⁶⁷ In 1963 Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens, archbishop of Mechelen-Brussel (Belgium), had persuaded Pope John XXIII to set up a small commission of experts to consider the morality of the use of the oral contraceptive.⁶⁸ Commonly known as ‘the Pill’, it first became available in the 1960s, enabling family planning in a way that did not ‘interfere with the act’. The commission, known officially as the Pontifical Commission for the Study of Population, Family and Births, was expanded by Paul VI and presented its findings in June 1966. The ‘majority report’ concluded that the Catholic teaching regarding artificial contraception ‘could not be sustained by reasoned argument’.⁶⁹ A ‘minority report’, concerned mainly with the question of authority in the Church, asserted that the Church could not change its teaching regarding artificial birth control as such a move would contradict the teaching of Pope Pius XI’s encyclical *Casti*

⁶⁵ Margaret Senyszyn, interviewed at Bellevue Heights, SA, 18 December 1915.

⁶⁶ *Tablet* (London), 2 January 2016, 31.

⁶⁷ Paul VI also removed from discussion in the Council clerical celibacy, reform of the Curia, and the mechanism to implement the Synod of Bishops. See Giuseppe Alberigo, ‘The Conclusion of the Council and the Initial Reception’ in Alberigo, Giuseppe and Komonchak, Joseph A eds, *History of Vatican II*, vol V (New York: Orbis, 2006), 541-42.

⁶⁸ Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI: the first modern pope* (London: Harper Collins, 1993), 299.

⁶⁹ Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI*, 469.

Connubii (31 December 1930).⁷⁰ This encyclical taught that those who deliberately frustrated the natural power of the conjugal act to generate life were guilty of an ‘offence against the law of God and of nature, and ...are branded with the guilt of grave sin’.⁷¹

After much consultation and personal anguish, Pope Paul decided to maintain the status quo and issued his encyclical which stated that the natural law, as consistently interpreted by the Church, required that ‘every marriage act (*quilibet matrimonii usus*) must remain open to the transmission of life’.⁷² But his language was markedly different from that of *Casti Connubii*. Paul VI encouraged priests, in their dealing with their people, to imitate Jesus who came not to condemn but to save, and he added that they should speak with confidence, fully convinced that the ‘spirit of God, while He assists the magisterium in proposing doctrine, illumines internally the hearts of the faithful inviting them to give their assent’.⁷³

The encyclical caused anguish to many married couples, bishops, priests, and theologians. Episcopal conferences began issuing pastoral letters which accepted that a Catholic should adhere to the encyclical’s teaching with ‘loyal submission of the will and intellect’.⁷⁴ However, as the teaching was not proposed as a solemn and infallible definition (although some conservative Catholics claimed it was), a person’s ‘informed conscience’ could enable dissent without sin. The Belgian bishops in their statement (30 August 1968) gave precise expression to this:

If someone, however, who is competent in the matter under consideration and capable of forming a personal and well-founded judgement – which necessarily

⁷⁰ Pius XI issued *Casti Connubii* in part to oppose the 1930 Lambeth Conference that, in certain circumstances, allowed methods other than complete abstinence to limit or avoid parenthood. See The Lambeth Conference Resolutions Archive from 1930, Resolution 15.

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/127734/1930.pdf>. Accessed 7 June 2018.

⁷¹ *Casti Connubii*, par 56.

⁷² Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, par 11.

⁷³ *Humanae Vitae*, par 29.

⁷⁴ This is a quotation from the Second Vatican Council’s ‘Dogmatic Constitution on the Church’ (*Lumen Gentium*), 25.

presupposes a sufficient amount of knowledge – may, after serious examination before God, come to other conclusions on certain points, he has the right to follow his conviction, provided that he remains disposed to continue sincerely his enquiry.⁷⁵

The Scandinavian bishops stated that a person who arrived at conclusions differing from *Humanae Vitae* should not ‘on account of such diverging opinions alone, be regarded as an inferior Catholic’.⁷⁶ Canadian bishops said that such persons ‘should not be considered, or consider themselves, shut off from the body of the faithful’.⁷⁷

Charles Curran, a moral theologian at the Catholic University of America, in 1968 composed a statement critical of the ecclesiology and methodology of *Humanae Vitae* which was eventually signed by 600 theologians and other academics. A group of European theologians issued a dissenting statement at a meeting at Amsterdam on the 18-19 September 1968.⁷⁸ Clearly there is some truth in the opinion that this controversy was the greatest challenge to papal authority since Martin Luther allegedly nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the church in Wittenberg in 1517.⁷⁹

Paul VI, aware of the negative response to his teaching, stated that it ‘caused Us not small spiritual suffering. Never as at this point have We felt the burden of Our Office’.⁸⁰ At this time Gleeson was the coadjutor archbishop and Archbishop Beovich simply provided a statement to the press. It was published in the *Southern Cross* on 2 August 1968:

The previous teaching of the Church continues as we have always known it. Once again, it means that to be a Catholic is to accept a life of suffering as well

⁷⁵ ‘Statements by National Hierarchies on Encyclical’ – ‘Belgian Bishops’, *Catholic Documentation*, vol 13, no 4 (1968), 273. This volume has statements from another ten bishops’ conferences and one from the Jesuit General, Fr Pedro Arrupe.

⁷⁶ Statements by National Hierarchies, ‘Scandinavian Bishops’ vol 13, no 4, 318.

⁷⁷ Statements by National Hierarchies, ‘Canadian Bishops’, vol 13, no 4, 325. Statements by the French, Spanish and Swiss bishops are in vol 14, no 1 (1969), 32-54. See also Joseph Parkinson, ‘*Humanae Vitae*: Pope Paul VI in pastoral mode’, *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 90, no 2 (2013), 185-95 and ‘*Humanae Vitae* II: conscience, contraception and holy communion’, vol 90, no 3 (2013), 297-310.

⁷⁸ Richard A. McCormick, “‘*Humanae Vitae*’ 25 Years Later”, *America: the national Catholic review*, (July 17-24 1993), 7.

⁷⁹ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *A History of Christianity: the first three thousand years* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), 972.

⁸⁰ *Southern Cross*, 16 August 1968, 2.

as love. No one welcomes the undoubted suffering that refusing contraception involves. But Catholics have simply a different standpoint from almost anyone else on earth. For Catholics, loyalty to their Church is not a fringe affair. It involves loyalty to God Himself. This loyalty has occasioned even martyrdom in the past. It will be the occasion of equal heroism as a result of the present decision. For Catholics when the Pope speaks as the successor of Saint Peter, as Shepherd of the whole Church, he is the voice of Christ and we accept his teaching.⁸¹

In the same issue of the *Southern Cross* the entire encyclical was printed together with an editorial by Fr Robert Wilkinson that supported the words of Beovich.⁸² Gleeson's approach, when he became the archbishop of Adelaide, contrasts with this stand.

The Australian bishops issued a statement (5 August 1968) accepting the teaching of the encyclical as 'authentic and authoritative' [but not infallible]. The statement acknowledged that conscience was the 'ultimate guide of the morality of our actions' and asked those who found the teaching hard to accept to consider prayerfully the Pope's teaching.⁸³ In April 1972 the Australian bishops, citing the confusion caused by interpretations of the encyclical by some episcopal conferences, sought guidance from the Holy Father. The response affirmed the authoritative nature of the encyclical and the 'full confidence' the Pope had in the Australian bishops' ability to deal with any resulting controversy. This response (August 1972) was published by the Australian Episcopal Conference as their second pastoral letter on the matter.⁸⁴ In September 1974 the Australian Episcopal Conference issued a 'Pastoral Letter on the Application of *Humanae Vitae*' to their priests. The bishops acknowledged that 'reactions against the Encyclical outside the Church were strongly negative and even hostile', and also that there were Catholics 'who reacted very unfavourably' to it.⁸⁵

Shortly after this pastoral letter was released, Gleeson (already the archbishop) recorded radio and television statements to explain its implications. He chose this public

⁸¹ *Southern Cross*, 2 August 1968, 4. *Advertiser*, 31 July 1968, 3.

⁸² *Southern Cross*, 2 August 1968. Encyclical, 2-4; editorial, 1.

⁸³ Kerr, *Australian Catholic Bishops' Statements* (Sydney: St Paul Publications, 1985), 148-9.

⁸⁴ Kerr, *Australian Catholic Bishops*, 149-151.

⁸⁵ Kerr, *Australian Catholic Bishops*, 152.

presentation so as to reach as many persons as possible because he believed their welfare was involved. He agreed that his statement had more meaning for believing Catholics but it also involved others, such as non-Catholic partners in a mixed marriage. Gleeson said that most people knew the Catholic Church was opposed to artificial birth control but it was less well known that it favoured family planning.

Gleeson then stated clearly that the Church taught that natural methods of family planning were the only acceptable ones and that consequently it was 'wrong to artificially destroy the life-creating power of any act of married love'.⁸⁶ He said that some Catholics accepted the teaching, some found it difficult to put into practice, and others rejected it or gave only qualified acceptance. He was also aware that many sincere Catholics felt unable to observe the law for reasons such as the health of the mother, economic problems, an already large family, the unwillingness of a partner to accept the teaching, and even a threat to the marriage itself: 'Such a person may be without blame, if he or she reaches this conclusion after honest study and prayer.' 'What I want to say particularly is that such people have certainly not cut themselves off from the Church.'⁸⁷ The archbishop then asserted: 'In the final judgement it is the individual's conscience before God by which each is judged and every Catholic at peace with God should be able to feel at home in the Church.'⁸⁸

Most of Gleeson's address was taken from the pastoral letter of the Australian bishops and there appeared to be some dependence on the European and Canadian bishops' statements quoted above. But his firm assertion of the primacy of conscience was impressive. He was stressing the Church's constant teaching, repeated by the Second Vatican Council, that a person's conscience is 'man's most secret core, and his

⁸⁶ *Southern Cross*, 11 October 1974, 3.

⁸⁷ *Southern Cross*, 3. See also *Advertiser*, 8 October 1974, 1.

⁸⁸ *Southern Cross*, 12.

sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths'.⁸⁹ John Henry Cardinal Newman (1801-90), deemed by some to be the greatest Catholic theologian of the nineteenth century, had spoken of conscience as the 'aboriginal Vicar of Christ' and when asked to propose a toast to the pope responded 'to Conscience first, and to the Pope afterwards'.⁹⁰ Here Gleeson was in good company. However, Michael Gilchrist, in his polemical work *Rome or the Bush*, sees Gleeson's statement as one of the first signs of a weakening of resolve among the Australian bishops regarding the teaching of *Humanae Vitae*.⁹¹

Gleeson went even further by sending a copy of the pastoral letter to the religious of the archdiocese. In an accompanying note he said that religious as well as priests were not infrequently called on to advise parents regarding this matter. He also reminded them that he had made statements on radio and television and had arranged for the *Southern Cross* to carry a report on the pastoral.⁹² Gleeson's approach had clearly become more nuanced than that of Beovich.

The Billings' Ovulation Method of Family Planning

The Australian physicians, John J Billings and his wife Evelyn L Billings, pioneered natural methods of family planning, termed eventually the Ovulation Method Billings.

The couple founded the World Organisation of the Ovulation Method Billings

⁸⁹ Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes*, par 16.

⁹⁰ 'A Letter Addressed to His Grace the Duke of Norfolk on Occasion of Mr. Gladstone's Recent Expostulation', see *Conscience, Consensus, and the Development of Doctrine* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 449 and 457.

⁹¹ Michael Gilchrist, *Rome or the Bush: the choice for Australian Catholics* (Melbourne: John XXIII Co-op Ltd, 1986), 19. Michael Gilchrist was editor of *AD 2000*, a publication of the National Civic Council, the virtual continuation of the Catholic Social Studies Movement in Melbourne.

⁹² Letter of Gleeson (8 December 1974) to 'Religious of the Archdiocese enclosing copy of 'Pastoral Letter on the Application of "*Humanae Vitae*"', Series 128, Box 4, ID 10, ACAA.

(WOOMB) and visited many nations to promote it.⁹³ In 1991, John Billings was awarded a Papal Knighthood for his work for families.

In a letter to Gleeson in 1976, Evelyn, a member of the Teacher Training Committee of the Australian Council of Natural Planning, was critical of an attitude attributed to Gleeson at a meeting of this committee.⁹⁴ Carmel Clancy, an employee of the Adelaide Family Welfare Bureau and a member of this committee, had submitted to Gleeson for consideration this paragraph from the manual dealing with the selection of teachers of the Ovulation Method:

While refraining from being accusatory when she recognises practices contrary to correct moral principles, she is supported by the strong conviction that what is morally right is the best for the couple; she leads them to a happy solution of their problems, gently, patiently and out of manifest love of them.

Clancy advised the meeting that Gleeson had accepted the validity of the paragraph as far as it went but had added: 'if a couple are in good conscience in regard to their decision to use artificial contraception, it would be wrong for them to go against their conscience at that time'. As a result of Gleeson's opinion, as conveyed by Clancy, the paragraph was deleted from the general section of the manual but retained in the section dealing with teacher training.

Evelyn Billings, in her letter to Gleeson, asserted that in addition to being obliged to act in accordance with conscience, a person had the obligation to strive to attain a conscience that was correct, and that deletion of this paragraph from the manual would remove from the teacher the requirement to work towards the correction of a wrongly-formed conscience. She believed that happiness was to be found in living according to the natural law, and that true charity and total care for a client was manifested in assisting the person to choose a solution in accord with natural law.

⁹³United States Conference of Catholic Bishops publication 'Forum' : <<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning/resources/upload/Forum-07-Sum-Fall.pdf>>. Accessed 2 April 2016.

⁹⁴ Billings to Gleeson, 22 June 1976, Box 264, folio 6, ACAA.

Gleeson's response to Billings's letter was that she had agreed in her letter that it would be wrong to act against one's conscience, and so he was 'confused' by her suggestion that his attitude could 'perpetuate contradictory approaches' to clients seeking help concerning the regulation of births.⁹⁵ In Billings's view, due weight had to be given to assisting people to acquire an informed conscience and she felt Gleeson's attitude failed to do this. As a priest who was ministering at the time *Humanae Vitae* was published, the author can testify that this point was not too much in the minds of many people who sought advice. Seemingly Gleeson did not appreciate Billings's insistence that there needed to be more stress on helping people to have a correct conscience.

'Brothers and friends'

The Vatican Council's Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*) taught that priests share with the bishops the one identical priesthood:

On account of this common sharing in the same priesthood and ministry then, bishops are to regard their priests as brothers and friends and are to take the greatest interest they are capable of in their welfare both temporal and spiritual⁹⁶

Not all bishops responded positively to this call from Vatican II. James Patrick O'Collins, bishop of Geraldton (1930-41), before being transferred to Ballarat (1942-71), was a bishop for thirty-five years. He attended all sessions of Vatican II, an experience he declared was 'one of the highlights of his life', and established an instruction program for his priests to assist in the introduction of new measures.⁹⁷ He did not practice the call for bishops to treat their priests as brothers and friends.

John Molony, as a seventeen year old, entered *Corpus Christi College* in 1945.

In 1947 he was sent to Propaganda College in Rome to complete his studies. He was

⁹⁵ Gleeson to Billings, nd, Box 264, fol 6. ACAA.

⁹⁶ *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, par 7.

⁹⁷ W J McCarthy, 'O'Collins, Sir James Patrick (1892-1983)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/ocollins-sir-james-patrick-15388/text26595>, published first in hardcopy, vol 18 (2012), accessed online 7 June 2018.

ordained priest in Rome in 1950, and in 1954 was appointed assistant priest at St Patrick's Cathedral in the diocese of Ballarat, and so subject to O'Collins. He claimed a sense of exhilaration at achieving his goal but soon discovered that he was naïve in his expectation that the 'diocesan priest was part of a family of brothers with the bishop as its head'.⁹⁸ O'Collins had imbibed *Romanità*, a quality that demanded total obedience to the papacy and the Roman public service, the curia. He was the product of a 'thoroughly authoritarian system based in the Vatican but rendered even less human by the Irish bishops whom he imitated in their relations with their priests'.⁹⁹ Molony claimed that O'Collins exercised 'inflexible control' over his priests, maintained a 'general remoteness' from them, and treated them as if they were his servants.¹⁰⁰

James Michael Liston, coadjutor bishop of Auckland in 1920-29 and bishop in his own right in 1929-70, was the only New Zealand bishop not to attend the Second Vatican Council and appears to have been little changed by it. From the beginning of his episcopate he 'applied standard criteria in what was essentially a Tridentine church'.¹⁰¹ Robin Walsh Leamy was ordained a priest of the Society of Mary (Marist) in 1958. He was bishop of Rarotonga in 1984-1996, and on retiring from his see became the auxiliary bishop of Auckland. According to Leamy, Liston's ecclesiology was still that:

...the church came first and priests just served the church. In other words, the hierarchical and structural church was the church he thought of. He didn't think of the people of God, the Vatican II model ... he would prefer a priest or [other] person to be treated unjustly rather than scandalise the church ... His top priority was that we must not cause scandal.¹⁰²

⁹⁸ John Molony, *By Wendouree: memories 1951-1963*, 220.

⁹⁹ *By Wendouree*, 221.

¹⁰⁰ *By Wendouree*, 235.

¹⁰¹ Nicholas Reid, *James Michael Liston: a life* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2006), 99. See also Dictionary of New Zealand Biography, <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/4111/liston-james-michael>. Accessed 12 August 2018.

¹⁰² Reid, *Liston*, 283. For Liston's treatment of his priests at various stages see 99-107; 183-95; 248-53; 281-88.

Gleeson's response to Vatican II's Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests differed from that of both O'Collins and Liston. The author has preserved letters of appointment that illustrate the change of episcopal governance that was initiated by the Council and realised in his own life.

The first, dated 7 December 1956, signed by Matthew Beovich simply stated: 'you are hereby appointed as Assistant Priest to Rev Father Collins, in the parish of Brighton as from the 24 December 1956'. There was no previous consultation. The second, dated 18 December 1965, advised the author of his appointment as Administrator of the parish of Glenelg from 6 January 1966 and was signed by Gleeson on behalf of Archbishop Beovich: 'On behalf of His Grace Archbishop Beovich, I wish to inform you that you are appointed Administrator of the Parish of Glenelg as from Thursday, 6th January 1966.... His Grace wishes to thank you for your work in the Parish of St Peters'. Again there had been no consultation prior to this letter. The third, dated 17 December 1973, appointed the author Dean of the Mount Gambier parish. The transfer from Glenelg to Mount Gambier came following consultation and some differences of opinion. The following is one paragraph of the letter that is from a different world from the 1956 letter of appointment:

In your role as Administrator of the mensal Parish of Glenelg, you have won the affection and gratitude of Archbishop Beovich, myself, the priests associated with you and the people you have served so tirelessly. While I cannot adequately express this gratitude, I want you to know of it. I am deeply aware that I have asked a great sacrifice of you in giving you this appointment and I want to thank you for the priestly spirit in which you have accepted it.

Gleeson did attempt to consult before making appointments though he could be insistent if he deemed an appointment to be for the good of the diocese, even if the one appointed was reluctant to move, as was the author. He also encouraged what he termed 'a climate of opinion', a readiness of priests to move for the good of the 'people of God'.

Gleeson's silver jubilee gift – Francis Murphy Villa

The building of Francis Murphy Villa was another example of Gleeson caring for the welfare of his priests. In August 1966 Pope Paul VI issued an Apostolic Letter, *Ecclesiae Sanctae I^a*, concerned with the implementation of three documents of the Second Vatican Council.¹⁰³ Patriarchal synods and episcopal conferences were required to arrange for the 'provision of a proper living for all clerics who are, or have been, engaged in ministering to the People of God' and the 'bishop shall make appropriate provision for the living and residence of those who resign'.¹⁰⁴ Before Vatican II, bishops and priests usually remained in office until death. Parish priests did so because there was no alternative accommodation provided. Following the Council, bishops were 'earnestly requested voluntarily to submit their resignation' to the supreme pontiff no later than the completion of their seventy-fifth year and parish priests, at the same age, were 'requested voluntarily to submit their resignation' to their bishop.¹⁰⁵

Gleeson agreed to receive a gift on the occasion of the silver jubilee of his episcopal consecration, celebrated in 1982. The gift was to be suitable accommodation for retired priests. The building, to be named Francis Murphy Villa in honour of Adelaide's first Catholic bishop, would provide accommodation for seven priests.¹⁰⁶ The land for the project was donated by Southern Cross Homes on the western side of their hostel complex on Marion Road, North Plympton. In June 1982 the Knights of the Southern Cross and the Catholic Women's League, assisted by the Retired Priests' Accommodation Committee, launched an appeal for funds. By the end of the year \$162 000 had been raised.

¹⁰³ The three documents were 'Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church; Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests; Decree on the Up-To-Date Renewal of Religious Life..

¹⁰⁴ *Ecclesiae Sanctae I*, par 8 and par 20.

¹⁰⁵ *Ecclesiae Sanctae I*, par 11 and par 20. These regulations were included in the 1983 Code of Canon Law: Canon 401 § 1 and Canon 538 § 3.

¹⁰⁶ Murphy was in fact the first resident bishop in Adelaide arriving in November 1844. The Anglican bishop, Augustus Short, arrived in Adelaide in December 1847.

On Sunday 4 December 1983, Gleeson blessed and opened his silver jubilee gift. The cost of the building was \$350 000. The Catholic Women's League agreed to furnish the seven units. Two branches of the Knights of the Southern Cross and migrant communities provided the furnishings for the chapel. The first three priests to take up residence were John O'Callaghan, Patrick Walsh and Thomas O'Rourke, all Irish-born members of the clergy. Gleeson expressed his gratitude for the gift and explained that it enabled him to meet his obligation to care for the retired priests. He stressed that without the gift he would have been unable to do this.

Catholic Women's League Child Care Centre, East Terrace, Adelaide

The Catholic Women's League (CWL) was established in Adelaide in 1914 and was involved in patriotic work during the First World War. In 1916 the League opened a hostel for girls coming from country areas for study or work. The hostel closed in 1972 when it was no longer meeting a need and the league turned its attention to families requiring child care. There was considerable opposition to this proposal both within the Catholic Women's League and the Catholic community – opposition referred to by Gleeson at the official opening. The budget of the McMahon Liberal-Country Party coalition government in August 1972 announced that the Commonwealth would subsidise not-for-profit child care centres across the nation, and the Child Care Act was passed soon afterwards. The Whitlam government, elected on 2 December 1972, true to its policy speech, furthered the child care movement. On 22 December, the Catholic Women's League applied to the Department of Labour and National Service for Commonwealth grants under the Child Care Act. In 1973 the League was awarded the first Commonwealth funds for a purpose-built, community-based, child-caring centre in

South Australia.¹⁰⁷ The centre opened for business in February 1975 and was officially opened in April.¹⁰⁸

In his address at the official opening, Gleeson admitted that initially he had serious doubts regarding the centre as he felt that certain important values appeared to be challenged. He listed these concerns which would have been held by many both in the Catholic community and beyond: the home no longer deemed the best place to rear children; pressure on women to join the workforce; downgrading of the role of women who chose to remain in the home, and setting aside practices that had proved successful for so long.¹⁰⁹

Gleeson said he had sought advice from Fr Terry Holland, Director of Catholic Social Welfare, and Fr Peter Travers, Director of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau. As a result of these consultations, he was satisfied the child care centre would not jeopardise traditional values and that it was appropriate for the CWL to provide such a service. He added that many people in the community needed the support the centre could provide. He cited the needs of single-parent families and families where one parent was ill. We note here Gleeson's ability to listen and indeed change his opinions when faced with reasoned arguments.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Charitable Trust Incorporated

Another example of Gleeson accepting advice came the following year. In June 1976 the *Southern Cross* reported that St Vincent de Paul's Orphanage at Goodwood, conducted by the Sisters of Mercy, was sold for \$750 000.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Bernard O'Neil, *Learning for Life: St Mary's Hostel (1916-1972) and the Catholic Women's League Child Care Centre (1975-1999)* (Adelaide: Catholic Women's League of South Australia Inc, 1999), 43.

¹⁰⁸ Ruth Schumann, "'Charity, Work, Loyalty': a history of the Catholic Women's League in South Australia: 1914-1979". BA thesis, Flinders University, 1979, 12-13. See also Schumann's article, "'Charity, Work, Loyalty" The Catholic Women's Guild in South Australia', *The Historical Society of South Australia*, no 11 (83), 34-47

¹⁰⁹ *Southern Cross*, 18 April 1975, 3.

¹¹⁰ The St Vincent de Paul Orphanage commenced in 1866 and closed in 1975. It had various locations and several different groups in charge. See, 'Find & Connect', St Vincent de Paul Orphanage 1966-1975, <https://www.findandconnect.gov.au/ref/sa/biogs/SE00049b.htm>. Accessed 18 June 2018.

Gleeson established the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Charitable Trust Incorporated to receive and manage this money. Following the passing by the South Australian parliament in February 1981 of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide Charitable Trust Act, funds from the sale of the Goodwood Orphanage, the Largs Bay Orphanage and St John's Boys' Home, Brooklyn Park, were received and managed by the Trust, in order to continue the work of these organisations in another environment. The Goodwood orphanage building and others like it were not adaptable to the smaller living units which were deemed to be more suitable for the welfare and development of children. Several such properties had been purchased – some staffed by the Sisters of Mercy and one by a married couple.¹¹¹ Gleeson supported Fr Holland who helped convince him that the new arrangement for orphans was a step forward.¹¹²

International Women's Year 1975

Following a decade of feminist movements, referred to as the second wave of feminism, which had made the term 'women's liberation' a household word, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 1975 the International Women's Year (IWY). The first wave of feminism was the efforts of the suffragettes in the early twentieth century to secure women's suffrage; the second wave of feminism had a broader agenda dealing with sexuality, family, workplace, domestic violence and marital rape.¹¹³

Gleeson issued a statement on International Women's Day, 8 March.¹¹⁴ He saw the day as an occasion for Catholics to reflect on the movement for the effective

¹¹¹ *Southern Cross*, 11 June 1976, 1.

¹¹² Interview with Marie Shevlin, Kensington Park, 4 February 2014.

¹¹³ The formational period of third-wave feminism in 1991-95 was sometimes termed postfeminist. See Leslie L Heywood, ed, *The Women's Movement Today: an Encyclopedia of third-wave feminism* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2006).

¹¹⁴ *Southern Cross*, 14 March 1975, 9.

recognition of women's rights, a movement viewed by some with misgivings. Gleeson said that the 'strident voices' of some feminists could distract from the real issues, the injustices that provoked the movement for women's rights. He said there continued to be discrimination against women and that it needed to be challenged. Gleeson listed the following concerns; beatings and cruelty in marriage; blatant forms of 'commercial exploitation'; vast social barriers inhibiting women's wish to develop gifts enabling participation in the economic and political life of the community; an 'unfair cultural heritage' suggesting that women are not equal to men in understanding and solving problems, except those involving domestic matters. He viewed the movement for women's rights as one of the great struggles of the century which aimed to achieve universal acceptance of the fundamental equality between all human beings. He declared: 'In one sense it is equalled in proportion only by the movement of developing nations to win justice from the wealthy countries.'¹¹⁵

Gleeson supported his words by quoting from the report of the Second General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, held in Rome from 30 September to 6 November.¹¹⁶ The synod's task was to deliberate concerning 'the ministerial priesthood and justice in the world'.¹¹⁷ Gleeson quoted the following: 'The members of the Church, as members of society have the same right and duty to promote the common good as do other citizens'.¹¹⁸ And, 'We also urge that women should have their own share of responsibility and participation in the community life of society and likewise of the Church'.¹¹⁹ However, he was insistent that the roles of wife and mother are God-given and should never be belittled. In the past the understanding of these roles had inhibited

¹¹⁵ *Southern Cross*, 14 March 1975, 9.

¹¹⁶ The Synod of Bishops was chartered by Pope Paul VI in the document *Apostolica Sollicitudo* on 15 September 1965. Its purpose was to assist the pope in governance of the Church. The Synod is covered in the 1983 Code of Canon Law in Canons 342-348.

¹¹⁷ Synod of Bishops, *Convenientes ex Universo*, 30 November 1971. See Flannery, Austin, ed, *Vatican Council II: more postconciliar documents* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1982), 695-710.

¹¹⁸ Flannery, *Vatican Council II*, 702.

¹¹⁹ Flannery, *Vatican Council II*, 703.

women from using their influence for the good of the community and the world. This, Gleeson insisted, was not God-given. He also stressed the need for women to be able to access education so that they could exercise an ‘equal responsibility to shape the world’. But on the other hand he saw one goal of the feminist movement, free access to abortion, as a form of oppression.

Shoring up the finances of the archdiocese

The main source of funds for parishes and the archdiocese was the offerings of parishioners at Sunday Mass. Hence, any decline in the number of regular attendees had financial implications. Gallup Polls indicated that in 1947, 63 per cent of Australian Catholics attended Mass regularly, and that in 1960 the figure was 53 per cent.¹²⁰ In 1978, according to the Catholic Research Office for Pastoral Planning (CROPP), 30 per cent of Catholics were regular attendees at Mass. In 1996, the Catholic Church Life Survey showed that the number of Mass attendees had fallen to 17.9 per cent. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference’s Pastoral Research Office (PRO) conducted the National Count of Attendance in every diocese and parish for the years 2001, 2006 and 2011. The results – 15.3 per cent, 13.8 per cent and 10.6 per cent respectively – revealed a continuing fall in the number of persons regularly attending Mass on Sunday.¹²¹ So during Gleeson’s time as a bishop, and since, the Catholic community has shown a diminished and diminishing fidelity to the Eucharistic celebration. The debt on the archdiocese and many of the parishes was in part the result of the expanding Catholic population in the archdiocese and the massive building of churches and schools from 1945, the year that Gleeson was ordained to the priesthood. During Gleeson’s time as a bishop (May 1957-June 1985) forty-six churches were erected.¹²²

¹²⁰ O’Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community*, 428. Gallup Poll figures would not have been as reliable as results obtained by the three National Count of Attendance projects.

¹²¹ Peter Wilkinson, ‘Who goes to Mass in Australia in the 21st Century?’ *The Swag: Quarterly Magazine of the National Council of Priests of Australia*, vol 21, no 3 (2013), 30-32.

¹²² Research provided by Dr David Hilliard. Copy in author’s possession.

To provide additional income for the archdiocese, Gleeson planned to erect a nineteen-storey office tower, to be known as the Cathedral Precinct Tower, on land on the western side of St Francis Xavier's Cathedral. A strange aspect of this plan was that, shortly before his death in June 1939, Archbishop Andrew Killian announced that the Catholic Church Endowment Society had purchased land on the western side of the Cathedral to prevent it being hidden by a large development. He deemed the acquisition of the land as being 'so essential to the dignity and beauty of this the chief temple of God in South Australia'.¹²³

On 9 November 1972 Gleeson formed the Catholic Church Sites Development Committee. In addition to the archbishop there were ten well qualified lay persons.¹²⁴ On 4 May 1973, Gleeson asked the Adelaide City Council if it would approve the building of an office tower on the church-owned land adjacent to the cathedral. He stressed that the developer, not the Church, would fund the project and that the income from the lease would enable the Church to continue to provide services for the Church and the wider community.¹²⁵ On 28 June, Gleeson wrote to the Town Clerk of the City of Adelaide expressing the hope that 'we have now forwarded all required information in order to secure an expedient approval'.¹²⁶

¹²³ Robert Rice, 'Andrew Killian, Fourth Archbishop of Adelaide and Seventh Occupant of the See: aspects of his theology and practice', *The Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 86, no 1 (2009), 47.

¹²⁴ For names and qualifications of the members, see Adelaide City Archives, File PF 1975/0022; *Southern Cross*, 8 June 1973, 2.

¹²⁵ *Southern Cross*, 8 June 1973, 1-2.

¹²⁶ Adelaide City Archives, PF 1975/0022, 28 June 1974.

The application was rejected on 16 December by the City of Adelaide Development Committee and three days later the City Council endorsed the decision. One of the reasons given by the City Planner for the rejection of the project was that ‘the amenity of the locality would be adversely affected by the dominance of a building of this bulk, with respect to the adjoining Cathedral’.¹²⁷ This decision was appealed by the Sites Development Committee in January 1975 but in November the Planning Appeal Board dismissed the appeal. The archdiocese attempted to gain approval for a modified proposal, Gleeson signing this official application in January 1976. This attempt also failed. The Church then sold the land and the building plan to the state government which used the plan to build Wakefield House, opposite the cathedral, at 30 Wakefield Street. The Catholic Church Endowment Society received almost a million dollars from the sale of the land and the building plan.¹²⁸ This was not the only failure of the Sites Development Committee. In 1976 the Unley City Council rejected a proposed \$14 million development on the site of St Joseph’s Centre for unmarried mothers, now Louise Place, at Fullarton. It was intended that the site would be leased to a developer, with the rent going to the Daughters of Charity to fund their welfare work.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Memo from City Planner to Administrative Manager, 19 February 1975. Adelaide City Archives, File PF 1975/0022.

¹²⁸ Interview with Gregory John ‘Greg’ Crafter AO, at Norwood, 12 November 2014. Crafter was a member of the South Australian Parliament for 14 years and a Minister for 11 years.

¹²⁹ *Southern Cross*, 5 November 1976, 1.

The Cathedral Precinct Tower project, in particular, suggested some flaws in Gleeson's approach. He must have known the reason Archbishop Killian wanted to purchase the land adjacent to the cathedral but was prepared to disregard it. The City Planner saw clearly that the proposed building would be out of place in the locality, but Gleeson persisted. It may be that financial considerations distracted him from considering all the relevant facts and background.¹³⁰ He was also a practical man and apparently had little aesthetic sense. In this case he may have been too single-minded and unheeding of the words of the City Planner that a building of this bulk would be out of place alongside the cathedral.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

This Commission was announced by Prime Minister Julia Gillard, in November 2012. The Commission's brief covered the years 1950-2010. This period included the entire period of Gleeson's episcopal ministry. The Commission's final report, comprising seventeen volumes, was presented to the Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, in December 2017. Volume sixteen, titled Religious Institutions, was made up of three books, close to 800 pages each: one was devoted entirely to the Catholic Church. The Commission found that more than 36 per cent of all abuse victims dealt with were abused in the Catholic Church.¹³¹ The Commission stated that of all 'Catholic priests included in the survey who ministered between 1950 and 2010, taking into account the duration of ministry, 7 per cent were alleged perpetrators'. 'The weighted proportion of alleged perpetrators... in the Archdiocese of Adelaide in South Australia was 2.4 per cent.'¹³²

¹³⁰The Catholic Church Endowment Society has a 'Church Plaza Deed' with the minister for infrastructure that sets out the agreement for the use of the land. The Deed expires 18 May 2025 and will be replaced by a 'Deed for Lease' that will provide 99 years occupancy.

¹³¹Address by Francis Sullivan, the CEO of the (Catholic) Truth Justice and Healing Council, to Concerned Catholics in Canberra Goulburn, 22 March 2018. *The Record*, Winter 2018 (Canberra: St Vincent de Paul Society National Council of Australia, 2018), 24-27.

¹³²Final report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Catholic Church. <https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/religious-institutions>. Accessed 8 February 2018.

No priest belonging to the Archdiocese of Adelaide was indicted for child sexual abuse between 1950 and 2010. There is no evidence that Gleeson concealed any cases or deliberately moved known transgressors. However, during his time as parish priest of Edwardstown (1985-94), a family man told the author how he and his brother had been sexually abused during their school days by a priest still active in the archdiocese. They had told their parents at the time, but the parents did not believe them. The author was thanked for listening to, and believing, the man, who did not mention the offending priest's name. Hence while the archdiocese of Adelaide appears to have been the least impacted of the Australian dioceses by the crime of child sexual abuse, it did not escape entirely unscathed.

Gleeson was interested in and responsive to others. Consequently, his administration was, in most cases, marked by processes of consultation and listening. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy was the first completed work of Vatican II, promulgated on 4 December 1963. Pope Paul VI said 'the liturgy was the first subject to be examined and the first too, in a sense, in intrinsic worth and in importance for the life of the Church'.¹³³ The introduction to the constitution stated that the liturgy nourishes the people of God and enables them to show forth the Church as 'a sign lifted up among the nations'.¹³⁴ Gleeson took this to heart in his cautious but steadfast promotion of liturgical renewal and especially in his endeavour to promote the involvement of the lay members of the Church, both women and men, in the preparation and celebration of the liturgy.

¹³³ Quoted by C J McNaspy, 'Liturgy' in Abbott, ed, *The Documents of Vatican II* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), 133.

¹³⁴ *Sacrosanctum Consilium*, par 2.

Gleeson faced the crisis of trust in the Church, following the promulgation of the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* with more courage and sensitivity than most other bishops. His change of attitude to the Child Care Centre and the Goodwood Orphanage reveal a willingness to heed the advice of others. He deemed the campaign seeking justice for women to be comparable to the quest of developing nations for justice from wealthy nations. On the other hand, Gleeson, or perhaps his Catholic Church Sites and Development Committee, showed a lack of competence when endeavouring to financially support the Church by considering the Cathedral Precinct Tower.

Gleeson took to heart the call of the Second Vatican Council for bishops to treat their priests as ‘brothers and friends’. He was a pastoral bishop and regarded his contact with priests, religious and parishioners in the visitation of parishes as his most rewarding task. The warm and respectful relationship between Gleeson and Beovich, the emeritus archbishop of Adelaide, was noted and appreciated by the Catholic community.

Chapter 10

DIOCESAN PASTORAL RENEWAL 1983-88

Gleeson regarded the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal Programme (DPRP) as ‘perhaps the most important initiative and legacy from my term as Archbishop of Adelaide’.¹ The DPRP needs to be seen as part of an ongoing process well described by Pope Paul VI in his *Apostolic Letter* in May 1971 to Cardinal Maurice Roy, Archbishop of Quebec (1947-81):

It is up to the Christian communities to analyse with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel’s unalterable words and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgement and directives for action from the social teaching of the Church....It is up to these Christian communities, with the help of the Holy Spirit, in communion with the bishops who hold responsibility and in dialogue with other Christian brethren and all men of goodwill, to discern the options and commitments which are called for in order to bring about the social, political and economic changes seen in many cases to be urgently needed.²

Historically viewed, it is clear that the DPRP was a significant contribution to the continuous and continuing stream of effort to promote renewal in the archdiocese, in accord with the vision of Vatican II. As will be noted, Gleeson was involved with the renewal thrust from his time as an assistant bishop until his retirement. Was his optimistic evaluation of the DPRP justified by what it actually achieved?

Historic meeting of the Laity

A national meeting of Catholic lay leaders was held on 23-24 July 1965 at the Anglican Retreat House, Belair, in the Adelaide foothills. Leaders from every state ‘responsible

¹ James William Gleeson, ‘The Church in Adelaide during my Years as a Priest and Bishop’, *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 65, no 3 (1988), 302.

² Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI to Cardinal Maurice Roy President of the Council of the Laity and of the Pontifical Commission Justice and Peace on the occasion of the Eightieth Anniversary of the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, par 4. <http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_letters/documents/hf_p-vi_apl_19710514_octogesima-adveniens.html>_ Accessed 8 June 2016.

for forming the adult laity in total Christian living' attended.³ At this time Vatican II was about to begin its fourth and final session, and Gleeson was the coadjutor archbishop. This was one of the first expressions of the Council's teaching that 'the laity...have...the vocation of applying to the building up of the Church...all the powers which they have received from the goodness of the Creator and from the grace of the Redeemer'.⁴ Those attending represented a wide range of Catholic lay organisations.

- Paulian Association (Sydney).
- National Christian Worker's Movement and Christian Family Movement (Melbourne).
- Adult Lay Apostolate Movement (Ballarat).
- Catholic Social Apostolate (Perth).
- Christian Family Movement (Hobart).
- Newman Institute (Adelaide). Known at the Christian Life Movement from 1967.
- Christian Family Movement (Brisbane).
- National Committee of the Young Christian Workers Movement.⁵

It was a matter of pride that this first meeting took place in Adelaide. In 1948, Archbishop Beovich had established the Newman Institute of Christian Studies as an adult Catholic Action body with a full-time staff, at a time when there was not a general awareness of such a need. The editor of the *Southern Cross* in 1965 (Fr Robert Wilkinson) claimed that the archdiocese of Adelaide was one of the 'leading dioceses in the English-speaking world for its experience and effectiveness in the adult mass movement for a total apostolate'.⁶ Gleeson addressed the national gathering. He said that the organisations of the lay apostolate should 'appreciate and encourage the work of one another, in a spirit of unity and not of competition' and added: 'The Vatican

³ *Southern Cross*, 23 July 1965, 1.

⁴ *Lumen Gentium*, par 33.

⁵ *Southern Cross*, 30 July 1965, 3.

⁶ *Southern Cross*, 23 July 1965, 23.

Council stresses the unity of the Church and each diocese is to be a model of people and groups working in unity under their bishop.’⁷

Diocesan Laity Congresses

The Pontifical Council for the Laity was created in January 1967 in the *Motu Proprio* of Pope Paul VI, *Catholicam Christi Ecclesiam*.⁸ In the same year, the Third World Congress for the Lay Apostolate was held in Rome on 9-18 October. World Congresses for the Lay Apostolate had been held in 1951 and 1957 during the pontificate of Pope Pius XII. The concern then was Catholic Action, seen as ‘the participation of laymen in the hierarchical apostolate’. The Australian delegation, responding to the ‘preparatory enquiry’ drawn up in Rome, conducted a survey of the Church in Australia in light of Vatican II and produced an ‘interim reply’ which was widely circulated for comment, resulting in some amendments to the text. The *Southern Cross* reported the findings of the survey in two editions.⁹

The Southern Cross gave assistance to the three Adelaide delegates to the congress: Bill Byrne from the Christian Life Movement, Carmel Clancy, diocesan president of the YCW, and Peter Davis, vice-president of the Aquinas Association of Catholic Graduates of the University of Adelaide (later known as the Newman Association).¹⁰ Readers of the Catholic newspaper were encouraged to form groups to consider the coming lay congress. To facilitate discussion, a list of questions was provided under the headings Liturgy, Parish, Diocese, Missions, Lay Organisations, Christian Unity, and General.¹¹ A report, based on the fifty responses received, provided

⁷ *Southern Cross*, 30 July 1965, 3.

⁸ On 1 September 2016, the Pontifical Council for the Laity ceased, and its responsibilities and duties taken over by the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. A *Motu Proprio* is a personal initiative of the Pope.

⁹ *Southern Cross*, 6 October 1967, 2; 20 October 1967, 2.

¹⁰ In 1967 Bill Byrne had become secretary of the new national Catholic Federation of Christian Family and Social Apostolate Organisations.

¹¹ *Southern Cross*, 17 March 1967, 2.

a ‘salutary lesson’. There was ‘a clear, vigorous, dynamic lead from the bishops, a good following among the people in organisations, and a poor grasp of what the bishops are saying in the less organised ranks of the laity’.¹² These words were to be echoed by the DPR committee when reflecting on the first phase of the project.¹³

A mini-congress, held at Cabra Convent, Cumberland Park, on 24 September 1967, discussed the ‘interim reply’ and put forth ideas on what should be discussed at the gathering in Rome. Observers from other churches were present. The gathering was deemed to be a new venture for the archdiocese: ‘This is the “open” type of exchange where all join on an “equal” footing simply as members of the Church.’¹⁴

On 25 February 1968, about one hundred people attended another lay congress conducted at Loreto Convent, Marryatville, to reflect on the Third World Congress of the Laity. This gathering called on the Australian government to consider civil aid service as an alternative to military service and also to increase overseas aid to 1 per cent of Gross National Product. The statement on birth control coming from the Roman Congress was endorsed. This was contained in section D of a resolution on development that required ‘leaving the choice of scientific and technical means for achieving responsible parenthood to parents acting in accordance with their Christian faith and on the basis of medical and scientific consultation’.¹⁵ This foray into an area that Pope Paul VI had reserved to himself revealed a willingness to tackle publicly even delicate subjects – subjects clearly of concern to the laity. Five months later the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* was issued during the sixth year of the pope’s pontificate. The pope did not follow the advice given at the Laity Congress, nor the majority advice of the papal commission established to examine the Church’s teaching on birth control. Paul VI

¹² *Southern Cross*, 21 April 1967, 1.

¹³ In 1984 the DPRP removed the final P and became the DPR, the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal.

¹⁴ *Southern Cross*, 29 September 1967, 1-2.

¹⁵ *Southern Cross*, 1 March 1968, 1-2.

upheld traditional Catholic teaching on the subject. The encyclical ‘remains one of the most controversial papal announcements of the twentieth century and the source of bitter disagreement among Catholic theologians’.¹⁶

Life and Worship Congresses

A Life and Worship Congress, held on 25-27 April 1969 at the Adelaide Teachers’ College, revealed the enthusiasm with which liturgical renewal was being pursued in the archdiocese: two thousand people joined discussion groups in preparation for the congress. About 500 people—200 religious and 300 lay persons participated, enrolling on the eve of the three-day gathering.¹⁷ Among the recommendations coming from the congress were: more Masses in homes and small groups; more Masses for Christian Unity; more pilgrimages by inter-church groups to other churches; introduction without delay of Masses suitable for children; and Mass propers more appropriate for particular groups such as young people and housewives. David Shinnick, who chaired the congress, advised that he would report to Archbishop Beovich and pass on the recommendations. Speaking at the open forum on the Saturday, Gleeson said that the membership of the Diocesan Commission for Sacred Liturgy, Music and Art would be expanded as at present the only lay person involved was the cathedral organist, James Govenlock. He also advised the gathering that a report on parish pastoral councils had been prepared by a joint sub-committee of the Priests’ Senate and the Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee. The Diocesan Pastoral Council had considered it, made some amendments, and then referred it back to the Priests’ Senate. Gleeson expressed the hope that this would be a ‘jumping off ground’ towards a more formal effort to set up Parish Pastoral Councils in every parish in the archdiocese. The three-day gathering

¹⁶ Bunson, Matthew, ed, *Encyclopedia of Catholic History*, rev ed (Huntington, Indiana: Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2004), 447.

¹⁷ *Southern Cross*, 24 April 1969, 1.

ended with a flourish of trumpets, the crash of symbols, and exultant sounds of organ, choir and congregation in the cathedral on Sunday evening. Gleeson was the principal celebrant of the concelebrated Mass. The cathedral was crowded, all received communion under forms of both bread and wine, and all shared the sign of peace.¹⁸

The initial response to Vatican II's call for a more consultative Church was evident. However, there were, at least for a time, limits on acceptable consultation. Archbishop Beovich chaired meetings of the liturgical committee, which he set up in 1964, and reserved the right to make the final decision; he could be terse in dismissing unacceptable suggestions.¹⁹ Gleeson's high profile at the Life and Worship Congress was evidence that, although Beovich had the final word, he was pleased to avail of the energy and enthusiasm of his coadjutor. It also contributed to the perception among many that Gleeson was the main promoter of Vatican II in the archdiocese.

A second Life and Worship Congress was held at Rostrevor College in suburban Adelaide in September 1971. The theme was 'Sacraments for the Secular Man'. Fr S Lennon SJ opened proceedings by saying: 'Somehow or other the Church must communicate what she has heard, what she has seen with her own eyes, what she has looked upon and felt with her own hands, the life of Christ himself' which the Church does 'by the sacraments, human signs that unfold with time'.²⁰ Gleeson was chief concelebrant for the Mass in the cathedral on the Sunday evening. He affirmed: 'We have been endeavouring to rediscover the place of the sacraments in our lives, to discover the importance of our lives in this world, to accept more fully and joyously our

¹⁸ *Southern Cross*, 2 May 1969, 1, 4, 5.

¹⁹ Laffin, *Matthew Beovich*, 271-2.

²⁰ *Southern Cross*, 10 September 1971, 1.

vocation as the people God has gathered together . . . We are called to be God’s sign of his life and love and truth in this world.²¹ Those in attendance learned more clearly about the link between worship and Christian witness and action in the world.

Diocesan Life Campaigns

The Diocesan Life Campaigns (DLCs) were a successful approach to Catholic adult education in the archdiocese. A reasonable estimate was that 5000-7000 were involved.

Eight campaigns took place around the following themes:

Year	Topic
1962	Pope John Speaks.
1963	Using the new catechism (Deeper Faith–Better Homes).
1964	The Parish around the Altar.
1965	The Family and Society (Society and the Christian Home).
1966	Community Spirit in the Parish.
1967	Peace begins at Home.
1968	People in need.
1969	No DLC because of Life and Worship Congress in April.
1970	Towards a New Life in Our Parish (Parish Pastoral Council Promotion)

As a diocesan venture, the DLCs were unique in Australia, but interstate parishes and overseas dioceses had successfully used this method.

The first DLC in August 1962 focused on Pope John XXIII’s encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (1961), which sought the goal of universal peace through commitment to building a just world.²² Home discussion kits were provided in the *Southern Cross* and the climax was the Archbishop’s Rally in Unley Town Hall.²³ It was a document-centred campaign, conducted in parish halls using the lecture-question technique. Subsequent campaigns adopted the theme-centred approach, moving away from lectures and embracing the home-discussion process.

²¹ *Southern Cross*, 17 September 1971, 1; proposals developed in the Congress, 1, 3, 11; photographs from the Congress, 6-7. *Southern Cross* 24 September 1971, 11, final listing of proposals from people’s discussion groups.

²² Pope John XXIII was canonised on 27 April 2014. The celebration took place in St Peter’s Square. His feast day is 11 October, the date of the commencement of the first session of the Second Vatican Council.

²³ *Southern Cross*, 31 August 1962, 1. *Southern Cross* on 3, 10, 17 August, provided discussion kits on pages 8-9 each issue.

In 1964 the third DLC had the theme, 'The Parish around the Altar'. The aim was to enable participants to better understand and appreciate the Mass. In the cathedral, on Sunday evening 28 June, Beovich blessed the gathering of 600 group leaders and commissioned them to 'go ahead and conduct the campaign'. Pope Paul sent a message to the gathering expressing his pleasure at the effort being made to enable people to value the Mass. He imparted his blessing to all involved.²⁴

A few days earlier, Beovich had announced that, following advice from the Diocesan Commission for Sacred Liturgy, English would be introduced into the liturgy in two stages. From Sunday 5 July, at all public Masses on Sundays and holidays, the priest would read in the vernacular the Introit, Collect, Epistle, Gradual and Gospel, Offertory, Communion and Post-Communion prayers, and would recite with the assembly the Our Father. The priest would face the people when reading the Epistle and Gospel: the pre-Vatican II practice was for the priest to read the lessons facing the altar. In the second stage, commencing Sunday 2 August, the people were to take part fully by joining with the priest in the Kyrie, Gloria, Creed, Sanctus and Benedictus, Agnus Dei, Acclamations, greetings and dialogues. There was the added direction that approximately half the Masses celebrated during the week were to be celebrated in Latin so as to enable the faithful to learn in Latin their parts in the Ordinary of the Mass. This directive appears to respect the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: 'The use of the Latin language, with due respect to particular law, is to be preserved in the Latin rites.'²⁵ But when the vernacular was allowed in certain parts of the Mass it soon became the norm. It was estimated that about 7500 took part in the campaign and that some of the leaders reported: 'People are incredulous when they realise how little they know about the Mass – even the really good Catholics.'²⁶

²⁴ *Southern Cross*, 3 July 1964, 1.

²⁵ The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, par 36.

²⁶ *Southern Cross*, 10 July 1964, 1.

Parish Pastoral Council campaigns

Parish Pastoral Councils (PPCs) were not specifically mentioned in the documents of Vatican II. However, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*) asserted: ‘By reason of the knowledge, competence or pre-eminence which they have the laity are empowered – indeed sometimes obliged – to manifest their opinion on those things which pertain to the good of the Church. If the occasion should arise this should be done through the institutions established by the Church for that purpose’.²⁷ The Code of Canon Law (1983) gave juridical status to PPCs in Canon 536 § 1 and § 2.

The *Southern Cross* in March 1970 reported that a five-month campaign to promote PPCs in all parishes would be conducted.²⁸ In May, David Shinnick, the campaign coordinator, provided two articles for the *Southern Cross* entitled ‘The what, the why and the how of Parish Pastoral Councils’.²⁹ In the cathedral, on 21 June, Beovich commissioned leaders for home discussion groups.³⁰ Shinnick offered ‘Some Practical Hints About Parish Councils’ in the *Southern Cross* at the end of July.³¹

Part of the PPC campaign was a residential weekend at Graham’s Castle conference centre, Goolwa on 1-2 August, attended by more than forty people from twenty-seven parishes throughout the archdiocese. The participants came from seven nationalities and included married couples, singles, priests, religious sisters, and seminarians. Gleeson remained in residence for the whole weekend, indicating both his appreciation of the value of PPCs and also his relentless dedication to work. Interviewed following the weekend, Gleeson said the purpose of the PPCs was ‘to help priests, religious and people make Christ present in our midst’. He stressed that PPCs must be pastoral in outlook by seeking to:

²⁷ *Lumen Gentium*, par 37.

²⁸ *Southern Cross*, 13 March 1970, 1.

²⁹ *Southern Cross*, 1 May 1970, 4; 8 May 1970, 10.

³⁰ *Southern Cross*, 26 June 1970, 3.

³¹ *Southern Cross* 24 July 1970, 4.

- get all to do God's will
- make our worship better
- make our charitable services better
- improve the education we offer
- step up our work for Christian unity
- bring about the impact we should have on society generally.³²

The first rally of PPCs was held at Loreto Junior School, Marryatville, on Sunday 23 May 1971, by which time Gleeson was the archbishop. More than 160 people from 33 parishes attended. Addressing the final session, Gleeson said that the relationship between the parish priest and the PPC should be like 'partners in marriage who grew in trust, understanding, confidence and respect as they lived out their married lives together'. Here Gleeson presented a very idealistic image. He also encouraged the PPCs to set aside time each meeting to discuss a truth of the Christian faith.³³ The annual conference of the Christian Life Movement in November recorded that it had 'provided the central organisation' for the DLCs, Life and Worship Congresses, the Lenten Appeals and also the PPC campaign that had brought together 7000 priests, religious and lay people.³⁴ In an unpublished paper Shinnick wrote: 'It is in this definitive establishment of parish pastoral councils in the diocese in 1970-1971 that the 'pattern of diocesan pastoral planning can be said to have its origins.'³⁵

Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee

The Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee (LALC) commenced work on 22 May 1966 and ceased on 30 October 1978.³⁶ Its purpose was to cooperate with and coordinate the various lay apostolate organisations in the archdiocese and, in view of the increasing awareness of the role of the laity in the Church, to address newly perceived needs.³⁷

³² *Southern Cross*, 7 August 1970, 3.

³³ *Southern Cross*, 28 May 1971, 3.

³⁴ *Southern Cross*, 20 November 1970, 3.

³⁵ David Shinnick, 'Pattern of Pastoral Planning in the Archdiocese of Adelaide 1970-2002: a resource compiled by David Shinnick', January 2016, 5. Document in author's possession.

³⁶ The commencement of LALC was recorded in the undated minutes of the LALC sub-committee on compiled by David Shinnick', January 2016, 5. Document in author's possession. Membership Criterion. Box 402: LALC 1, ACAA; its closure in a letter from the chairman, David Young, to members dated 30 October 1978. Box 510: LALC 2, ACAA

³⁷ 'Some notes concerning the Role and Future of the Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee (LALC)', by John R Sabine (vice-president). Box 402: LALC 1. ACAA,

The value of LALC was made clear in a letter Bill Byrne sent to Archbishop Beovich from Washington DC in 1967, following the Third World Congress for the Lay Apostolate. He said that he had met many who had been ‘very envious of our set-up in Adelaide, particularly of the Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee’.³⁸ Byrne expressed the opinion that LALC was ‘so essential to the fruitful cooperation between laity and Bishops, for without it, each lay group tends to promote itself to the exclusion of all others’. He also recorded that in Rome there was ‘very wide agreement that the day of big meetings is over, and that the era of the small less formal, but more closely-knit group is here’.³⁹ This had been the accepted wisdom in Adelaide for quite some time.

The Diocesan Pastoral Renewal Programme

The Diocesan Pastoral Renewal Programme (DPRP) was a continuation of what had already been done in the archdiocese to further the vision of Church presented by Vatican II. It was in harmony with the words of Pope Paul VI during the final session of the Council: ‘From now on *aggiornamento* [updating] will signify for us a wisely undertaken quest for a deeper understanding of the spirit of the Council and the faithful application of the norms it has happily and prayerfully provided.’⁴⁰ The publication of the booklet, *Parish and Lay Renewal* (1979), which sold 30 000 copies, raised awareness of the need for reflection and renewal. The authors were Robert Wilkinson, a priest of the archdiocese, and editor of the *Southern Cross*, and Charles Mayne, a Jesuit priest, who as noted in Chapter 1, greatly influenced Gleeson when he was a student in the seminary at Werribee.⁴¹

³⁸ The archdiocese of Wellington, New Zealand, had formed the Catholic Lay Apostolate Committee on 1 July 1962 ‘to enable lay organisations of Wellington archdiocese to co-operate in the work of the apostolate’.

³⁹ Byrne to Beovich, 28 November 1967, Newman Institute – Christian Life Movement, 1948-69, ref 012-0006, ACAA. In 1967 NICS became known as the Christian Life Movement.

⁴⁰ Quoted by Lawrence Cardinal Shehan in the Introduction to *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed Walter Abbott, XVIII.

⁴¹ Robert (Bob) Wilkinson and Charles Mayne SJ, *Parish and Lay Renewal* (Melbourne: Society of Saint Paul, 1979).

The booklet was based on addresses to the Diocesan Pastoral Council by the two authors in 1979. This publication gained international recognition – copies were sent to bishops in Ireland and the United States of America.⁴² In 1981 Mayne again spoke to the Diocesan Pastoral Council and his address was serialised in the *Southern Cross*.⁴³

The women and men religious in South Australia supported a programme of reflection and pastoral planning. The triennial meeting of the bishops of South Australia and the provincials of men and women religious working in the Adelaide archdiocese and the Port Pirie diocese was held at St Francis Xavier's seminary on 23-25 March 1981. Forty-four provincials were present, twenty-two males and twenty-two females. This was the continuation of a series that began in 1975 and was an initiative of Gleeson and the then bishop of Port Pirie, Bryan Gallagher.⁴⁴ The provincials represented more than eight hundred priests, nuns and brothers who were involved in a wide range of ministries. During the meeting the existing and developing needs in the mission of the Church were examined. There was agreement on the need to clarify the vision of the Church and the apostolate of its members in both the short and long term.⁴⁵ A proposal for diocesan self-study and pastoral planning came from this meeting: 'Our call as Church to be an Easter people means that we are called to a continual transformation in Jesus...to assist this transformation...we propose that a self-study in the light of the gospels be initiated by the beginning of 1982.'⁴⁶ The Council of Priests and the Diocesan Pastoral Council supported the idea of renewal, a popular word at this time.

⁴² Kennedy to Most Rev Bernard Law, 14 July 1980. Series 23: Bishop Philip Kennedy Official Correspondence and Papers, ACAA.

⁴³ *Southern Cross*, 25 June 1981, 6; 2 July 1981, 6; 9 July 1981, 6; 15 July 1981, 6.

⁴⁴ Gallagher was bishop of Port Pirie in 1952-80.

⁴⁵ *Southern Cross*, 2 April 1981, 16.

⁴⁶ 'A proposal for Diocesan Self Study and Pastoral Planning – submitted by the South Australian Conference of Major Superiors, 27 April 1981'. *Planning for Renewal: report from the diocesan self-study task force*, Issue 2 (Revised), 47, Box 386, folio 'DPR Towards a Vision of Renewal 1983', ACAA.

Gleeson announced the move to develop a new pastoral plan for the archdiocese, at a meeting of the Council of Priests on 24 June 1981.⁴⁷ He had discussed the idea with Bishop de Campo of Port Pirie, who in 1980 had succeeded Gallagher. The object of the programme was to encourage the ongoing formation and renewal of all members of the Church in the archdiocese of Adelaide, to seek to understand the ‘joys and hopes, the fears and anxieties’ of the laity, religious and clergy, to strengthen the apostolic commitment of the archdiocesan ‘family’, and select pastoral goals. A Diocesan Self-Study Task Force was established in June 1981 with the responsibility of consulting widely, proposing a programme and process to be followed, and reporting by the end of the year. The task force was to bear in mind the results of the meeting of the bishops with the major superiors of religious women and men in the state held in March and also the address given by Mayne to the Diocesan Pastoral Council in June.

In January 1982, the *Southern Cross* provided a report on the progress made by the task force and a statement by Gleeson. A letter had been sent to the priests of the archdiocese asking for their assistance for ‘developing a self-study’ of areas of concern in the local church. Such an exercise was deemed to be necessary, given the emerging shortage of priests and the changing attitudes and standards of society. Gleeson said that the task force’s recommendation for a self-study would proceed and this would have six general aims. Before listing these aims he recalled the ‘three burning questions’ posed by Pope Paul VI in his 1975 encyclical, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*:

- In our day, what has happened to that hidden energy of the Good News, which is able to have a powerful effect on man’s conscience?
- To what extent and in what way is that evangelical force capable of really transforming the people of this century?
- What methods should be followed in order that the power of the Gospel may have its effect?⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Bishop Francis Peter de Campo was bishop of Port Pirie in 1980-98.

⁴⁸ *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, par 4.

Gleeson then listed the six general aims of the self-study:

- To enable the archdiocese to face the questions put by Pope Paul.
- To help us strive for conversion and renewal.
- To help us discover the joys and hopes, the fears and anxieties of the people in the archdiocese.
- To help us:
 - to discover and develop new forms of apostolic presence.
 - to select pastoral goals.
 - to develop programmes to provide for a continuing formation and renewal of lay people, religious and clergy.
- To strengthen the apostolic life and commitment of all members of the diocesan family. People can be strengthened to live the Christian life by belonging to small communities – each parish can become a cluster of small communities and the diocese a ‘communion of communities’.
- To help us co-ordinate the efforts of everyone in the Church in Adelaide as we all work faithfully to fulfil our part of the mission of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ *Planning for Renewal: report from the diocesan self-study task force, Issue 2 (Revised) 22 June 1982, Appendix 1, 41-45. Reference Material, Box 14, ACAA.*

In March 1982 the task force recorded that thirty-five responses had been received from the letter sent to priests of the archdiocese. At the time there were 109 priests incardinated into the archdiocese (that is, belonging to it).⁵⁰ A 32 per cent response rate provided a reasonably representative view. Eighteen parishes and three schools were in the care of religious clergy, who numbered approximately eighty, but it is unclear how many of these were consulted.⁵¹ A particular area of concern was the number of invalid marriages among Catholics, mainly referring to those divorced Catholics who had contracted another marriage, and how to deal adequately with this pastoral problem. Some deemed that the decline in the number of priests should be viewed positively as it provided an opportunity to re-assess how to advance the Kingdom of God.⁵² The task force recommended that the ‘action-reflection-action’ methodology be followed. This process called for an inductive approach, observing relevant facts and drawing conclusions. It was well known to members of the Cardijn movements, the Young Christian Students and the Young Christian Workers. These Catholic Action groups had been vigorously promoted in the archdiocese. For those not involved in the groups it may have been difficult. There was a longstanding custom of looking to the clergy for leadership and so to a deductive way of proceeding.

⁵⁰ This figure was in the Quinquennial Report by Archbishop Gleeson for the years 1978-1982. The number of priests was for the year ended 31 December 1982. Box 179, ACAA.

⁵¹ *Official Directory of the Catholic Church in Australia 1983-1984.*

⁵² *Southern Cross*, 25 March 1982, 5.

In June 1982 there was a joint meeting of the main advisory bodies to the archbishop: the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Council of Priests. This was the first time that the two groups had held a joint meeting. The report of the task force, a sixty-page document entitled 'Planning for Renewal', was considered.⁵³ Some amendments were accepted, which shifted emphasis from 'self-study' and 'planning' to pastoral renewal, which was intended to include 'renewal in faith' as well as a 'renewal of church structures and use of resources'.⁵⁴ Gleeson, supported by Kennedy, his auxiliary bishop, accepted the recommendation that, following due consultation, the archbishop should implement the programme which was to be known as the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal Programme (DPRP). In March 1983 Gleeson initiated the six-year DPRP to be directed by a Diocesan Coordinating Committee. The committee comprised a director, David Shinnick, a secretary Pauline Kenny, and a Sister of Mercy. The Sisters of Mercy offered the services of a sister to work half-time with the director – Sr Patricia Pak Poy (1983-4), Sr Catherine Seward (1985-6) and Sr Ruth Egar (1987-8). The word 'Programme' was removed from the title in 1984 to indicate that it was not a programme to be followed by another programme but 'a movement in renewal', a 'major effort in the continuing journey'.⁵⁵

Parishes, lay organisations, Catholic schools, diocesan agencies, and individuals were invited to nominate persons to augment the committee. Gleeson's constant commitment was to set up structures on a representative basis; the nominees had to have

⁵³ *Planning for Renewal: report from the diocesan self-study task force*, Issue 2 (Revised) 22 June 1982. Box 386: Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, Files 203-221, ACAA.

⁵⁴ *Comprehensive Report of Diocesan Pastoral Renewal Phase 1: 1983-1988*, vol 1, 'Story of the Journey' (Adelaide: Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, nd), 18. Reference Material, Box 14, ACAA.

⁵⁵ *Report of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal 1983-1988* (Adelaide: Catholic Adult Education Service, circa 1989), 6. Reference Material, Box 15, ACAA.

a base from which they were drawn. Over a hundred names were put forward and Gleeson and Shinnick together chose the final twelve, all of whom accepted.⁵⁶ The committee met for the first time in May 1983 at the archbishop's home 'Ennis' to share a meal and plan for the future. Gleeson advised them that their task was to work with and support David Shinnick, the director of the renewal. In particular, they were:

- To work towards renewal in faith of the people of the archdiocese.
- To work towards a review of Church structures and use of resources.⁵⁷

A vision statement

The Committee decided that its first task was to produce a vision statement, clearly defining the aims of the programme. A twenty-page document entitled *Towards a Vision of Renewal* was produced and presented to the Council of Priests and the Diocesan Pastoral Council in August.⁵⁸ About 7500 copies of the vision statement were printed and made available to parishioners at all Masses in the archdiocese on Presentation Sunday, 18 September 1983. The vision statement was offered for 'discussion, comment and amendment' over a three month period. Parishes, schools, religious communities, families, small groups, and individuals were encouraged to study the statement and to report their views and suggestions to the programme director

The vision statement insisted that renewal must be considered in the context of the society in which we live, our world, and the Church of which we were members. It listed matters that needed to be kept in mind: divorce rates, unemployment due to technological changes, religious practice being in a state of rapid decline, Aboriginal culture and spirituality destroyed because the Aboriginal people had been deprived of their land rights, the sick, lonely, poor, and destitute in the community. On the world

⁵⁶ The initial members were: Antonietta (Anna) Bonini; Sr Christine Burke IBVM; Michael Campbell; Sue Hawkins; Fr Terry Holland PP; Sr Anne Howard OP; Terry Rowett; Br Austin Stephens FMS; Adrian and Lyn von der Borch.

⁵⁷ *Southern Cross*, 19 May 1983, 1. Photograph of the co-ordinating committee, 2.

⁵⁸ *Towards a Vision of Renewal* (Adelaide: Catholic Adult Education Service, 1983). Reference Material, Box 14. ACAA.

scene there were people enduring extreme poverty and the denial of human rights. Christians and people of goodwill were called to contribute to the building of a more just and humane society. The changes in the Catholic Church brought by Vatican II invited a new approach to the world and other Christians and other faiths.

The renewal programme was considerably influenced by the proclamation in 1983 of a Holy Year by Pope John Paul II.⁵⁹ It was to commemorate the 1950th anniversary of the Year of Redemption – the year Jesus was said to have died. The pope said the Holy Year would commence in Lent 1983. The theme would be ‘reconciliation and penance in the Church’s mission’. The reasons for declaring a Holy Year were the centrality of the Redemption to Christianity, the approaching Synod of Bishops and the ‘worthy preparation’ for the Holy Year 2000.⁶⁰ The pope then said: ‘We ask the Lord that this celebration may bring a gust of spiritual renewal at all levels!’⁶¹ Clearly this also was the aim of the DPR. The committee decided that the theme and purpose of the Holy Year would be embraced by the DPR until Easter 1984.⁶² As a result of the responses to the vision statement and the declaration of the Holy Year, the focus for 1984 was to accept that the ‘starting point for our renewal be in our own lives, especially in our relationship with God and with other people’. Specifically, this entailed encouraging people:

- to reflect on their lives in the light of the Gospel.
- to share their hopes and concerns, and then find opportunities to respond to them individually and together.

⁵⁹ Popes, John XXIII and John Paul II, were canonised on 27 April 2014, Divine Mercy Sunday.

⁶⁰ After The Sixth Ordinary Synod of Bishops in 1983, Pope John Paul II issued a Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (1984) which summarised the work of the synod. ‘*Personal conversion is the necessary path to harmony between individuals*’, (par 4) was an assertion in harmony with the aims of the DPR.

⁶¹ *L’Osservatore Romano*, 6 December 1982, 7. See also *The New York Times*, 27 November 1982.

⁶² *Memoirs of David John Shinnick*, vol. 3, 11.

The need for leaders

It soon became clear that the DPR needed leaders to enable the proposed renewal to function effectively. A core group worked with twenty facilitators to produce a leadership formation programme. Parishes, organisations, schools and religious communities were invited to nominate suitable persons to attend these courses. Those nominated attended sessions arranged in fifteen clusters, each cluster formed from the combination of three to seven parishes. About 450 attended these formation sessions, and the course ended with a commissioning service in the cathedral on 13 June 1984, at which Gleeson presided. Normally leaders would have been commissioned during Mass but the committee decided that a flexible 'liturgy of the Word and life' was more appropriate, and Gleeson accepted this recommendation.

In his homily Gleeson skilfully referred to the final book in the New Testament, the Apocalypse. Chapters 2 and 3 contain letters to seven churches in Asia, bringing to each a message from the Lord. The letters express praise, blame, exhortation and encouragement and all ended with the summons: 'Listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches'. Gleeson said that those present were praying that here in Adelaide all would listen to what the Spirit was saying to them. He then spoke the words of commissioning: 'Go forth now in the power of the Spirit to be leaders in the mission to rediscover the person and mission of Jesus, to help us all to deepen our relationship with him and to renew the life of the Church and the world.'⁶³

⁶³ *Southern Cross*, 14 June 1984, 1.

Youth Consultation: an assembly within the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal

A Youth Consultation was launched on 2 December 1984 by the Catholic Youth Team (CYT) in cooperation with the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal Coordinating Committee. It was conducted at St Michael's College, Henley Beach. The CYT became an official structure in the archdiocese in March 1984. This resulted, in large part, from an initiative of Bishop Kennedy who expressed his concern at the 'uncoordinated' state of youth affairs in the archdiocese and the lack of communication between the various groups and ministries.⁶⁴ The date of the consultation was significant as it was on the night between 2 and 3 of December that the Bhopal gas tragedy, also known as the Bhopal disaster, occurred in India. A gas tank of the American firm, Union Carbide Corporation, had exploded releasing the deadly Methyl Isocyanate (MIC) gas and other poisonous substances. It was one of the world's biggest industrial disasters to that date, causing massive and continuing loss of life. The event was seen as a summons to all, including the youth, to be concerned with the needs of the human family throughout the world.

⁶⁴ *Comprehensive Report of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, Phase: 1 1983-1988*. Volume 3, Supporting Documents. Part 1: Looseleaf documents 1 to 33. Box 14 Reference Material, Document 16, ACAA.

At least two hundred young people attended the consultation which began at 10.30am and concluded with Mass at 4.30pm. The coadjutor archbishop, Leonard Faulkner, was celebrant of the Mass and told the youth that he and Archbishop Gleeson pledged their support. The gathering planned an assembly of youth leaders early in 1985 to make final plans for the consultation. In April, Sr Mary La Buna, a Pastorelle Sister, began work as a part-time coordinator.⁶⁵ In May, the *Southern Cross* reported that thirty-five energetic young people gathered at Norton Summit to share their hopes and concerns. The gathering tabled its own thoughts concerning the Church, both positive and negative. The youth viewed the Church in a favourable light as:

- A place where you find meaning and a sense of mission.
- An organisation which gives hope in the risen Christ.
- A family which shows us how to share.
- A challenge to strive for a better and more just world.

But there was a downside. Some young people complained that the Church was 'boring and meaningless'; too structured, a 'conservative club', and that in some parishes there was little involvement with the wider community.⁶⁶

The youth assembly, with the theme 'Youth-United for Action', took place on the weekend of 25-27 October 1985 at Christian Brothers' College in Adelaide. One hundred delegates from the various youth groups attended from Friday evening through Saturday, identifying key issues facing young Catholics and preparing proposals for change. On Sunday from 10am to 5pm about four hundred attended the open assembly to hear and see the fruits of the delegates' discussions and reflections.

⁶⁵ The Pastorelle Sisters were founded in Rome in 1938 by Blessed James Alberione.

⁶⁶ *Southern Cross*, 2 May 1985, 8.

The delegates affirmed that 'Everyone needs an opportunity for creative, cooperative work that is of service to the community'; the homeless and the victims of sexism and racism need support; feeling happy about one's physical and mental condition and having good relationships with friends, family and community is essential; faith is fundamental to enable life to be lived to the full and consequently both schools and parishes should employ creative ways of catechising.⁶⁷ A shared Eucharist, barbeque and entertainment rounded out the day. The gathering was assured that the recommendations would be presented to the Diocesan Assembly by twenty-five youth representatives. It was hoped that conference delegates would return to their parishes/youth groups with a new vision of what could be achieved.

⁶⁷ Statement from the Adelaide Diocesan Youth Assembly, October 25-27 1985. *Comprehensive Report of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, Phase 1: 1983-1988*. Volume 1: Story of the Journey. Appendix 13. Reference Box 14. ACAA.

The Diocesan Assembly

The Diocesan Pastoral Renewal reached a milestone in 1985, the year Gleeson retired, and Leonard Faulkner became archbishop on 19 July. The Diocesan Assembly with the theme 'Sent Forth' was the climax of the first three years of the DPR. It had become clear to those involved that this was not just a time-limited project but a phase in a never-ending endeavour. The two foci for the year were:

- To deepen our appreciation of our Christian faith.
- To deepen and extend our appreciation of the two objectives we set ourselves for 1984.

The Catholic Adult Education Service, established in 1971, designed a booklet, 'Towards Deeper Faith', to assist with the diocesan-wide, small-group discussion sessions, held in August-October.⁶⁸ The booklet aimed to 'deepen our faith, not in an abstract way, but through the re-discovery of Jesus and our Church within the experiences of our own daily lives'.⁶⁹ The booklet presented four themes, each of which was to be prayerfully considered during two meetings: The worth of each person; God loves us in our daily lives; taking up the cross – failure and faithfulness; and listening to the Spirit. It was estimated that five thousand people took part, gathered in over five hundred groups. At the end of the discussions, parish assemblies considered the recommendations coming from the groups. A diocesan assembly to reflect on these recommendations was held from 29 November to 1 December 1985 at Loreto College, Marryatville. Nearly three hundred delegates took part in the whole weekend and several hundred more joined them on the Sunday afternoon to learn something of the matters discussed and the recommendations made. At 5pm three thousand people attended the outdoor Mass, followed by a shared meal. The final event was a Bush Dance at 8pm.

⁶⁸ *Towards Deeper Faith* (Adelaide: Catholic Adult Education Service, 1985).

⁶⁹ *Towards Deeper Faith*, 3.

In January 1986, the *Southern Cross* reported that a booklet, containing the 136 proposals coming from the Diocesan Assembly, had been printed.⁷⁰ These were grouped under nineteen headings. The DPR Committee had identified seven ‘Major Trends’ in these proposals:

- There is a call to deepen and continue our personal renewal.
- There is the need for equality and participation in the life of the Church at every level.
- There is an emphasis on people’s yearning for Christian community, especially through all sorts of small groups.
- There is a strongly expressed desire for adult education.
- There is the call for more extensive leadership formation.
- Strong concern is voiced that the Church reach out more actively to alienated people.
- There are several calls to the diocesan family to examine our institutional life to ensure we are faithful to what we preach.⁷¹

All proposals coming from the Diocesan Assembly were considered in February 1986 at a joint meeting of the Council of Priests, the DPC and the DPR committee. Archbishop Faulkner established a working party to follow up the recommendations of the assembly.⁷² Members of the working party came from the Council of Priests, the DPR committee, the DPC, and migrant communities. The working party commissioned existing organisations to deal with matters within their competence and accepted responsibility for the remaining concerns.

⁷⁰ Renewal Assembly ’85, Proposals, Box 14, Reference Material, ACAA.

⁷¹ *Southern Cross*, 23 January 1986, 5.

⁷² ‘Diocesan Assembly 85 Working Party Report’, Box 15, Reference Material, ACAA.

Follow-up to the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal

In 1987 a booklet entitled ‘Diocesan Assembly 85 Working Party Report’ detailed the progress made in carrying out the proposals of the DPR. The working party had consulted with twenty-eight groups, and recorded twenty-two initiatives, some the direct outcome of the DPR, others resulting from the initiative of other groups or individuals. One outcome was the Adelaide Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace, established in April 1987. Previous attempts to set up such a commission had not succeeded. In January 1985, twelve members of the archdiocese who had attended a national justice and peace consultation in Sydney met with Archbishop Faulkner when it was decided to make another attempt.⁷³ This new commission was affiliated with the National Catholic Coalition for Justice and Peace. It was given the responsibility to further the assembly’s call to focus on Aboriginal matters – land rights, health, deaths in custody, education, multiculturalism, racism, and equal rights. Another significant development took place in March 1988 when the Catholic archdiocese of Adelaide was received, and warmly welcomed, into the South Australian Council of Churches, an outcome sought by the DPR.⁷⁴ For many who took part, the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal was a fruitful and enlightening experience and they enriched the archdiocese by their enhanced awareness of the need for change.⁷⁵

⁷³ Shinnick, *Memoirs*, vol 3, 53.

⁷⁴ Information provided by the South Australian Council of Churches, 27 May 2015.

⁷⁵ ‘Diocesan Assembly 85 Working Party Report’, Box 15, Reference Material, ACAA.

In April 1987 the Diocesan Newsletter reported that Archbishop Faulkner had appointed Michael Vial to the position of Diocesan Youth Minister Coordinator, tasked with the responsibility of creating an overall vision for youth ministry in the diocese and to implement such a ministry. He was to work with the CYT and especially Fr Dean Marin, the CYT chaplain, and Sr Carmel Pilcher, state school and post-school faith formation coordinator with the Catholic Adult Education Service.⁷⁶ This appointment was the fulfilment of a recommendation of the youth assembly.

Some deemed the formation of the Diocesan Pastoral Team (DPT) to be the principal achievement of the DPR. It came as a result of the laity's increasing awareness of being called to contribute to the Church and the world. A letter from David Shinnick and Peter Mullins to Archbishop Faulkner offered him assistance in the governance of the archdiocese.⁷⁷ The letter was a response to Faulkner's statement that administration was not one of his strong points and that he would prefer to give more time to pastoral work. Responding to the offer, Faulkner suggested a meeting with a 'small group of trusted and appreciative people' to discuss how best he could lead the archdiocese: should he request an auxiliary bishop or were there other possibilities? This meeting led to the formation of the Diocesan Pastoral Team (DPT), the first of its kind in Australia. Together with the archbishop, a vicar-general, a religious sister and a lay person jointly provided pastoral care of the archdiocese.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ *Diocesan Newsletter: monthly newsletter of the Archdiocese of Adelaide*, April 1987, 5.

⁷⁷ Shinnick and Mullins to Faulkner 15 March 1985, Box 390, ACAA.

⁷⁸ Madge McGuire, 'Bishop, Sister, Priest and Lay Person Working in Partnership', *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 67, no 4 (1990), 482-89. *Southern Cross*, 17 April 1986, 1 and 7. Paul Kenneth Hawkes, *Prophetic Pastoral Leadership: the Adelaide archdiocesan pastoral team 1986-2001* (Canberra: Inspiring Publishers, 2018).

Adjunct events

The DPR committee had planned to use the year 1986 for consolidation and reflection – a time to move around the archdiocese and maintain the momentum built up during the years 1983-85. However, by the end of 1985 the committee added to its intended programme support for a series of events organised outside the DPR but needing to be integrated with each other and the renewal movement. These included:

- An Ecumenical Lenten Study
- Discussion in preparation for the 1987 Bishops' Synod in Rome
- A Priests Assembly
- The visit of Pope John Paul II.

The first, in chronological order, was the ecumenical Lenten programme, sponsored by the Heads of Christian Churches with the theme 'Land of Promise? Visions of Freedom'. A booklet to facilitate group discussion was prepared by the Ecumenical Studies Continuation Committee and published by the Anglican Board of Christian Education.⁷⁹ Following the 1982 ecumenical Lenten programme, Gleeson had agreed that the next Lenten programme, to be conducted in 1986, would be a contribution to the sesquicentenary of South Australia. These ecumenical undertakings resulted from a residential conference attended by nineteen heads of Christian churches in South Australia. Those involved claimed that they had grown in an understanding of each other and their Christian fellowship and wondered if it would be possible for others to be enriched with a similar experience.

⁷⁹ *Land of Promise? Visions of Freedom* (Adelaide: The Anglican Board of Christian Education, 1985). Box 15, Reference Material, ACAA.

It was from that question that the ecumenical Lenten studies began in 1980; the theme of the first was 'Your Kingdom Come'. The Anglican archbishop, Keith Rayner, reported at the ecumenical worship service that concluded the 1980 programme that 18 000 had taken part.⁸⁰ The principal outcome for the archdiocese from the 1986 programme was the highlighting of ecumenism as an integral part of the diocesan renewal.

The DPR contributed to preparations for the Synod of Bishops held in Rome on 1-30 October 1987. Two hundred and thirty two bishops participated in the synod, conducted in St Peter's Basilica with the theme 'The Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World Twenty Years after the Second Vatican Council'.⁸¹ The archdiocese was invited to join the national consultation in preparation for the synod. A discussion guide for small groups and personal reflection, 'Laity Today and Tomorrow', was published by the Catholic Adult Education Service, and bore the logo of the Papal Visit and also that of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal.⁸² People were invited to send comments to Brian Moylan at the Lay Apostolate Office where they were collated and made available to the Australian Bishops' Conference as part of their preparation for the synod. They were also given to the DPR Committee as part of the on-going renewal of the archdiocese. One result of the discussion groups was the emphasis on lay people having a mission, not merely in service of the Church but perhaps more importantly a mission 'in and to the world'.

⁸⁰ *Southern Cross*, 2 April 1980, 7.

⁸¹ The Synod of Bishops was constituted by Pope Paul VI's Motu Proprio, *Apostolica Sollicitudo*, 15 September 1965.

⁸² *Laity Today and Tomorrow* (Adelaide: Catholic Adult Education Service 1987). Reference Material, Box 15, ACAA.

In October 1987 the Priests' Assembly, a project of the Priestly Life and Ministry Committee (PLM), was conducted over ten days at St Francis Xavier's Seminary. The PLM had been set up by the Council of Priests in August 1978 with the term of reference, 'care for the renewal in depth of the life and ministry of priests'. In its duration and scope the assembly was a first for the archdiocese. The assembly adopted a vision statement of priesthood.⁸³ It also issued another five documents.

- Ordained ministry within the total ministries of the Church.
- Continuing formation and support of priests.
- Ministry among the poor and those at the margins of Church life.
- Developing Christian Communities.
- Review of regions.⁸⁴

The DPR contributed to the assembly by promoting a month of prayer for its success. A pamphlet: 'Walking with Our Priests: practical suggestions for people in walking with our priests towards their assembly' was prepared jointly by the DPR committee and the Priestly Life and Ministry committee. It bore the logo of the DPR.⁸⁵

The visit of Pope John Paul II to Australia from 24 November to 1 December 1986 involved enormous preparations in the Adelaide archdiocese, as elsewhere in Australia. The theme of the visit was 'Australia: land of many cultures'. The pope was welcomed to Adelaide on the evening of Saturday 29 November where, despite his delayed arrival, he was greeted by thousands with a Candlelit Way from the airport to the city and to the Town Hall. A large crowd also assembled in and around 'Ennis' where the pope lodged for the night. The pope, and Archbishops Gleeson and Faulkner, greeted the crowd from the balcony until the pope finally encouraged them to go home

⁸³ Priestly Life and Ministry, Archdiocese of Adelaide, Vision Statement, Box 14, Reference Material, ACAA.

⁸⁴ *Priests' Assembly October 1986: ordained ministry within the total ministries of the church* (Adelaide: Catholic Education Service, 1987), Box 15, Reference Material, ACAA. For the vision statement see *Comprehensive Report of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal*, Phase 1: 1983-1988, Volume 1: Story of the Journey. Appendix 26, Box 14, Reference Material, ACAA.

⁸⁵ *Walking with Our Priests* (Adelaide: Catholic Education Service, 1986). Box 15, Reference Material, ACAA.

to their beds! The following day, Sunday 30 November, the pope celebrated the Advent Sunday Eucharist at Victoria Park Racecourse: some 180 000 people attended.⁸⁶ The DPR supported a time of prayerful and pastoral preparation for the visit. Three publications, each bearing the logos of the papal visit and the DPR, were distributed: 'Preparing for the Visit of Pope John Paul II – 'Australia Land of Many Cultures'; 'I am the Way the Truth and the Life'; 'Resources'.⁸⁷ The pope's visit was promoted as a time of personal and pastoral renewal, deeper faith, renewed enthusiasm, and a stronger sense of universal solidarity.

Women and the Australian Church

Women and the Australian Church (WATAC) commenced on 15 May 1982. The 'tentative step' was taken by a 'Mixed Commission' of representatives of the Major Religious Orders of Women, CMSWA (National), the New South Wales Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes (CLRI), and some Catholic bishops of New South Wales.⁸⁸ In May 1984 WATAC approved a national survey of Catholic women, *Project on Women*, that had the goal of changing the understanding of the role of women in their participation in the Australian Church and in the broader society. At the state level the primary task was 'consciousness-raising on Christian feminist issues'. The methodology was to be inductive, seeking women's experiences in order to formulate a response. In Adelaide, WATAC worked through the DPR.

Evaluation of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal

There were two evaluations of the DPR. In March 1986, an in-depth evaluation was conducted with the aid of a Uniting Church minister, Stuart A Reid, from the Centre for

⁸⁶ *Southern Cross*, 4 December 1986. It contained a 'Papal Visit Souvenir Issue', pages A-K and a normal *Southern Cross*, pages 1-20.

⁸⁷ All three were prepared by the South Australian Papal Visit Pastoral Preparation Committee and published by the Catholic Adult Education Service, the first in 1985 and the others in 1986. Box15, Reference Material, ACAA.

⁸⁸ See 'WATAC Herstory 1982–2007' <<http://www.watac.net/history.php>>. Accessed 31 August 2016.

Structural Analysis, Melbourne. There were twenty-four participants in the evaluation process – seven ordained clergy, nine religious sisters, one religious brother, three lay women and four lay men. The main points of Reid’s critique of the DPR can be summarised as follows. For the planning group, setting goals and objectives was of primary importance, but to convey them to others and to seek their acceptance and approval was a challenging task and there lingered the serious question: was it ‘behaviourally feasible’? Generally people do not readily own goals set by others. Another weak link was the lack of group skills possessed by the leaders and trainers. Such skills can only be gained through experiential and workshop methods. Not all parishes were ready to participate at the same time. It would have been better to have commenced with a small number of parishes and then moved on to another group. The timetable set for the exercise was too ambitious. There was also the resistance of some priests to ‘outsiders’ addressing their parishioners and the mistake of presuming that all involved understood the action-reflection-action methodology.⁸⁹ This assessment dealt mainly with the structure and processes of the DPR and not with the positive results achieved, despite the quite serious flaws in planning.

In mid-1988 the DPR Committee launched a review, conducted in the main without involving professionals. The purpose of the review was:

- to focus on what we had learnt so far;
- but particularly to clarify directions for the future.⁹⁰

The methodology: visiting as many priests as possible, the distribution of a questionnaire, encouraging individuals and groups to forward personal and group testimonies, inviting several parishes and lay organisations to write case studies of their journey of renewal, and the formation of a select group of forty to meet with the DPR

⁸⁹ Box 390: Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, ACAA.

⁹⁰ Comprehensive Report of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, Phase 1:1983-1988, vol 1: Story of the Journey (Adelaide: Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, 1988), 94. Box 14, Reference Material, ACAA.

committee for consideration and reflection.⁹¹ The committee conceded that it had been virtually impossible to reach Catholics who were not already involved with the Church and consequently that the contributors to the questionnaire would, in the main, be those already active in the archdiocese in some way. The result was a final comprehensive report to the archbishop.

With regard to the overall impact, the report concluded that the DPR had created a more positive climate and atmosphere whereby a large number of people had come to:

1. a greater degree of consciousness of what it meant to be involved, as a result of their baptism, in the mission of Jesus and his Church in an ongoing long-term way;
2. to a deeper desire to take action, both in their personal lives and within the institution of the local church and in the wider society, to live out that mission in greater fidelity to the Gospel;
3. a greater willingness to accept and tackle structural changes in creative ways.

As to the impact on individuals, priests, parishes, groups and society, the committee endeavoured to visit as many priests as possible as the success of the renewal and the effort to build a 'revitalised Church' depended on the backing of priests in parishes. The priests were reported to have provided constructive criticism in a real spirit of renewal. Two thousand questionnaires were distributed but when the report was being prepared only a hundred and thirty had been returned. Some responses showed awareness of the need for continuing ongoing renewal, of a deeper appreciation of their faith, and of greater involvement in the life and activity of the parish. 'Greater involvement by lay people' was seen by many as one of the great fruits of the DPR. In some parishes there was growth in community development, in the awareness of the necessity to reach out to those in need, both Catholics and in the wider community. Small groups were esteemed as a source of inspiration and there had been growth in the

⁹¹ Comprehensive Report, vol 1, 96-7.

use of the action-reflection-action paradigm. The involvement of Italian communities had brought great energy and enthusiasm to the renewal, as had the contributions of the Youth Forum. Small communities, such as people with hearing impairment and Acceptance, a welcoming ministry for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Catholics, their families and friends, who had been somewhat overlooked, were made to feel part of the community.⁹² There was also an awareness, and indeed growing pressure, for more urgent pastoral planning and a review of Church structures.

A navel-gazing exercise?

The DPR committee admitted to a feeling of self-doubt: 'Is what we are fostering really having an impact on our culture' or are we pursuing a relatively comfortable 'navel-gazing' exercise? To address this, the committee, contrary to its original intention, sought assistance from a professional, Fr Gerald Arbuckle, a Marist priest from New Zealand who was an experienced anthropologist. He directed the DPR committee to ask if their efforts had enabled communities to grow in their knowledge and love of Christ, to relate the Christian message to the issues around them, and to realise that their religion was not synonymous with an institution but with a living Christ. They should also ask if churches encourage the likes of social critics and dreamers who can assist reflection, and if they strive to make multiculturalism a reality.⁹³ The DPR committee, on reflection, listed fifteen trends and directions coming from the DPR, and expressed confidence that these positive findings revealed beyond doubt that the DPR was not a 'navel gazing' exercise.⁹⁴

⁹² Comprehensive Report, vol 1, 106-117. Acceptance was a welcoming ministry for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Catholics, their families and friends, affirming their dignity and Catholic faith. It was founded in Sydney in 1972 by Gary Pye who died of AIDS in 1990. <<http://www.gaycatholic.com.au/history>>. Accessed 20 June 2016

⁹³ Comprehensive Report of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, phase 1, vol 1, 98-99. See also, Gerald A Arbuckle, 'The Australian and the New Zealand Churches: ten years after *Evangelii Nuntiandi* – an overview'. *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 62, no 4 (1985), 340-1.

⁹⁴ Comprehensive Report of Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, vol 1, 98-99.

A critical voice

Michael Gilchrist, a long-time editor of *AD 2000*, a magazine founded by B A Santamaria in 1988 to oppose what he saw as liberal and non-traditional trends in the Catholic Church following Vatican II, was scathing in his criticism of the Adelaide archdiocese and in particular the Adelaide Diocesan Assembly:

The Adelaide Archdiocese, more than any other Australian See, busies itself regularly in assemblies, conferences, up-dating exercises, speculating on the future and creating new renewal programmes. To its admirers, this is proof that Adelaide, above all, has grappled with the real 'spirit' of Vatican II. To others, it is evidence of a 'Dutch Church' foothold in Australia.⁹⁵

Fr Denis Edwards, a respected theologian, had addressed the Diocesan Assembly and, according to Gilchrist, presented a 'future Church [that was] horizontal in emphasis, a kind of spiritual "meals on wheels" organisation, founded by Christ chiefly to better the temporal lot of the "suffering and marginalised of our society"'. Gilchrist viewed this as an 'inversion of Christ's teaching to love God *first* and to seek first, "the Kingdom of Heaven"'.⁹⁶ He was accusing the Adelaide archdiocese of distorting fundamental teachings of Christianity. However, Gilchrist's negative comments were not based solely on theology. They expressed also the long-standing hostility of the National Civic Council to the leadership of the archdiocese of Adelaide since Archbishop Beovich had withdrawn his support for the Movement, led by Santamaria, in the mid 1950s. There were conservative Catholics in Adelaide who would have agreed with Gilchrist. Copies of *AD2000* were readily available in Adelaide and were at times available in the front porch of churches.

⁹⁵ Michael Gilchrist, *New Church or True Church: Australian Catholicism today and tomorrow* (Melbourne: John XXIII Fellowship, 1987), 222. The Dutch Church was regarded by some as radical in its approach to the renewal called for by Vatican II.

⁹⁶ Gilchrist, *New Church*, 223

End of the first phase of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal

At the suggestion of Archbishop Faulkner, the decision was taken to end the first phase of the DPR in 1988. The committee gathered at 'Ennis' on 9 November 1988 to share a meal with Archbishop Gleeson in the room where the committee had met for the first time in May 1983. On 15 December, again at 'Ennis', the annual diocesan Eucharist for staff of the archdiocesan offices was celebrated. After the homily, the DPR committee returned to Archbishop Gleeson the mandate he had given them in 1983. This was followed by the burning of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal symbol accompanied by the words: 'Out of these ashes comes the recognition that we place greater emphasis in the future of pastoral planning, leadership formation and the growth of small groups and communities.'⁹⁷ Looking back on what had been a major activity in his life, Shinnick, the director of the DPR, said:

One thing I know: the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal is one activity, perhaps in some ways complicated and diffuse, that the diocese has experienced which has made a significant contribution, even if at times inadequate, to the building up of the diocese as a community for the world, a community of communities.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Shinnick, *Memoirs*, vol 3, 71.

⁹⁸ Shinnick, *Memoirs*, vol 3, 71.

According to the historian John Maguire, 'in comparison with what had been achieved in Adelaide in implementing the conciliar decrees, most dioceses lagged behind'.⁹⁹ So the belief of many that Adelaide was at least equal to the archdiocese of Hobart under Guilford Young in promoting Vatican II appears to be a just claim.¹⁰⁰ To be equal with the Hobart archdiocese was to be wholly committed to renewal, as was evidenced by Young's letter to a group of clergy, religious and lay leaders, dated 18 January 1966: 'The decisions of the bishops were meant for the whole Church. This means that it is the duty of every priest, religious and layman to do all in his power to play an active role by learning what the Council means and putting it into practice.'¹⁰¹ William (Bill) Byrne, a significant lay person in Adelaide, became the Sydney-based national director of Australian Catholic Relief in 1968. He and his wife Anne noted the contrast with what they had known in Adelaide. They found only 'superficial changes' had been made in Sydney: 'Both clergy and laity were at that time suffering from a real lack of education programs to help them through this period.'¹⁰²

⁹⁹ John Maguire, *Prologue: a history of the Catholic Church as seen from Townsville 1863-1983* (Toowoomba: Church Archivists' Society, 1990), 235.

¹⁰⁰ Laffin, *Beovich*, 263.

¹⁰¹ W T Southerwood, *The Wisdom of Guilford Young* (Tasmania: Stella Maris Books, 1989), 310.

¹⁰² Naomi Turner, *Catholics in Australia: a social history*, vol 2 (Melbourne: Collins Dove, 1992), 295.

Sometimes people have unrealistic expectations of the success of renewal efforts in Christian churches. In this context the experience of the Rev (Sir) Alan Walker and his Mission to the Nation in 1953 is relevant. Walker, the ‘conscience of the nation’, was deemed the ‘greatest preacher of his day in Australia, and a worldwide evangelist for the Methodist Church’.¹⁰³ He thought it ‘amazing how difficult it is for a new strategy to become understood leave [let] alone accepted by the church people’.¹⁰⁴ The success of the Mission depended on the wholehearted involvement of Methodist circuits but this did not happen.¹⁰⁵ It was the classic example of the ‘centre-periphery problem’, the strength at the centre unable to fully influence the circuits. According to Wright, Walker’s efforts to present Christ as the ‘answer to the personal and social problems of the whole society in meaningful language meant nothing to people who could understand only talk about personal sin and the cleansing power of “the blood of the Lamb”’.¹⁰⁶ Some of these problems were evident, to a degree, in the DPR.

In the Adelaide archdiocese, the ‘centre-periphery problem’ became evident in the Blackwood parish, situated in the Mitcham Hills, south of Adelaide. A young priest was appointed administrator in 1970. He was described by one parishioner as a ‘new-wave priest’ who ‘pushed himself to the limit for the parish’. The formation of the Parish Pastoral Council was seen by parishioners as the major development of his short ministry. He was replaced successively by two administrators, one of whom set out to undo much of what his young predecessor had done. This left many of the parishioners ‘frustrated and angry’. A parish priest was appointed in January 1972 and given the

¹⁰³Obituary<<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/1420576/The-Reverend-Sir-Alan-Walker.html>> Accessed 25 September 2017.

¹⁰⁴ Don Wright, *Alan Walker: conscience of the nation* (Adelaide: Openbook, 1997), 102.

¹⁰⁵ A Methodist circuit was a group of local churches in the care of one or more ministers.

¹⁰⁶ Wright, *Alan Walker: conscience of the nation*, 103.

‘period of upheaval’ prior to his taking up his post, he was deemed good for the parish.¹⁰⁷ The priest in question was Monsignor H B Skehan who arrived in the archdiocese in 1936, the year of his ordination, and retired in 1986 after serving the parish of Blackwood–Belair for fourteen years. Donovan noted:

Monsignor Henry Skehan left the parish in January 1986, the year of the golden jubilee of the [his] ordination...Materially the parish was much better served than it had been when he arrived.... Perhaps more importantly, however, the spiritual life of the parish had been consolidated.¹⁰⁸

Was the DPR the ‘most important initiative and legacy’ of Gleeson’s time as archbishop of Adelaide? As we have seen, there was the question of what was ‘behaviourally feasible’. Was it realistic to hope to achieve the goals of the DPR in the relatively short time allotted, given the acknowledged ‘centre-periphery problem’? The promotion of the vision of Church presented by Vatican II was the prime motivation for the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal, a renewal that included ‘renewal in faith’ and ‘renewal of church structures and use of resources’. The aim to achieve so much in so short a time was unrealistic. So it appears prudent to view the DPR, not as a pinnacle event, as for example speaking of someone reaching the pinnacle of fame, but as a significant contribution on the never-ending path to ‘renewal’. Such a judgement harmonises with the words of Vatican II: ‘The Church...at once holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of penance and renewal’.¹⁰⁹

Gleeson was present at many of the meetings and celebrations associated with the DPR. He was present for an entire residential weekend during the parish pastoral

¹⁰⁷ Peter Donovan, *Towards the New Jerusalem: a history of the Catholic community of Blackwood* (Adelaide: Blackwood Parish Council, 1986), 50-55.

¹⁰⁸ Donovan, *Towards the New Jerusalem*, 64. Note also a booklet, *Vale Monsignor Skehan: A great Irish priest of South Australia 1910-1993*. It contains three pen-pictures of Skehan: one by Kevin Kain, a parishioner when Skehan was in the parish of Edwardstown; a long-time friend also from the parish of Edwardstown, and Fr John Chambers Skehan’s assistant priest at Edwardstown. Copy in author’s possession.

¹⁰⁹ Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, par 8.

council campaign. His constant presence and enthusiasm was a sign to the participants of his commitment to forming a 'Council Conscience' in bishops, priests and people.

Chapter 11

SOME SIGNIFICANT PEOPLE IN GLEESON'S LIFE

Gleeson's people comprised groups and individuals; this was in part required by the new image of Church. He did not appear to have a special priest friend whose company and advice he sought. In this he was unlike Archbishop Daniel Mannix of Melbourne who had a close relationship with the Irish Jesuit Fr William Hackett.¹ But Gleeson had many friendships that he valued and nourished. The author remembers a celebration for Darcy Woodards, a long-serving employee in the church office. A reception followed the Mass in Our Lady of Victories Church, Glenelg.² Beovich, now retired, showed some annoyance when Gleeson offered him precedence when entering the reception, and motioned Gleeson to go first. Perhaps Gleeson was deferential to a fault! In his address Beovich said that he did not have personal friends, but if he did have one it would be Darcy Woodards. This would be consistent with his assertion that 'the life of a priest was a lonely life, and that of a bishop even more lonely'.³ Cardinal Gilroy was of the same opinion regarding the call to the episcopate. At the time of his retirement he told journalists that he had no personal friends; priests were told that being a bishop required 'a necessary isolation'. Gilroy was quite gregarious as a young man and the historian Edmund Campion asked the question: 'How did this man-about-town become the "ecclesiastical iron man" of later years?'⁴ John Luttrell recorded the words of Gilroy's nephew, Laurence Bayliss, describing a 'very moving' moment at a family

¹ See Brenda Niall, *The Riddle of Father Hackett: a life in Ireland and Australia* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2009).

² The author was administrator of the Glenelg parish 1966-74.

³ Laffin, *Beovich*, 166.

⁴ Edmund Campion, *Great Australian Catholics* (Melbourne: Aurora Books, 1997), 70.

gathering. His uncle spoke about the ‘loneliness at the top’, how he had ‘relied on his family for normality’ and ‘how much he loved the family’.⁵

Philip James Anthony Kennedy

Gleeson had been an auxiliary to Beovich for seven years and the coadjutor archbishop for a further seven years and so had learned at first-hand the need of the archdiocese for an auxiliary bishop. Soon after taking over from Beovich, he indicated his intention of seeking an auxiliary and invited the priests of the archdiocese to nominate three whom they deemed suitable for episcopal ordination. A Papal Bull, dated 29 January 1973, appointed Philip Kennedy as titular bishop of Roscrea and auxiliary bishop to James Gleeson. He received ‘episcopal consecration’ in St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral on 17 March 1973, less than two years after Gleeson assumed leadership of the archdiocese. Before Kennedy’s appointment was made public, Gleeson, who was attending a meeting of the Australian Episcopal Conference at St Paul’s Seminary at Kensington, in Sydney, wrote to Kennedy: ‘With gratitude to God, to the Holy Father and to you, I welcome you as my very special brother in Christ.’⁶ Kennedy was a graduate of both the University of Adelaide (LLB, 1954; BA, 1973) and Flinders University. At Flinders University, he received the Diploma of Social Administration in March 1972 and when the status of that course was upgraded he was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Social Administration in August 1977.⁷

A brief episode in Kennedy’s earlier life was his time with monks belonging to the Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance (OCSO), popularly known as Trappists. In 1954, monks from Mount St Joseph Abbey, Roscrea, Ireland, made a foundation in Australia at Tarrawarra, in the Yarra Valley, sixty kilometres north-east of Melbourne. Kennedy entered this community (raised to abbey status in 1958) on 1 February 1956,

⁵ John Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy*, 388.

⁶ Gleeson to Kennedy, 2 February 1973. Series 0023, ACAA.

⁷ Kennedy’s academic record, Series 0024, ACAA.

began the novitiate on 11 March and left the monastery on 23 May.⁸ In later life Kennedy claimed that at heart he was a recluse and his youthful wish to join the Trappists adds weight to this view. The following year he entered St Francis Xavier's seminary and was ordained to the priesthood in 1962.

Before his episcopal ordination Kennedy had revealed considerable organisational ability. In 1967-1971 he was assistant priest in the Marion parish and also chaplain to Flinders University. St Ann's Chapel, the oldest Catholic church in the near metropolitan area and the second oldest in the state, was within the parish boundaries and in dire need of repair. The parish was unable to fund the work so Kennedy decided to marshal volunteers. The chapel was restored and the only cost involved was for materials; donations provided the required \$1400. The estimated cost, without voluntary labour, was \$35 000.⁹ It seems likely that Gleeson was impressed by Kennedy's work in the diocese. The author recalls a comment of Kennedy's parish priest, Owen Farrell: 'You get the message when the archbishop calls on the telephone and asks to speak to your assistant priest.'

The day Kennedy died, on 23 March 1983, Gleeson stated that: 'We were very different characters but we were able to work in a spirit of unity in the love of Christ.'¹⁰ The vicar-general, Thomas Horgan, frequently recalled the time Gleeson and Kennedy finished the commitments for the day earlier than expected. Gleeson wondered if they could do something to usefully occupy this free time. Kennedy's response was that he was going home to watch *Kojak*, a popular television series at the time. It featured Telly Savalas as a crime-fighting cop in New York City.¹¹ By contrast, on those occasions when Gleeson was a patient in Calvary Hospital, a telephone was installed in his room

⁸ Fr Stephen List OCSO to Sister Attracta, 17 May 1983. Series 0024, ACAA.

⁹ *Southern Cross*, 21 May 1971, 3.

¹⁰ *Southern Cross*, 30 March 1983, 7.

¹¹ The series ran 1973-78.

so that all who wished to contact him could do so. This was the ultimate indicator of his extreme work ethic. Following his heart attack in 1984, Gleeson did not continue this practice. Clearly Kennedy's approach to life was more balanced.

There were other contrasts in lifestyle between Gleeson and Kennedy. In 1981, the Marist Brothers celebrated the golden jubilee of their foundation in Mount Gambier. There was a civic reception for the brothers and distinguished guests, one of whom was Kennedy. In a light-hearted comment, Kennedy told the mayor, A L (Arch) Sealey, that the author, who was then the Dean of the South East, had only bourbon to offer him on his arrival. Sealey agreed that bourbon was only good for lighting fires! When the reception was over, Sealey told the author to look behind the door in the mayor's parlour before leaving. Behind the door was a bottle of excellent whisky that provided Kennedy with an enjoyable nightcap. Then there was the occasion when Gleeson made one of his many visits to Kennedy during his time in Calvary Hospital, terminally ill with a brain tumour. Gleeson arrived to find a nurse taking a bottle of French champagne back to the servery, as it was not correctly chilled. The champagne was a gift to Kennedy from a wealthy Catholic. Gleeson was not critical of Kennedy but marvelled how one, soon to enter the world to come and encounter the ineffable God, could be concerned with what appeared to Gleeson a trifling matter.¹² Kennedy also differed from Gleeson in being a dedicated cigarette smoker.

In his homily at Kennedy's funeral Mass Gleeson said: 'Bishop Kennedy and I were devoted as friends and brothers.'¹³ He also noted that Kennedy was not a 'yes' man and readily offered his ideas and constructive criticism. As a member of the Australian Episcopal Conference, Kennedy was secretary of the Bishops' Committee for Mass Media, Bishops' representative for Catholic press and for the Tertiary Catholic

¹² Memory affirmed in interview with Monsignor Robert Aitken, at Glenelg, 20 May 2015. At the time, Aitken was administrator of the cathedral, vicar-general and resided at the Archbishop's House.

¹³ *Southern Cross*, 30 March 1983, 3.

Federation of Australia and a member of the Bishops' Social and Charitable Works Committee.¹⁴

Kennedy's willingness to put forward his views was shown in a letter he sent to Gleeson in 1982. He asked Gleeson to suggest to the Central Commission of the Australian Episcopal Conference (from the late 1980s, the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference) the desirability of a meeting of the Australian bishops specifically to reflect on the mission of the Church in Australia. He mentioned that the bishops in the United States of America would be meeting for two weeks during June of that year for such a reflection. He added that there were positive features in the biannual meetings of the Australian bishops he had attended but there were also negative aspects. In particular, there were the pressures of tasks that required instant attention so that there was too little time or energy for faith reflection as a group. He felt the conference had only a vague sense of direction and of where the emphasis in mission should be.¹⁵ There is no evidence that this suggestion was adopted.

In May 1968, before Kennedy was a bishop, the Australian Episcopal Conference met at the Franciscan retreat house, Mount Alverna, Wahroonga, on the upper North Shore of Sydney. This, for the first time, was a ten-day meeting; the normal meeting ran for four and a half days.¹⁶ The report of the meeting listed the committees involved: Education; Liturgy; Ecumenism; Seminaries; Clergy and Religious; Revision of Dioceses and Provinces; Social and Charitable Works; Works of the Apostolate; Doctrine and Morals; Mass Media.¹⁷ Clearly the meeting was task-oriented and such appears to have been the normal procedure. Kennedy's letter indicated that it was still the norm in 1982.

¹⁴ *Southern Cross*, 24 March 1983, 2 (Special Supplement).

¹⁵ Kennedy to Gleeson, 23 March 1982, Series 23, ACAA.

¹⁶ *Southern Cross*, 10 May 1968, 1 and 11.

¹⁷ *Southern Cross*, 10 May 1968, 2.

The director of Catholic education, John McDonald, saw Kennedy as a ‘good foil’ for Gleeson because he would raise issues that Gleeson felt ought not to be raised. An example of this came in 1979 when the Kingston College of Advanced Education and the Murray Park College of Advanced Education amalgamated to form Hartley College of Advanced Education.¹⁸ The merger meant that the Kingston College property in North Adelaide, which included three nearby houses, was no longer required. It was therefore offered to the Catholic Church for 1.2 million dollars.¹⁹ Kennedy was an enthusiastic supporter of the proposal. He was of the opinion that St Francis Xavier’s Seminary could be sold, the students housed on the new site and further, the whole of the Church’s adult education service could be in the one location. When Gleeson returned from holidays he said: ‘Look, Archbishop Beovich is still alive and that seminary was really his project. I don’t believe we ought to do anything on that.’²⁰ McDonald said that, at least in hindsight, the potential of the proposal was ‘tremendous’. Gleeson’s decision indicated the reverence and respect he had for his predecessor.

On 27 February 1983, a month before Kennedy died, the first stage of the Bishop Philip Kennedy Retirement Village at Largs Bay was blessed and opened. Peter Taylor, chairman of Southern Cross Homes, had spoken by telephone to Kennedy seeking his consent for the village to be named after him. Kennedy gave his consent, on condition that Gleeson approved, and stated that it was the ‘greatest honor’ he had received. There was a certain irony in a retirement village being named after one who

¹⁸ Hartley College of Advanced Education Act 1978; repealed by South Australian College of Advanced Education Act 1982.

¹⁹ On 6 June 1974 the Adelaide Kindergarten Teachers College became the Kingston College of Advanced Education, ceased to be a section within the Kindergarten Union of South Australia, and began a new life. See Christopher Dowd, ‘The Adelaide Kindergarten Teachers College: a history of the teacher-training operation of the Kindergarten Union of South Australia 1907-1974’. MA thesis, Flinders University, 1981, vol 2, 615.

²⁰ South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project Part 3. Conversations with Dr John McDonald. Interviewer David Shinnick. Transcript, tape 4, 7. Adelaide Catholic Education Office Archives.

never lived to the age of retirement. Kennedy stated that he was proud to have been a member of the Knights of the Southern Cross, the developers of Southern Cross Homes, before entering the Adelaide seminary.²¹ Gleeson, who strongly resisted buildings or projects being named after himself, was delighted that his assistant bishop was so honoured.²²

At Kennedy's funeral Mass Gleeson recalled that Kennedy was keenly aware of the importance and value of higher studies. This awareness was evident in his enthusiastic support for the establishment of the Theology Institute in 1975, the Adelaide College of Divinity in 1979 and the Centre for Catholic Studies at the South Australian College of Advanced Education in 1982. The Theology Institute arose from the realisation of the limited opportunities for lay people to undertake theological studies in Adelaide; those involved in religious education had made known their desire for assistance. The institute was to be governed by an interim council of which Gleeson was president; it included representatives of the Catholic Adult Education Centre, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Catholic Education Office, seminary professors, Major Superiors, Christian Education Association, Priests Education Committee and Parish Co-ordinators.²³ This was a good example of Gleeson's consistent policy of forming boards and committees by co-opting members from all the groups involved. The first course of the institute was held in March 1975. Forty-five students enrolled in advance and thirty more on the opening day, indicating that the institute was meeting a need.²⁴ The Adelaide College of Divinity was a consortium of Adelaide theological colleges affiliated with Flinders University which awarded its Bachelor of Theology degree.²⁵ Here Gleeson was accepting a reversal of the attitude of the Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand that in 1937 viewed attendance at universities

²¹ Later Southern Cross Care.

²² *Southern Cross* 3 March 1983, 1.

²³ Promotional flyer for the Theology Institute, Box 317: Administrative Files. ACAA.

²⁴ *Southern Cross*, 14 March 1975, 5.

²⁵ Margaret Press, *St Francis Xavier Seminary: the first fifty years 1942-1992* (Adelaide: St Francis Xavier's Seminary, 1992), Chapter 10.

a ‘danger to the faith of Catholic students’ and aligning with the view of Archbishop Daniel Mannix who valued the ‘stamp and hallmark of university degrees’.²⁶ The Centre for Catholic Studies provided for the formation and continuing education of Catholic teachers.²⁷ The centre accredited some units supplied by the Theology Institute, for those who wished to teach in Catholic schools and colleges

Kennedy was also concerned to promote postgraduate studies for diocesan clergy. Shortly after Kennedy’s death, Gleeson announced the creation of the Bishop Philip Kennedy Memorial Scholarship. It was to be joined to the existing Brian Jordan Scholarship, which had already enabled some diocesan priests to attain higher degrees overseas.²⁸ Dame Roma Mitchell, who had chaired meetings of the Brian Jordan Scholarship committee, continued to fill that role for the Jordan-Kennedy scholarship.²⁹ Gleeson’s personal enthusiasm for advanced study was limited. John McDonald, as director of Catholic education, was entitled to study leave every nine years but never availed himself of the opportunity. He once raised the matter with Gleeson who responded: ‘What would *you* study? You like *doing* things, not studying things!’³⁰ McDonald admitted later that he regretted not taking the opportunities for further study. However, in later years, in 1980 Gleeson approved six months study leave for David Shinnick.

²⁶ Max Vodola, ‘The Diocesan Seminary’, MA thesis, 51.

²⁷ In January 1991, the University of South Australia was founded through the amalgamation of the South Australian Institute of Technology and the Magill, Salisbury and Underdale campuses of the South Australian Colleges of Advanced Education.

²⁸ Brian Jordan, a priest of the archdiocese, was ordained in 1953 and died in 1976 at the age of 46. He possessed a fine mind and was an academic at heart. He sought permission to engage in further studies some years following ordination but permission was not granted.

²⁹ *Southern Cross*, 14 April 1983, 1. Roma Mitchell, a devout Catholic, was appointed Queen’s Counsel (1962); Justice of the Supreme Court of South Australia (1965); Dame Commander of the British Empire (1982); Governor of the State (1991). She was the first woman in Australia to achieve these high offices. Susan Magarey & Kerrie Round, *Roma the First: a biography of Dame Roma Mitchell* (Adelaide: Wakefield Press, 2007).

³⁰ Transcript of South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project: Conversations with Dr John McDonald. Interviewer, David Shinnick, 21 October 1996, 2nd tape, 16, Adelaide Catholic Education Office Archives.

In this same homily Gleeson, very much a spiritual person, spoke of some aspects of Kennedy's spirituality. As he coped with the dying process, Kennedy found comfort in Psalm 27 which is a 'Triumphant Song of Confidence':

The Lord is my light and my help, whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life; before whom shall I shrink?

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long, to live in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life, to savor the sweetness of the Lord, to behold his temple (v.2 and 4)

At times, those near his bed, heard Kennedy repeat the words of the dying Jesus: 'Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit' and 'At last all powerful Master, you give leave to your servant to go in peace'.³¹ Gleeson ended the homily by saying that we will heed Kennedy's petition, expressed in the words of St Thomas More: 'Pray for me, as I will for thee, that we may merrily meet in heaven.'³² It appears reasonable to view Kennedy as one who did contribute significantly to Gleeson's functioning as archbishop. The author spoke to Kennedy at a time when there was a difference of opinion between himself and the archbishop. One of the author's complaints was that during a recent interview Gleeson accepted telephone calls instead of concentrating on the matter at hand. During a subsequent interview, Gleeson did not answer any telephone calls.

Gleeson and Religious

The Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (*Christus Dominus*, 28 October 1965), asserted:

In order to promote harmonious and fruitful relations between the bishops and religious, the bishops and superiors should meet at regular intervals and as often

³¹ *Southern Cross*, 30 March 1983, 15.

³² *Southern Cross*, 30 March 1983, 3. These words were also on the memorial card made available to those who attended the funeral Mass.

as seems opportune to discuss business matters of general concern in their territory.³³

Gleeson, a faithful promoter of the Council's decrees, did much to facilitate the greater integration of religious women and men into the life of the archdiocese. In October 1980, Gleeson wrote to the provincials of religious women and religious brothers and priests with houses in South Australia reminding them of residential meetings held in 1975, 1976, 1977 and 1978; also of the 1979 meeting of local provincials and nominated representatives of provincials living interstate. Clearly Gleeson valued and gave high priority to these meetings and a consideration of some of them illustrated their value and importance.

In July 1975 Gleeson and Kennedy shared a three-day meeting with the provincials of religious sisters with houses in the Adelaide archdiocese, at St Joseph's Convent, Aldgate,³⁴ This meeting was appreciated especially by the provincials who did not live in Adelaide. A similar meeting for provincials with houses of religious men in the archdiocese was held in February 1976.

A residential meeting of Gleeson, Kennedy and the vicar-general, Monsignor Thomas Horgan, with the provincials (or their delegates) of men and women religious working in the Adelaide archdiocese was held at St Joseph's Convent, Aldgate on 3-5 October 1977. This gathering was attended by forty men and women representing thirty-seven religious congregations. Those present identified the need for 'more dialogue, consultation and co-ordination' between the bishops and religious orders. They wanted the laity to receive more adequate formation to be able to fulfil their calling to the various

³³ *Christus Dominus*, par 35 (6).

³⁴ A photograph of all present appeared in the *Southern Cross* 11 July 1975, 5.

‘non-ordained ministries’ and more involvement with Catholic children in state schools and migrants.³⁵

Letters of appreciation sent to Gleeson indicated the success of this gathering. Austin Cooper OMI, Australian provincial of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, wrote: ‘Your initiative in calling such a meeting certainly gave me a very lively sense of the Church and the role which religious should play in it.’³⁶ Even more revealing was the letter from Sr Margaret Purchase of the Daughters of Charity: ‘We are indeed blessed in the Archdiocese in the example of openness and simplicity you give us. I am sure your trust and your encouragement must bear fruit in the time to come.’³⁷ The Jesuit provincial, Patrick O’Sullivan, among other matters was impressed by the trust Gleeson showed in his co-workers:

The atmosphere of trust and openness was truly inspiring, and a wonderful credit to yourself and Bishop Kennedy.

I would like to repeat the strong support all the provincials involved feel for you and Bishop Kennedy and how anxious we are to co-operate with you in building up the local church.³⁸

Gleeson expressed regret that he failed to take any initiative in 1980 but, following a meeting with local provincials in September, it was decided to have another meeting early in 1981. Gleeson advised the provincials that Bishop de Campo had ‘graciously agreed’ that this meeting should also involve the Diocese of Port Pirie.³⁹

Four years later, the South Australian bishops and provincials resident in South Australia invited all provincials or their representatives who had houses in South Australia to a two-day residential meeting on 23-25 March 1981 at St Francis Xavier’s

³⁵ *Southern Cross*, 14 October 1977, 9.

³⁶ Cooper to Gleeson, 10 October 1977. Box 208, ACAA.

³⁷ Purchase to Gleeson, 8 October 1977. Box 208, ACAA.

³⁸ O’Sullivan to Gleeson, 12 October 1977. Box 208, ACAA.

³⁹ Gleeson to Provincials of Religious Women and Religious Brothers and Priests with Houses in South Australia, 21 October 1980. Box 207, ACAA.

Seminary,⁴⁰ A letter from Sr Olga, the provincial of the Daughters of Saint Paul, dated 24 November 1980, tendered an apology for this meeting. She had nominated Sr Emmanuel, the local superior, to represent her and ended her letter with a tribute: 'I take this opportunity, Your Grace, to express my heartfelt gratitude to you for your continual goodness – so warm and personal always – to our Community and to me. I appreciate it deeply.'⁴¹

Gleeson constantly acknowledged the contributions of others who in turn responded in kind. An example was the invitation to the provincials of religious women resident in the archdiocese of Adelaide, together with their predecessors who had held office during the previous eight years, to a Mass and buffet meal at 'Ennis' in January 1981, to thank Sr Monica Marks RSM (Provincial of the Sisters of Mercy in 1972-80) for 'her support and encouragement to us all'. In her reply to the invitation, Sr M Concepta from St Joseph's Generalate, North Sydney said:

Your invitation to be present at the gathering for Monica conjured up many memories of my 'S.A. days'. 'Dialogue and collaboration' were already a reality in S.A. even before the publication of the 'Directives for Mutual Relations between Bishops and Religious in the Church'! – thanks to you.⁴²

It is obvious that Gleeson had been diligent in promoting closer cooperation between bishops and religious before the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes issued 'Directives for Mutual Relations between Bishops and Religious in the Church' (*Mutuae Relationes*) on 23 April 1978. It aimed to secure and consolidate 'fruitful collaboration between bishops and religious at diocesan, national and international levels'.⁴³ This intervention might suggest that in parts of the Church

⁴⁰ Gleeson to provincials, 21 October 1980. Box 207: Archbishop Gleeson Papers, ACAA.

⁴¹ Box 207, ACAA.

⁴² Sister M. Concepta to Gleeson, 2 January 1981. Box 207, ACAA. This gathering was also reported in the publication, *Conference of Major Superiors of Women's Religious Institutes. Australia: National and Regional Presidential Reports*, June 1981, 13, Box 207: Archbishop Gleeson Papers, ACAA.

⁴³ 'Mutuae Relationes', Austin Flannery ed, *Vatican Council II: more postconciliar documents* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1982), Document 92.

this 'fruitful cooperation' had not been satisfactorily progressed. A further indication that this was the case was the directive from Rome that religious men and women in all dioceses in the world were to provide a report for the Roman authorities on the progress achieved in the implementation of the directives.

Sr Mary Reardon returned to Adelaide as provincial of the Sisters of St Joseph in South Australia from 1977 to 1983. During this time she was also a member of the National Conference of Religious Women. At a meeting in Sydney, to organise the required report for Rome, she was elected chair of the committee entrusted with the task. Following this meeting she was driven to the airport for the flight back to Adelaide. During the drive, Reardon was tapped firmly on the back by the Australian provincial of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sr Noni Mitchell, who said: 'Just remember when you write the report we don't all live in the archdiocese of Adelaide.'⁴⁴ Reardon saw this as an acknowledgement that Gleeson was a leader in the area of relating with and empowering religious.

The May 1982 report from the Conference of Major Superiors of Women's Religious Institutes, Australia, would suggest that renewal in the archdiocese of Adelaide (and the Port Pirie diocese) was occurring with the total support of the bishops. The regional report from South Australia noted: 'The last twelve months have seen a continuance of that mutually enriching dialogue which has characterised the relations of bishop [Gleeson, Kennedy and de Campo] and religious in this State. We are grateful for the opportunities of formal discussions of policy which are open to us and for the ready access of all religious to the bishops.'⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Interview with Sister Mary Reardon at Kensington, S A, 1 October 2013.

⁴⁵ *Conference of Major Superiors of Women's Religious Institutes. Australia: National and Regional Presidential Reports*. May 1982. 15. Box 207, ACAA.

The 1984 meeting of major superiors was held at St Francis Xavier's Seminary on 1-3 October. Edmund Doogue, assistant editor of the *Southern Cross*, interviewed Sr Elizabeth Murphy, the Superior General of the Josephites from Sydney, Fr Frank Bertagnolli, the Salesian Provincial from Melbourne, and Sr Christine Burke IBVM, the facilitator of the gathering. Some of their responses were indicative of a changed mentality resulting from the Second Vatican Council and Gleeson's diligent implementation of its decrees. Bertagnolli said, 'There is a human face to religious life that wasn't there 30 years ago'. He also noted that there was a more relaxed manner of relating, with first names being the norm. All three agreed that religious communities needed to develop a 'new awareness of the need to respond to the issues of contemporary society'; that 'service of the kingdom of God' rather than a slavish keeping of rules was the key to religious life; that 'both lay and religious will need to be open to the call of the kingdom'. Sr Christine said, 'We are all trying to discover what it means to be disciples of Jesus Christ.'⁴⁶ She also expressed the conviction that there was no shortage of vocations among lay people and that the 'alienated, the hurt people of the Church, need attention'. Fr Bertagnolli said the Church will have to attend to the unchurched and those on the margins including the 75 per cent of young Catholics who rarely if ever attend Sunday Mass.

Gleeson and Laity

As noted in Chapter 4, Gleeson presented a written intervention, in English, on the subject of the laity, during the third session of the Second Vatican Council. This was probably an indication of his lack of ability to speak or write confidently in Latin, the language of the Council. He stated that too many saw the lay apostolate as something that had only become necessary because of the 'present state of the world rather than

⁴⁶ *Southern Cross*, 11 October 1984, 3.

seeing it as the full flowering of the life of the faithful'⁴⁷. He viewed this negative assessment as hindering the appropriate development of the laity which would be achieved by active participation in the liturgy, empowering them for apostolic endeavour. His commitment to the 'full flowering' of the laity' was shown by word and deed: the following two sections of the thesis illustrate this commitment.

Diocesan Assemblies

In establishing Diocesan Assemblies, open to all members of the archdiocese, Gleeson was breaking new ground. Vatican II had promoted collegial relationships throughout the Church. One example of this was the call to bishops to establish a council or senate of priests that would assist in the government of the diocese.⁴⁸ The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church stated: 'It is highly desirable that in every diocese a special pastoral council be established, presided over by the diocesan bishop himself, in which clergy, religious, and laity specially chosen for the purpose will participate.'⁴⁹ But the Diocesan Assemblies, open to all Catholics in the diocese, was an innovation. The response from the Sacred Congregation for Bishops to Gleeson's Quinquennial report for 1973-1977, signed by Cardinal Sebastiano Baggio, noted with approval the Diocesan Assembly:

Equally important [to the liturgical reform] is the annual Diocesan Assembly which has no executive authority but provides an excellent forum for all priests, religious and laity of the diocese who wish to attend. Such initiatives bode well for the future of the Church in South Australia.⁵⁰

The first Diocesan Assembly was held on 17 March 1974, at St Michael College senior school, Henley Beach, and it had the approval of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. The gathering was to be of a 'fairly informal nature' and not restricted to 'formally

⁴⁷ *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, Volumen III, Periodus Tertia, Pars IV, 807-8.

⁴⁸ Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, par 7.

⁴⁹ Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, par27.

⁵⁰ Response to Quinquennial Report submitted in 1978 from the Sacred Congregation for Bishops, dated 10 June 1980. Box 170, ACAA.

elected voting members'. The hope was that it could lead to 'something bigger in the future'.⁵¹ Almost all metropolitan parishes and several country parishes were represented at the assembly.⁵² Gleeson and Kennedy were present and two major topics were presented for discussion: the coming Holy Year and Parish Pastoral Councils. In addition, there was provision for questions to the archbishop.

The Holy Year was officially proclaimed by Pope Paul VI on Pentecost Sunday 1973: its theme was to be 'Reconciliation'. It would commence on Christmas Eve 1974 and conclude on Christmas Eve 1975 and so coincided with the tenth anniversary of the completion of the Second Vatican Council. There was also to be a time of preparation for the Holy Year which was inaugurated by the pope in the Basilica of St John Lateran on 10 November 1973. The first Diocesan Assembly was presented with a programme for the preparation of the Holy Year that was prepared by a special committee formed from the Senate of Priests and the Diocesan Pastoral Council. The programme called for community involvement:

- March: Life and Worship Congress.
- April: Communal celebration of penance and renewal of Baptismal vows.
- May: Greater involvement in Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.
- June: Reconciliation in families.
- July: Good Neighbour Month; celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Good Neighbour Council; reflecting on attitude to migrants.
- August: Unity and reconciliation on local and civic level: our responsibility for community welfare.
- September: Accent on care of the elderly and the sick.
- October: Diocesan Unity; also on Labor Day (14 October) renewal and reconciliation in industry.
- November celebration of the Feast of Christ the King: general communion at Mass on the feast day, 24 November.⁵³

While this list showed concern for the inner life of the Church it was also open to the civic community and the world.

⁵¹ *Southern Cross*, 22 February 1974, 2.

⁵² *Southern Cross*, 22 March 1974, 3.

⁵³ *Southern Cross*, 22 March 1974, 5 and 9.

In his address, Gleeson called on parishes to share resources and noted the danger that a parish ‘can turn in on itself.’ He reminded the assembly that the diocese provided services that a parish alone could not: for example, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine; the Catholic Education Centre and the Catholic Welfare Bureau. Consequently, it would be necessary for parishes to contribute to a central fund to maintain these services. Relevant to this, Gleeson declared that just wages must be paid to Church employees. He stressed the importance of daily life, the locus where we are called to represent Christ: ‘Because we belong here [in the world], we need to help the world and its people to be more fully redeemed, to be a place where we can be more truly and genuinely human because of our relationship with Christ’.⁵⁴ Here Gleeson was promoting the teaching of Vatican II, contained in the document *Gaudium et Spes*: ‘God destined the earth and all it contains for all men and all peoples so that all created things would be shared fairly by all mankind under the guidance of justice tempered by charity.’⁵⁵ He reminded those present that the Parish Pastoral Council shared the role of the Good Shepherd and as such should not restrict its concerns to financial matters; reaching out to those who had lost contact with the Church should be prioritised. Gleeson said there was a need for all to realise that the whole Church was present in the diocese headed by its bishop. Here he was referring to Vatican II which had reaffirmed: ‘A diocese is a section of the People of God entrusted to a bishop...it constitutes one particular church in which the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and active’.⁵⁶ He insisted that the parish was not a complete Church, only the diocese was. The presidential chair in the parish was a reminder of the bishop’s presidential chair in the cathedral, signifying that the priest was an extension of the bishop.⁵⁷ The archbishop appeared to remind all present of this theological truth to

⁵⁴ *Southern Cross*, 22 March 1974, 3.

⁵⁵ *Gaudium et Spes*, par 69.

⁵⁶ Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church (*Christus Dominus*), par 11.

⁵⁷ *Southern Cross*, 1 March 1974, 2, 3, 8.

bolster his case for ‘co-responsibility’ contributions from all parishes to a central fund. Bishop Kennedy, in his address to the gathering, dwelt in large part on the gift of ‘Faith’.⁵⁸ It appeared that a large part of the day was given to input from the two bishops; it was not just a time for constructive dialogue.

Two months later, on 7 May 1974, Gleeson sent a circular letter to all priests, chairpersons of Parish Pastoral Councils and other key laypersons, seeking cooperation for the campaign to boost the first collection at Sunday Mass. He also asked for an effort to inform all parishes of the importance of parishes contributing to a central fund for diocesan works and projects. Meetings were to be conducted in the eight regions of the archdiocese to explain and promote both objectives.⁵⁹ The final sentence of Gleeson’s letter was: ‘I ask your full co-operation in this project which is so vital for our diocesan family.’⁶⁰ The following month a circular letter from Fr Kevin McLennan, chancellor of the archdiocese, advised that following discussions at a clergy conference and the information presented at regional centres, he was presenting a list showing the contribution to the co-responsibility fund required from each parish. In assessing each parish, the following had been taken into account:

- existing debt
- necessary Development
- number of parishioners
- physical size and geographical location of parish
- economic situation of area
- potential.

The contributions were budgeted to raise \$ 60 000 and were to be paid quarterly, commencing from 1 July 1974.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Bishop Kennedy’s address to the assembly was published in three consecutive issues of the *Southern Cross*: 5 April 1974, 11; 11 April 1974, 11; 19 April 1974, 11.

⁵⁹ Later in the year the number of regions into which the archdiocese was divided became ten when both Eastern and Western Regions were divided into two parts.

⁶⁰ Box 317: Administrative Files, ACAA.

⁶¹ Box 317: Administrative Files, ACAA.

The campaign to increase contributions to the first collection was successfully conducted by lay members of parishes on Sundays 30 June and 7 July. The first payments of the co-responsibility levy were paid at the end of the September quarter. Gleeson showed a commitment to consultation and transparency in this whole process. The co-responsibility contribution was not popular, and a number of parishes wrote to the chancellor requesting a lower assessment. At an earlier time, a bishop might have simply announced his intention to impose what was in effect a tax on parishes. Gleeson's outreach to the priests was further evidenced by his invitation to the regions to share a buffet lunch at 'Ennis' prior to a region's monthly meeting.⁶²

The second Diocesan Assembly was held at St Michael's College on Sunday 22 June 1975. It was the shortest day of the year and also the coldest to that time. A photograph of the meeting room revealed a sizeable gathering.⁶³ Gleeson responded to a question alleging that Catholic schools were teaching a watered-down version of the Catholic faith. In his response he said that about two months previously he had attended a live-in meeting of heads of Catholic secondary schools at Graham's Castle, Goolwa. Those present had become more sharply aware that faith was a gift of God and that God's offer of faith required a free response from each person. Gleeson acknowledged that many had become attached to various devotions that were not of the essence of the faith and were distressed when such devotional practices were seemingly less valued. Gleeson agreed 'we are in a period of turmoil' that might be distressing for some but was in reality a time of cleansing our whole appreciation of the faith. He informed those gathered that at the time 180 lay teachers were attending in-service training and many others attended courses in the newly established Theology Institute – measures that

⁶² See letter to Eastern B Region of Priests, 9 September 1974. Series 0077, Box 1, Council of Priests Minutes and Correspondence, ACAA.

⁶³ *Southern Cross*, 27 June 1975, 5.

were intended to better equip teachers to present the faith to their students. Gleeson assured parents that all involved shared their concern.⁶⁴

Gleeson gave approval for Fr Bunleun Mansap, a Thai priest who was the executive secretary of the Office for Human Development in Manila, to address the gathering. Mansap's office was sponsored by the Federation of Asian bishops' Conferences. He asserted that Asians felt they had been manipulated by two non-Asian ideologies – communism and capitalism. Since the fall of Phnom Penh (12 April 1975) and Saigon (30 April 1975), many Asian people had bitter feelings against the First World and especially the United States of America. They were seeking to unite, in order to be themselves, in order to be self-reliant and not dependent on foreign powers. 'We look to mainland China as the champion of this self-reliance, as the champion of Asian brotherhood.' He appealed to Australians to come to know Asia better: 'They must forget the paternalistic approach of the past and come to appreciate Asian traditions, cultures and values'. He praised the Fund for Asian Development, established by Australian Catholic Relief and the Canadian Catholic relief organisation. It had later been joined by the Catholic relief agencies of Ireland, France and New Zealand. With this fund, decisions concerning the use of aid were made mainly by the donor and recipient countries, with the recipient nations having the greater say.⁶⁵ Gleeson commented that this approach had problems because some who gave money wanted to have a say on how it would be spent: they wanted to pick out 'their own pet orphans, their own pet projects'.⁶⁶ He spoke of the gift of a lump sum to India where the people on the spot decided how it was to be used: 'This avoids the old imperialistic attitude of some agencies.'⁶⁷ Those who listened to Fr Mansap would have been alerted to the raw

⁶⁴ *Southern Cross*, 27 June 1975, 1

⁶⁵ *Southern Cross*, 27 June 1975, 3.

⁶⁶ *Southern Cross*, 27 June 1975, 3.

⁶⁷ *Southern Cross*, 27 June 1975, 3.

facts of poverty in Asia and the need to respond. The speaker would have reinforced for the gathering Gleeson's constant promotion of the obligation on a Christian to reach out to the developing world, to respect the culture and history of these nations and to honour their dignity when supplying immediate relief and development aid.

About three hundred attended the third Diocesan Assembly at Loreto Junior School, Marryatville, on 17 September 1978. According to the chairman of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, John Ford, this was the best attendance to date.⁶⁸ The theme was 'Is there prayer in your parish life? Is there life in your parish prayer?' During the open forum Gleeson was asked why priests no longer 'visited homes spontaneously'.⁶⁹ Gleeson responded by saying that priests did visit the homes but there had been a big change in society; in most households husband and wife were both in the work force and to visit in the evening could be difficult for the family when home tasks had to be attended to.⁷⁰ However, priests were faithful to visiting the sick and, with the help of special ministers of the Eucharist, parishioners in hospitals, nursing homes or confined to the home were regularly able to receive communion. He added that priests were required to give more time to preparing people for the celebration of the sacraments of baptism, reconciliation, confirmation, and marriage. Gleeson thus supported priests who were at the time criticised for not spending more time visiting parishioners in their homes.⁷¹

Gleeson challenged those present with his observation: 'Most Christians are not acting in a way that would show they were aware of their social responsibilities.'⁷² He added, 'Every day we must be reconverted' and 'if we follow Christian principles we can influence society'. In the Quinquennial Report submitted to Rome in 1978, Gleeson

⁶⁸ *Southern Cross*, 21 September 1978, 3.

⁶⁹ *Southern Cross*, 21 September 1978, 5.

⁷⁰ The first television station in South Australia, NWS 9, opened in 1959. This was another reason for not interrupting families in the evenings.

⁷¹ *Southern Cross*, 21 September 1978, 5.

⁷² *Southern Cross*, 21 September 1978, 3.

asserted that the St Vincent de Paul Society was an ‘outstanding exception’ to this.⁷³

Ron Jay, president of the South Australian State Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society, told the gathering that while the government computers could ‘spit-out social security cheques’ the society gave love and provided for human needs. He referred to the many forms of poverty: lack of cash, unemployment, sickness, loneliness, being a refugee, and being aged and isolated. In consequence ‘home visitation is the main work of the Society’. Hospital visitation and care for the homeless was also part of its work.⁷⁴

David Shinnick spoke concerning the recently released social justice statement, *Aborigines: a statement of concern*. It was prepared by the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace for the Catholic Bishops of Australia. Senator Neville Bonner, the first Aboriginal Federal Parliamentarian (1971-83), declared the statement to be ‘absolutely spot on’ and that he would like it to be ‘compulsory reading for every Australian over the age of 15’.⁷⁵ The Commissioner for Community Relations, A J (Al) Grassby, deemed it to be the ‘most significant Catholic statement on the subject for 109 years when the pastoral letter of the Australian bishops acknowledged the blood upon the land and called for natural justice for Aboriginal people’.⁷⁶ Grassby added: ‘The statement represents a powerful challenge to the conscience of white Australia and a strong commitment in support of the Aboriginal people in their search for relief from 200 years of oppression.’⁷⁷ Gleeson would have supported this promotion of the social justice statement given his constant and public support of the rights of Aboriginal people.

⁷³ Box 170, ACAA.

⁷⁴ *Southern Cross*, 28 September 1978, 5 and 15.

⁷⁵ *Southern Cross*, 21 September 1978, 7. Senator Bonner’s term of office ended in 1983; the next Aboriginal federal parliamentarian was Senator Aden Ridgeway, an Australian Democrat, whose term ended in 2005. In 2016 Linda Burney was the first Aboriginal woman to be elected to the House of Representatives, winning the South-Sydney seat of Barton.

⁷⁶ Joint Pastoral of the Second Provincial Council, 24 April 1869, *The Eye of Faith: the pastoral letters of John Bede Polding* (Kilmore, Victoria: Lowden Publishing, 1978), 403-05. It was signed by eight bishops, eighty-one years after the penal colony of New South Wales was established in 1788.

⁷⁷ *Southern Cross*, 21 September 1978, 7.

The next Diocesan Assembly was held in The Square, Loreto Senior School, Marryatville, on 20 June 1982. The gathering commenced at noon with a shared lunch to mark the silver jubilee of Gleeson's episcopal ordination. The keynote address, entitled 'Marriage and Family', was given by Roseanne and Brian Moylan. Brian was secretary of the CLM and a member of the Pontifical Council for the Laity that had been created in January 1967.⁷⁸ This was a matter of current concern as the instability of marriage and the prevalence of young people cohabiting before marriage posed a challenge to the Catholic teaching in these areas.

In his address Gleeson spoke of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal that would commence in 1983 and which he hoped would enrich the life of the archdiocese. Its aims were:

- to enrich the life of the diocese.
- to examine again the opportunities and resources we have.
- to look at various apostolic means that is available to us.
- to help us to be truly a sign and a sacrament of the presence of Christ.⁷⁹

The diocesan assemblies enabled Gleeson to meet with smaller groups of concerned members of the archdiocese. Through them he could promote values he deemed important if Catholic and Christian people were to represent Christ in the world. In turn, those who attended were formed to be leaven in their parishes. Gleeson was also open to dealing with questions from the assembly. At this time, the importance of small groups was being promoted. In such formations those present were better able to discuss and absorb the teachings being presented.

⁷⁸ The address, partly abridged, was included in the *Southern Cross* in two parts, 24 June 1982, 6 and 1 July 1982, 6.

⁷⁹ *Southern Cross*, 24 June 1982, 1

Conferences of the Laity

The first conference of the laity in the Adelaide archdiocese was held at Mercedes College, Springfield, on 2-4 April 1976, five years after Gleeson assumed leadership of the archdiocese. It differed from Diocesan Assemblies to which all were invited; the Conference of the Laity was for a specific purpose with selected members. The conference, with Gleeson's approval, was sponsored by a joint committee of lay apostolate organisations and parish representatives. It was a forerunner to the First National Laity Conference held in Sydney on 23-25 April. Gleeson addressed the gathering and clearly presented his understanding of the apostolate of lay members of the Church. He quoted from the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (*Ad Gentes Divinitus*) of the Second Vatican Council which stated: 'The Church is not truly established and does not fully live, nor is a perfect sign of Christ unless there is a genuine laity [a laity worthy of the name] existing and working alongside the hierarchy.'⁸⁰ He stressed that lay members of the Church, inserted into the Body of Christ through the sacrament of baptism, and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit in confirmation, were assigned to the apostolate directly by the Lord. Lay persons share in the 'priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ' and exercise their apostolate when they strive for the sanctification and salvation of people and 'endeavor to have the Gospel spirit permeate and improve the temporal order'.⁸¹ Gleeson's view was global: 'Charitable action today can and should reach all men and all needs.'⁸² 'Great sensitivity', he declared, must be shown for the liberty and dignity of those assisted and the demands of justice must be satisfied first. The causes of injustice not only the effects must be tackled. Aid should meet the immediate needs of people but the

⁸⁰ Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (*Ad Gentes Divinitus*), par 21.

⁸¹ Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*), par 2.

⁸² *Southern Cross*, 9 April 1976, 8.

aim of development aid was to enable the beneficiaries to eventually become self-supporting.

The National Laity Conference held in Sydney in 1976 revealed differing politics in Church affairs in Australia. There were eighty-one delegates from all but five Australian dioceses, as well as representatives from the Australian Episcopal Conference, the National Council of Priests and the Major Superiors of Religious. According to the Adelaide delegates, Adelaide appeared as 'progressive' whereas Sydney and Melbourne were 'conservative'. David Young, leader of the Adelaide delegation, claimed that the conference was too cautious. He was also of the opinion that the reports from individual diocesan congresses contained more that was really stimulating and exciting than the reports emanating from the national conference itself. The Melbourne delegation moved for standing orders that would include the provision that the chairman could not accept any resolution critical of the Church's current practices or teaching; this was rejected. Young said that the Adelaide laity had been spoilt in being allowed to speak openly of their ideas. The Adelaide statement to the conference called on people to review their life-style in a spirit of frugality and called on the Church to do the same; this also was rejected.⁸³

Tony Elliot, vice-chairman of the Adelaide Diocesan Pastoral Council and a delegate to the National Conference, reported to the Adelaide Diocesan Pastoral Council in July 1976. He claimed that there were two main groups in the conference, one with a 'narrow, legalistic approach' and the other 'concerned for the needs of people as these had been expressed in the different diocesan reports'.⁸⁴ This latter group, he claimed, reflected the 'whole tenor' of the Second Vatican Council. The 'narrow' group from Sydney seemed to say the Church should 'stand high, firm, erect, and immutable and

⁸³ *Southern Cross*, 30 April 1976, 1.

⁸⁴ *Southern Cross*, 9 July 1976, 5.

then ‘beckon people to enter into the fold by sheer directive’.⁸⁵ He admitted that the organisers of the conference had a difficult task as there was no precedent to assist in the planning. Perhaps there was some pride in his local archdiocese that led Elliot to claim: ‘By comparison with others, the Adelaide document was a model of hard-thinking, extensive deliberation and pastoral concern.’⁸⁶ Elliot’s assertion that the conference ‘reflected the relationship that has developed in our Diocese between lay people and our pastors [Gleeson and Kennedy] – a relationship that would be hard to find duplicated elsewhere in Australia’ – was impressive. This may be deemed self-praise but it was in harmony with John McDonald’s assessment of the support that Gleeson provided to him as director of Catholic Education. He said Gleeson was a ‘great administrator’ who had ‘great compassion for people’ and was very supportive of the work of the Catholic Education Office (CEO). Gleeson gave the CEO ‘a lot of freedom’ and McDonald said: ‘When I’d go interstate, I’d come back feeling that I was very lucky to be working in the Archdiocese of Adelaide, because of the relationships which existed in some of the other states.’⁸⁷

Gleeson and his family

Gleeson was close to his family. At his funeral, his brother Raphael (Ray) delivered the commentary to explain the meaning of the various symbols placed on the coffin. His introductory words were: ‘Our late Archbishop James Gleeson, our brother, not only devoted his life to God and his Priestly duties, he always found time for his family.’⁸⁸ Further: ‘His extended family was always a part of his life’ and he was the driving force in the compilation of the first family history book that recorded the history of the Gleeson and O’Connell families. The final comment was:

⁸⁵ *Southern Cross*, 9 July 1976, 5.

⁸⁶ *Southern Cross*, 9 July 1976, 5.

⁸⁷ Transcript – Shinnick interviews McDonald, South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Oral History Project, part 3, tape 4, 4.

⁸⁸ Commentary by Ray Gleeson at the funeral Mass for Archbishop James Gleeson, 27 March 2000. Copy in possession of author.

Another symbol of his family commitment is the Christmas tea towel, a reminder of the family get togethers of which he was always a part. It was a practice that, at washing up time, it was James' role to take charge. This may have been in lieu of his lack of culinary skills but was one of the many ways he showed his example of togetherness.⁸⁹

Gleeson's diary reveals his attachment to his family and the extent to which it was important in his life. A few examples – 'Today is my sister's birthday'; 'Keep afternoon free – Family Reunion' (31 December 1972); 'John's silver wedding'; 'If possible call on Aunt Mary for her 95th birthday'; 'Keep afternoon free for family gathering' (5 January 1975); 'Tomorrow is my father's anniversary'; 'Tomorrow is my mother's anniversary'; 'Tomorrow is my brother's birthday Ray'; 'Tomorrow is my brother's birthday John'.⁹⁰

Gleeson's niece, Margaret Senyszyn, said that Gleeson had a special relationship with his sister Mary and her family. After Mary completed her nursing training at Calvary Hospital in North Adelaide, she qualified in the field of midwifery at the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne. At the time Gleeson was at Corpus Christi College, Werribee, and Mary visited her brother when college rules allowed. As a priest and bishop, he visited the family every Saturday unless impeded by other commitments or sickness. Mary sewed name tags on Gleeson's clothes, replaced missing buttons on his shirts and reversed collars on them. This latter task reflected the attitude of those who were raised during the depression of the 1930s; instead of buying a new garment it was cheaper to unpick a collar and reverse it so that the frayed side was concealed. Gleeson used to shop at Trims store in King William Street, to purchase cheaper clothing.⁹¹ The author recalled Gleeson telling a group of priests how he was at Trims endeavouring to keep a low profile when he was recognised by a fellow shopper who gave 'Your Grace' a warm and none-too-private greeting. Gleeson appeared to have practised the call he

⁸⁹ Commentary at Mass.

⁹⁰ Gleeson's Diaries, Series 129, ACAA.

⁹¹ Interview with Margaret Senyszyn at Bellevue Heights, SA, 18 December 2015.

made for people to live a modest lifestyle so as to be able to contribute to the needy in Australia and the world.

Relatives in Ireland

The Gleeson family maintained contact with relatives in Ireland. David Gleeson, a first cousin once removed of Archbishop Gleeson, visited relations in Ireland at the time of the First World War. David fought on the Gallipoli Peninsula and also on the Western Front. In 1963 Bishop Gleeson was in Rome and he arranged to visit Ireland and stay with Brigid Gleeson, of Cloneyharp, Thurles, County Tipperary, who was married to David Cahill. A daughter of the family, known as Brid to avoid confusion with her mother, relates that ‘a big fuss got underway’ to prepare for the arrival of the august visitor. Everything was painted, the gardens were planted with beautiful flowers, the excitement and apprehension was almost unbearable.⁹² David and Brid’s two brothers, Robert and Thomas Gleeson, welcomed ‘His Lordship’ at Dublin airport. When Gleeson arrived the welcomers attempted to kneel and kiss the bishop’s ring but he would not allow them to do so and welcomed them as ‘My brothers’.

Soon the nervousness associated with this meeting passed and like the following visits it was an ‘absolute pleasure’. During the first visit Bridget fussed over her guest and changed his bed linen every day until Gleeson realised what was happening and admonished her to change the linen once a fortnight. Gleeson loved ‘Shanrahan’, the family home in Clogheen, and chose ‘his’ corner where there was a very comfortable chair near the turf fire. From that vantage point he gained a delightful view of the Knockmealdown Mountains where he visited the Vee, a local scenic spot. He loved the peace and quiet of the place, to be able to dress informally and just relax. He always ate whatever was set before him and always insisted on attending to the washing-up.

⁹² Information supplied in an email from Brid, 22 May 2016.

Gleeson celebrated Mass for the family in the home: the family all felt a ‘real sense of peace and love in his presence’. He never presented himself as being holy, just an ordinary ‘Joe soap’. He managed to get each one of the family for a private chat, and all remembered him for his simple faith and the encouragement he gave. They felt he was interested in the personal life of each person. Back in Adelaide he kept in touch. Each year he rang Brid on St Brigid’s day and she was ‘really chuffed at his thoughtfulness’.

One of several visits Gleeson made to ‘Shanrahan’ was in 1981 when he officiated at the marriage of Brid and John Joe Brophy on 10 July. The couple declared the day to be one of the most wonderful days of their lives. When they arrived back from their honeymoon they discovered that the ever-practical Gleeson had installed a clothes line in their garden and attended to many other little jobs to make their home more comfortable. During following visits to Ireland he sometimes stayed at the home of Brid and John.⁹³

When Brid’s younger sister, Bernadette, married in Ireland, Gleeson gathered the relations who lived in Adelaide for Mass to mark the occasion and later shared a meal at the home of Margaret Brauer, the sister of Fr Tom Gleeson, the son of the above mentioned veteran of the First World War, David Gleeson. Later, when a child of Bernadette died in Ireland, Gleeson again celebrated Mass with some of the relatives to pray for the deceased child, the parents and relatives of the family.⁹⁴

Gleeson’s warm and personal ways of relating with extended members of the Gleeson clan was a testimony to the value he placed not only on the nuclear family but also on the more distant relatives. He nourished the relationship by telephone calls and

⁹³ All the above information supplied by Brid in the above noted email.

⁹⁴ Interview with Margaret Senyszyn at Bellevue Heights, SA, 11 May 2016.

by his annual Christmas greetings to a large number of relations and friends. For a busy bishop to find time to retain these links was impressive.

Gleeson's relating with women

Relating with women could be a particular challenge for bishops and indeed the clergy in general. The Fourth Plenary Council of Australia and New Zealand dealt with the probity of life required of clerics. In uncompromising language, the council asserted that priests were not to be involved in empty and pointless social visits, especially in the evening; they were also to avoid undue familiarity with women especially under the pretext of piety or charity.⁹⁵ This being the official stance of the bishops, it is not surprising that clerics were cautious in relating with women.

In his biography of Patrick Joseph Clune, the fourth bishop and first archbishop of Perth, Christopher Dowd says of him: 'Wary of women, Clune inhabited a social world that was almost entirely masculine.'⁹⁶ This could not be said of Gleeson, nor could it be said of him, as it was of Clune, that 'he had few close relationships with women. In fact, it is probably more accurate to say that he had none'.⁹⁷ Dowd made the wry comment: 'One wonders if Patrick imagined the proximate danger to himself to be greater than it actually was'.⁹⁸ The reserve of bishops and clergy with regard to women would have been reinforced by the widely publicised and remembered court case involving Fr Denis O'Haran, Cardinal Moran's private secretary and vicar-general, who in 1900, was named as co-respondent in divorce proceedings.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ *Concilium Plenarium IV Australiae et Novae Zeandiae Habitum Apud Sydney Anno Domini 1937*, Decrees 43 and 44. Translations by author. The Fifth Plenary Council is planned for 2020, 83 years since the previous one.

⁹⁶ Christopher Dowd, *Faith, Ireland and Empire: the life of Patrick Joseph Clune CSSR 1864-1935 Archbishop of Perth, Western Australia* (Sydney: St Paul Publications, 2014), 361.

⁹⁷ Dowd, *Faith, Ireland and Empire*, 276.

⁹⁸ Dowd, *Faith, Ireland and Empire*, 277.

⁹⁹ Philip Ayres, *Prince of the Church: Patrick Francis Moran 1830-1911* (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2007), Chapter 12 'Denis O'Haran, Co-Respondent 1897- 1901'.

James Duhig appears to have related comfortably with women. His father died when he was four years of age and he grew up 'in a family where feminine influence was paramount. What he knew of his Church and his homeland he learned from his mother and his sisters.'¹⁰⁰ As bishop of Rockhampton (1905-1912), he was a frequent visitor to girls' schools as he deemed their vocation to be as high as that of nuns, the 'creation of Catholic households'. Many became 'personal friends' and their correspondence with Duhig over the years revealed 'a unique relationship of pastor to flock'.¹⁰¹ James Michael Liston, the seventh Catholic bishop of Auckland (1929-70), appears to have related well with religious women and was comfortable in sharing time with them in their community room.¹⁰² Gleeson to some degree resembled Duhig and Liston. He enjoyed a close and loving relationship with his sister Mary and was aware of and accepting of his emotional life. He was able to relate with others, women included, with personal warmth and affection.

Marie Shevlin

Marie Shevlin, aged sixteen, commenced employment as an office junior in the Church Office, West Terrace, Adelaide, on Monday 2 June 1958. Monday was the traditional day off for the clergy, but Gleeson, the auxiliary bishop, called in to welcome her. Shevlin retained her employment for forty-two years, retiring in 2000 shortly after Gleeson's death. When Darcy Woodards, the long-serving lay-secretary in the church office, retired after fifty-one years in 1963, Shevlin became secretary of the Church Office.¹⁰³ When Peter Sheedy, the clerical secretary in 1980-86, received another appointment, Shevlin,

¹⁰⁰ Boland, *James Duhig*, 99.

¹⁰¹ Boland, *James Duhig*, 100-101.

¹⁰² Nicholas Reid, *James Michael Liston: a life* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2006), 286-87. Liston received the honorary title of Archbishop in 1954 as an acknowledgement of his contribution to the Church.

¹⁰³ *Southern Cross*, 31 May 1974, 4. Darcy Woodards claimed to have worked fifty-two years for the Church and his daughter, Sr Mary Helena, claimed he retired in 1965. Hence there is some doubt about the date of his retirement. See ACAA, 0223-0002 'Reminiscences About Archbishop Beovich' and 0223-0003 'Letter of Sr Mary Helena'.

while remaining secretary of the Catholic Church Office, became also Gleeson's secretary. Gleeson noted in his diary that 2 June 1979 was the twenty-first anniversary of Shevlin's commencing employment in the Catholic Church.¹⁰⁴ The diary also noted that the 12th of August was her birthday and that on 13th August he had celebrated Mass in the chapel for her and her family. Each birthday Gleeson celebrated this Mass in the chapel at Archbishop's House West Terrace or, in the chapel at 'Ennis'. Gleeson and Shevlin enjoyed a relationship that was marked by mutual respect and affection.

Following Gleeson's death many expressions of condolence were received by Shevlin and Faulkner. These are in two separate files in the diocesan archives. Both files contain many letters and cards, from bishops, clergy, religious and lay persons. Monsignor Thomas Horgan, a previous vicar-general of the archdiocese, sent an undated letter to Shevlin from his retirement residence in Partridge Street, Glenelg. He thanked Shevlin for her 'kind and thoughtful call' which supplemented the fax sent earlier and which Horgan said 'came in the midst of your well-earned tears'. Horgan saw these tears as expressing 'so much about your love and esteem for one who has been so much part of your life for so many years. Indeed, a lot more than part of your life – rather a life beautifully shared with all that freedom of give and take, of due respect and healthy candour as the occasion demanded'.¹⁰⁵ Horgan was regarded as a word-smith by his fellow clergy due to his command of English and this skill was clearly evident in this letter.¹⁰⁶

An illustration of this partnership was Shevlin's attending to one of the requirements of Gleeson's will which stated: 'As to my personal notebooks of retreats and spiritual life and as to all and any of my private letters, be they contained in filing cabinets or elsewhere, **IDirect** that they all be totally destroyed with strict and absolute

¹⁰⁴ Series 129, Gleeson Papers, ACAA.

¹⁰⁵ Series 0021, Box 9, ID 28. Archbishop James Gleeson – Correspondence and Papers, ACAA.

¹⁰⁶ Horgan's speech at the dinner celebrating Gleeson assuming leadership of the archdiocese is recalled by the author as a classic.

confidentiality.¹⁰⁷ In a File Note, dated 13 April 2000 and signed by Shevlin as Archbishop's secretary, she advised that she had accepted the responsibility of complying with this section of the will and that Gleeson had shown her the location of the material to be destroyed. She had found that one complete, four-drawer filing cabinet, was filled with packets of letters, cards and aerograms, indicating that Gleeson maintained an active correspondence. Shevlin advised that she had fulfilled the requirements of this section of the will.¹⁰⁸ Her contribution to the archdiocese was recognised when she received the papal award *Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice* in 1975. This award, also known as the Cross of Honour, was instituted in 1888 by Pope Leo XIII and was conferred upon those who had given distinguished service to the Church.¹⁰⁹

Jan Ruff-O'Herne

Jan O'Herne, from a Dutch colonial family, was living in Java when the Imperial Japanese Army occupied the Netherlands East Indies in March 1942.¹¹⁰ This brought to an end her idyllic childhood. Her experiences were revealed in August 2001 by the ABC series, 'Australian Story', under the heading 'The Forgotten Ones'.¹¹¹ What she suffered as a sex-slave of the Japanese – she rejected the term 'comfort woman' – was poignantly revealed and also her heroic building of a happy and fruitful marriage with Tom Ruff, a member of the British Army that after the war provided protection for those who had been held in internment camps by the Japanese. The couple celebrated their engagement on Christmas Day 1945 but were then separated for six months when the Dutch were repatriated to Holland. In 1946, O'Herne took a night boat to Harwich, England to meet Ruff and his family and their marriage was celebrated there on 14

¹⁰⁷ Gleeson's will, Series 0129, Box 3, ACAA.

¹⁰⁸ Gleeson's will, Series 0129, Box 3, ACAA.

¹⁰⁹ The medal consists of gold cross made octangular in form by fleurs-de-lis fixed in the angles of the cross.

¹¹⁰ Indonesia declared its independence on the surrender of the Japanese in 1945 and the Dutch finally recognised the country as a state in 1949.

¹¹¹ <http://www.abc.net.au/austory/archives/2001/AusStoryArchive2001Idx_Thursday30August2001.htm> Transcript accessed 2 November 2015.

August. O’Herne’s body had been severely damaged in her time as a sex-slave but, following three miscarriages and major surgery, she had two daughters, Eileen and Carol. After fourteen happy years in England the family came to Australia in 1960.¹¹²

After fifty years of silence, on 9-10 December 1992, Ruff-O’Herne spoke to the International Public Hearing in Tokyo concerning Japanese War Crimes. She was motivated by a desire to support the women from Korea, Taiwan, Philippines and China who had been sex-slaves for Japanese forces. Soon after returning to Australia she wrote to Gleeson who for many years had been her archbishop ‘but above all a very dear friend’.¹¹³ Two days later Gleeson noted on the letter that he had rung Ruff-O’Herne, talked about her experiences in Japan, and invited her to visit him at ‘Ennis’. On 16 February Gleeson recorded on the letter that Ruff-O’Herne and he had met at ‘Ennis’ from 10 to 11.30am; it was a peaceful meeting at the end of which he had driven his guest back to her home.

Ruff-O’Herne was a member of the second Diocesan Pastoral Council, composed mainly of elected members, which met for the first time in 1971.¹¹⁴ She recalled that she was often invited to give addresses to groups and her theme always concerned peace and forgiveness. On many occasions she and Gleeson attended the same meetings where they discussed the problems facing the Church, even though they were often unable to suggest solutions.

In 1975 Ruff-O’Herne’s husband Tom was totally incapacitated when struck by a vehicle whilst crossing a road. Despite this, for the next twenty years she cared for him at home. She said that the marriage pledge was ‘for better or for worse’ and she had enjoyed thirty wonderful years of marriage and had lovingly honoured her promise

¹¹² Jan Ruff-O’Herne, *50 Years of Silence* (Sydney: Imprint, 1997). First published (Sydney: Editions Tom Thompson, 1994), 130-32.

¹¹³ Ruff-O’Herne to Gleeson, 4 January 1993. Series 21, ID 05, ACAA.

¹¹⁴ *Southern Cross*, 19 March 1971, 7.

during the last twenty years.¹¹⁵ A sign of the rich relationship between Ruff-O’Herne and Gleeson was evident at the funeral Mass for her husband. Gleeson was the principal celebrant and the concelebrants were the parish priest, Leo Cronin, and a Franciscan priest, Sylvester Campbell. In the homily Gleeson declared ‘Tom Ruff was the most Catholic non-Catholic one could wish to meet.’¹¹⁶ When Gleeson died, she wrote a letter of condolence to Faulkner: ‘We have lost a great man, a dear friend, a truly gentle, compassionate and holy man of God. Archbishop Gleeson was a very close friend of mine. I treasured his friendship and I thank God for having known him.’¹¹⁷

On 1 January 2001 Ruff-O’Herne received a Centenary Medal, which marked the centenary of the federation of the Australian states, ‘for her role as a campaigner and advocate for human rights and the protection of women in war’. In the same year the government of the Netherlands made her a member of the Order of Orange-Nassau in recognition of her work as spokesperson of ‘comfort women’. In 2002 Ruff-O’Herne, a Secular Franciscan, became the first Australian woman to receive the second-highest papal honour available, Dame Commander of the Order of St Sylvester, ‘for her advocacy for women imprisoned and abused in war, and for her Christian virtue and faith’.¹¹⁸ Also in that year she received the Anzac Day Peace Prize given annually by the RSL to ‘recognise any outstanding effort by an Australian citizen who has promoted the concept of international understanding and who, in so doing, has made a contribution to world peace’.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Interview with Jan Ruff-O’Herne at Kingswood, 15 December 2015.

¹¹⁶ Jan Ruff-O’Herne to the author, 13 January 2015.

¹¹⁷ Jan Ruff-O’Herne to Faulkner, 27 March 2000. Series 21, Box 9, ID 27, ACAA.

¹¹⁸ Catholic News, < <http://cathnews.acu.edu.au/703/4.php>>, viewed 1 January 2016.

¹¹⁹ Anzac Day Peace Prize,

<<http://www.rsl.org.au/Portals/13/About%20Us/Awards%20&%20Scholarships/ANZAC%20Peace%20Prize%20Winners.pdf>> Viewed 7 December 2015.

On 15 February 2007, Ruff O’Herne addressed the United States House of Representatives as part of a congressional hearing on ‘Protecting the Human Rights of Comfort Women’:

I have forgiven the Japanese for what they did to me, but I can never forget. For fifty years, the ‘Comfort Women’ maintained silence; they lived with a terrible shame, of feeling soiled and dirty. It has taken 50 years for these women’s ruined lives to become a human rights issue.... I hope that by speaking out, I have been able to make a contribution to world peace and reconciliation, and that human rights violation against women will never happen again.¹²⁰

The United Nations Security Council on 19 June 2008 unanimously adopted Resolution 1820 which declared ‘rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide’.¹²¹ Ruff-O’Herne made a major contribution to this outcome. Clearly Ruff-O’Herne and Gleeson shared many standards and were passionate in their promotion – human rights, a living and active faith, international understanding and world peace, and forgiveness of enemies. Gleeson’s niece, Margaret Senyszyn, said that her uncle was profoundly affected by Ruff-O’Herne because of her deep faith, heroism, dedication to human rights and peace and the fact that her faith in God was not shaken by her extraordinary sufferings.¹²²

Gleeson and women religious

Sr Angela Byrne, an Irish Dominican Sister, a former principal of St Mary’s College and Cabra Dominican College, spoke affectionately of Gleeson at the time of his death. She claimed him to be her best friend whom she would always remember for his ‘overwhelming kindness’. Gleeson taught her to drive a motor vehicle. One day in the 1950s, when Gleeson and some Dominican Sisters were travelling to the Woodside

¹²⁰ Protecting the Human Rights of Comfort Women
<<http://www.skycitygallery.com/japan/JanRuff.html>.> Accessed 22 December 2015.

¹²¹ United Nations Resolution 1820, <<http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/CAC%20S%20RES%201820.pdf>> Viewed 9 December 2015.

¹²² Interview with Margaret Senyszyn, Bellevue Heights, 20 November 2015.

Migrant Camp, Byrne drove part of the way and almost ran into a fence. Gleeson jokingly suggested she had almost killed him. In later years, if he saw her walking to work at the *Southern Cross* newspaper, where she was a librarian, he would stop and offer her a ride. She expressed her delight that Gleeson and Faulkner came to lunch to celebrate her golden jubilee as a Dominican Sister.¹²³

The following letters also reveal the wholesome two-way expressions of affection between Gleeson and religious women. A handwritten personal note to Sr Monica Marks RSM, at the bottom of a typed Christmas circular dated 12 December 1999 is to the point:

Dearest Monica, thank you for allowing me to be part of the wonderful celebration of your Golden Jubilee. I praise and thank the Lord for you, for the beautiful gift [of] our friendship and for your religious life and ministry. You have had a profound impact upon my personal life and my ministry and I thank you very sincerely...With every blessing for Christmas and the New Year and with very deep affection, your loving brother in Jesus, Jim xxoo.¹²⁴

An undated letter to Gleeson from Sr Christine Burke, a Loreto Sister, revealed a freedom to express emotion. The letter was written following Gleeson's heart attack and subsequent open-heart surgery in September-October 1984:

Thank you for who you are and who you have been for so many.

Thank you especially for the friendship I've received. It means a lot to me. The affection and love that have grown over these years (through a few hills and dales!) are very precious and I treasure them – and you!

Do allow yourself to slow down! Give a call if you feel up to time with people, but otherwise rest and let your body work at healing itself.

With my love and continuing prayers. Chris.¹²⁵

¹²³ *Southern Cross*, April 2000, Special Memorial Edition.

¹²⁴ Josephine Laffin, 'Vatican II Women: Monica Marks and the Sisters of Mercy in Adelaide, South Australia'. Unpublished source, copy in author's possession.

¹²⁵ Ref 0021 – 0023. Archbishop Gleeson's Health and Illness ACAA.

David Shinnick

Shinnick, born on 9 February 1930, entered the Provincial Minor Seminary for the Archdiocese of Adelaide and the Diocese of Port Pirie ten days before his 12th birthday. Dedicated to one of the patrons of Australia, St Francis Xavier, the seminary was situated in the suburb of Stradbroke Park. During 1942-48 he completed four years of secondary education and three years study of philosophy.¹²⁶ In 1949-51 he was a student at the regional seminary, Corpus Christi College, Werribee, Victoria. Uncertain if he wished to be ordained to the priesthood, he took time out. During this period, he worked as a tram conductor and on a farm. He decided not to receive priestly ordination and entered the public service in Adelaide and was assigned to the Hospitals Department where in 1959 he became chief clerk at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

Shinnick became a full-time employee of the archdiocese on 24 May 1965 on his appointment as assistant secretary of the Newman Institute of Christian Studies (NICS), renamed in January 1968 the Christian Life Movement (CLM). The objective of the NICS was 'to bring Christ into the whole of Society in which we move, live and have our being'.¹²⁷ Archbishop Beovich announced the appointment but it was Gleeson, who by then was the coadjutor, who negotiated the terms and conditions of employment. Shinnick, now married, accepted a salary that was less than he received in the Hospitals Department. He said: 'What it boiled down to was that the job was really a vocation, much in the sense of a vocation to the priesthood or religious life, but a specifically lay one.'¹²⁸ This was the beginning of thirty years of service to the archdiocese that can be divided into four periods:

- 1965-70 Assistant secretary/secretary of the Newman Institute of Christian Studies and the Christian Life Movement.
- 1971- 82 Secretary of the Adult Education Centre.

¹²⁶ St Francis Xavier's Seminary became a major seminary in 1945 when the study of philosophy commenced.

¹²⁷ *Memoirs of David John Shinnick*, vol 1, 228.

¹²⁸ *Memoirs of David John Shinnick*, vol 1, 178.

- 1983-1988 Director of the Diocesan Pastoral Renewal (Programme).
- 1989-1995 Pastoral Planning Officer from 1 January 1989.¹²⁹

In December 1967, the *Southern Cross* reported that Shinnick had topped the External Studies Course in Hospital Administration for the whole of Australia. The course was conducted by the School of Hospital Administration, at the University of New South Wales. He was also awarded the Connie Ratcliff Memorial Prize, awarded by the University of New South Wales to the Hospital Administration student ‘who has shown leadership, human understanding and human sympathy’. The prize was established by Dr S W G Ratcliff, the ‘doyen of Hospital Administrators’, in memory of his wife to whom he was ‘tremendously devoted’. Shinnick was only half-way through this correspondence course when he began full-time work in the church.¹³⁰ This achievement illustrated both his competence and his dedication to the Church.

According to one anecdote, Adelaide’s own ‘lay bishop’ told Archbishop Gleeson: ‘You don’t need a Coadjutor – you have me’.¹³¹ Shinnick denied ever saying this but it is true that Shinnick was a very visible figure in the Adelaide Church during Gleeson’s time as a bishop. In 1981 Pope John Paul II conferred on him the honour of Knight of St Sylvester, an acknowledgement of his contributions to the mission of the Church.

How Shinnick ceased to be secretary of the CLM was a revealing story. Gleeson and Shinnick went to ‘Ennis’ to present to Archbishop Beovich the recommendations of the 1970 annual conference of the CLM. The CLM offered the archbishop the full-time service of its secretary to help parish pastoral councils to develop and to liaise with

¹²⁹ For some details of Shinnick’s contributions in each of these phases of his employment in the archdiocese of Adelaide: 1965-70, *Memoirs of David John Shinnick*, vol 1, 228-319; 1971- 82 vol 2, 8-81; 1983-88 vol 3, 5- 71; 1989- 95 vol 3, 140-196.

¹³⁰ *Southern Cross*, 22 December 1967, 15. See also John Penfold (Lecturer) to Shinnick 11 December 1967 and Neville Acklom (Director) to Shinnick 22 December 1967. Copies of both letters in author’s possession.

¹³¹ Michael Gilchrist, *New Church or True Church: Australian Catholicism today and tomorrow* (Melbourne: John XXIII Fellowship, 1987, 145.

other parish and diocesan structures; to assist in the development of inter-diocesan and national councils if and when such structures were desirable; to assume responsibility for such diocesan works as Project Compassion and liturgy congresses, and to maintain a close relationship with the Lay Apostolate Liaison Committee. Beovich listened and acknowledged the excellent report. He then said: ‘Now, Archbishop Gleeson, I think we’ll leave it aside for now. The need for the future is adult religious education, don’t you think?’¹³² Shinnick declared he was ‘aghast’ but agreed with Gleeson to accept the new direction and priorities. However, he reminded Gleeson that he had become an employee of the archdiocese for a five-year period that was to be followed by a review of his position. Gleeson responded by asking two questions: ‘Well, are you happy in your work?’ and ‘Are you interested in this new direction?’ When Shinnick responded in the affirmative to both questions Gleeson said: ‘We are very happy with you and with what you have done, so you are most welcome to stay on.’¹³³ It was a non-professional form of review but resulted in Shinnick being involved in adult education in the archdiocese in 1971-1982. It was surprising that Beovich made this decision a mere five months before Gleeson was installed as archbishop of Adelaide – clearly he was still the one in charge. Following the meeting Gleeson and Shinnick agreed that neither of them knew much about adult education but they acknowledged that Beovich was a wise leader and so they would do their best to follow the new direction. That Gleeson did not reverse the decision when he took over as leader of the diocese showed his respect for Beovich.

An epilogue. In April 2015 Shinnick was the first recipient of the ‘David Shinnick Award for Excellence in Pastoral Planning’. The award was instituted by the National Pastoral Planners Network that was established in 1991 at a meeting in the Anglican Retreat House in Adelaide. Those present were active in pastoral planning in

¹³² David Shinnick’s Memoirs, vol 1, 338.

¹³³ David Shinnick’s Memoirs, vol 1, 338.

various Australian dioceses. The citation said that the award was given ‘in recognition of his outstanding contribution and distinguished service to pastoral planning in Australia’. This recognition, coming years after his retirement, was most gratifying to Shinnick.¹³⁴ It was also further confirmation of the important part he played in the Adelaide archdiocese.

Clearly Gleeson was an outgoing, gregarious type with good communication skills. He was ordained in 1945 when bishops normally governed without much consultation. During his time as the archbishop of Adelaide, Gleeson ministered in a greatly altered Church where communication, consultation and shared responsibility were the new norm, at least in official teaching. Unlike Matthew Beovich and Cardinal Gilroy, Gleeson did not view the call to the episcopate as entry into a lonely life that excluded personal friends. He does not appear to have had any priest as a close confidant except perhaps Bishop Kennedy, but nonetheless he had many friends in the ranks of the clergy. His friends came also from religious, the laity (both married and single) and his own family. A significant group in Gleeson’s life were the religious women and men. It is particularly notable that he did not live in an exclusively male world and was able to relate with warmth to religious sisters and lay women.

¹³⁴ Details, in the form of letters, were provided by Shinnick. Copies of the letters are in the author’s possession.

Chapter 12

THE EMERITUS ARCHBISHOP

Gleeson had not been comfortable at the prospect of moving to ‘Ennis’ in the upper-class suburb of Medindie following the death of Archbishop Beovich on 24 October 1981.¹ It appeared to him too grand a residence. His preference was to remain in Archbishop’s House, West Terrace.² However, he accepted the advice that he should move to ‘Ennis’. Gleeson lived at ‘Ennis’ while archbishop of Adelaide until 1985 and then as the emeritus archbishop until his death in 2000. He quickly made some alterations to the dwelling so that it could be more useful than a mere residence. A room on the first floor was furnished as a chapel, replete with an altar and provision for the reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. This enabled the large chapel on the ground floor to be converted into a meeting room. It was suitably furnished and became the location for regular meetings of the Council of Priests, the College of Consultors, meetings of the Heads of Christian Churches in South Australia, and the Australian Lutheran–Roman Catholic Dialogue. Gleeson was a gracious host, welcoming the guests and sharing lunch times and coffee-breaks with them. He mingled with all present and showed genuine interest in them personally and in their tasks. This chapter will explore the final fifteen years of Gleeson’s life, the time in which he was the Emeritus Archbishop of Adelaide. This period of Gleeson’s ministry as a bishop was the longest as shown in the following chart:

¹ Beovich had also been reluctant to accept the offer of Mary and John Fennessy for the new residence for the archbishop of Adelaide. Josephine Laffin, PhD thesis, 206-207.

² Interview with Fr Peter Sheedy, Hallett Cove, SA, 4 September 2013.

Auxiliary Bishop	15 February 1957	5 July 1964
Coadjutor Archbishop	6 July 1964	30 April 1971
Archbishop	1 May 1971	19 June 1985
Emeritus Archbishop	20 June 1985	21 March 2000

The chapter will also consider his spirituality and health, factors that had influenced each phase of his ministry, and his final farewell.

Gleeson had been an energetic auxiliary bishop, appreciated by Archbishop Beovich who was influential in Gleeson becoming both his assistant bishop and then coadjutor archbishop of Adelaide with the right to succeed him. Gleeson was viewed by many as the principal figure in promoting the spirit and reforms of the Second Vatican Council in the archdiocese. As the archbishop, he skilfully led the archdiocese through a period of expansion and challenge. In his later years, he demonstrated that emeritus bishops do not retire but enter ‘a new phase of their ministry’.³ Prior to the Second Vatican Council, bishops, with few exceptions, remained at their post until death. The rationale for this was recalled by Pope Paul VI who quoted the words, allegedly addressed to Pope St Clement V (July to December 1294), the first pope to resign: ‘paternity cannot be resigned’.⁴ Vatican II however, as part of its reform agenda, ‘earnestly requested’ bishops to retire if they were less able to carry out their duties and Paul VI in 1966 ‘earnestly requested’ them to submit their resignations ‘not later than the completion of their seventy-fifth year’. The 1983 Code of Canon Law (Canon 401 § 1) stated: ‘A diocesan bishop who has completed his seventy-fifth year of age is

³Frank J Rodimer, ‘The Bishop Emeritus’, *America: the National Catholic Review*, 22 March 2010, 16.

⁴Quoted in, *America*, 28 February 2005. Downloaded 7 February 2017.

<<http://www.americamagazine.org/issue/520/article/how-popes-illness-affects-church>>. See also, James Day, ‘The Prophetic Papacy of Paul VI’, *Crisis Magazine: a voice for the faithful Catholic laity*, <<https://www.crisismagazine.com/2014/prophetic-papacy-paul-vi>>. Accessed 28 February 2018.

requested to offer his resignation from office to the Supreme Pontiff, who taking all the circumstances into account, will make provisions accordingly'.⁵ The word 'requested' in all these statements has been interpreted as implying obligation.

After a heart attack, coronary artery bypass surgery and a long spell in hospital, Gleeson resumed responsibilities as archbishop at the end of February 1985. In a letter he informed the people of the archdiocese that in 1984 'irreparable damage was done to the muscles at the bottom and at the back of my heart' and so he would proceed, keeping in mind the requirements of the fifth commandment.⁶ In fact, the damage to his heart was so severe that the surgeons had been hesitant to perform heart surgery. But if the surgery had not been attempted Gleeson would certainly have died.⁷ Gleeson's calm acceptance of his situation contributed to the decision of the surgeons to perform the operation and also to his recovery. Ten years later, Gleeson telephoned Dr David Craddock from the Cardio-Thoracic Surgical Unit at the Royal Adelaide Hospital to report on his health. Craddock replied by letter saying that he regretted missing the call and added 'you were a most difficult and dangerous case and it is particularly gratifying that 10 years have passed since the operation'.⁸ Attempting to resume duties given this medical report might appear imprudent but it did reveal Gleeson's stern sense of commitment.

When Gleeson returned to work, he was accompanied to celebrations of confirmation by his clerical secretary, Peter Sheedy. Following one such celebration, Gleeson discovered that he was physically unable to remain after the ceremony to greet the people and be photographed with the newly confirmed, as was his usual custom. He

⁵ *Christus Dominus*, par 21; Apostolic Letter, *Ecclesiae Sanctae*, written Motu Proprio, on the Implementation of the Decrees *Christus Dominus*, *Presbyterorum Ordinis* and *Perfectae Caritatis*, par 11.

⁶ Gleeson to People of God, Archdiocese of Adelaide, 1 March 1985. Ref 0021–0023 Records concerning Archbishop Gleeson's Health and Illness, ACAA. See also *Southern Cross* 7 March 1985, 3.

⁷ Faulkner to Archbishops & Bishops of Australia, 5 October 1984. Records Concerning Archbishop Gleeson's Health.

⁸ Craddock to Gleeson, 19 October 1994. Records concerning Archbishop Gleeson's Health.

told the long-standing lay secretary, Marie Shevlin, that those families and all other groups in the archdiocese deserved more than his limited strength would allow him to offer, and therefore he would retire.⁹ Gleeson's decision to retire was consistent with his pastoral outlook and practice, so clearly evident during his years as a bishop. On 25 March 1985 he submitted his resignation from the office of Archbishop of Adelaide to Pope John Paul II. This was accepted, to become effective on 19 June. The archbishop announced his impending retirement at Adelaide's annual Marian procession on 5 May. He retired with the title Emeritus Archbishop of Adelaide.

This was not the first time Gleeson had thought of retirement. Two months after retirement, he was interviewed by Nicholas Kerr, editor of the *Southern Cross* in 1976-86. He recalled that in 1980 he had been hospitalised five times with chronic asthma and other complaints and that the previous year he had been seriously unwell several times. He was 'really struggling and unhappy about handling the requirements of being the archbishop at that particular time', but he remained in office because of the presence of Bishop Kennedy who was a 'tremendous support'.¹⁰ When Kennedy died in 1983, Gleeson considered retirement at the age of sixty-five and petitioned Rome for a coadjutor archbishop, not an auxiliary bishop. This was because a coadjutor automatically takes over when the incumbent retires or dies whereas finding a replacement can be a long process.¹¹

In May 1985 Gleeson published a letter to the 'People of God in the Archdiocese of Adelaide' in the *Southern Cross*, confirming his retirement.¹² He affirmed his intention of remaining a contributing presence in the archdiocese: 'Within the limits of

⁹ Interview with Marie Shevlin, Kensington Park, SA, 4 February 2014.

¹⁰ *Southern Cross*, 16 May 1985, 8.

¹¹ *Southern Cross*, 16 May 1985, 8.

¹² *Southern Cross*, 16 May 1985, 4. Series 1, box 1, Item 5, Archbishop Leonard Anthony Faulkner's Records ACAA.

my health and strength, I hope to be able to assist in the life and mission of the Church in accord with the wishes of Archbishop Faulkner. In this way I hope to be able to keep in touch with you in various ways.’ Humbly, he acknowledged his failures and asked for forgiveness: ‘I appreciate that there have been many faults and shortcomings in my personal life and in the way I have fulfilled the various offices I have held. For these I ask the forgiveness and compassion of the Lord and of you all.’ His spirituality was evident: ‘Please continue to pray for me that I may be able to open my heart more fully to Jesus, our loving Redeemer, and, with you all, to be instruments of peace and renewal in the life of the Church and of the world.’¹³

During retirement, Gleeson was supported in turn by the Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus, Ray and Jacqui May, and Maureen and Neil Brett; all performed as house managers and housekeepers at ‘Ennis’. Maureen and Neil Brett were with him in the last few hours of his life and when he died. Whenever their pre-school granddaughter, Mary, had come to the house she demanded to see ‘the bishop’. Gleeson always welcomed her and conversed with her.

Archbishop Faulkner said that Gleeson, in his retirement years, encouraged religious and lay people to come to him, not only for a talk but also for counselling, spiritual direction and confession. He did not use the term ‘spiritual direction’ because he had not completed the qualifying course, but Faulkner said that in practice that is what it was.¹⁴ Faulkner visited Gleeson weekly and shared ‘a formal day of prayer’ with him every three months.¹⁵ Gleeson regularly visited the sick in Calvary Hospital and the Royal Adelaide Hospital, with a special interest in those who had undergone heart surgery.

¹³ *Southern Cross*, 16 May 1985, 4.

¹⁴ Interview with Leonard Faulkner, Netley, SA, 10 June 2014.

¹⁵ Faulkner’s homily at Gleeson’s funeral Mass. Copy in author’s possession. See also, *Southern Cross*, May 2000, 17.

On Sunday 22 September 1985, a liturgical celebration was held in the cathedral to honour Gleeson's contribution to the archdiocese over the forty years, from the year of his ordination as a priest until his retirement. John Brewer, chairman of the Diocesan Pastoral Council, provided the following statistics for this period.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Citizens in the Archdiocese</u>	<u>Number of Catholics</u>	<u>Parishes</u>	<u>Children in Catholic Schools</u>
1945	c. 500 000	60 000	43	8000
1957	c. 700 000	110 000	63	18 700
1971	1 003 041	211 281	72	22 983
1985	1 200 000	230 000	76	28 500

The figures revealed that during the time of Gleeson's ministry, the Catholic population of the archdiocese almost quadrupled, the number of parishes nearly doubled and enrolments in Catholic schools more than trebled.¹⁶ Vatican II, occurring near the midpoint of his ministry, produced a paradigm shift and a change of style regarding the Church and how it related to the modern world. Old certainties were challenged and a radically different vision of the Church was set forth, 'more biblical, more historical, more vital and dynamic'.¹⁷ Setting aside 'tradition-caked' attitudes, the Church consciously put itself forward as a service to the human family.¹⁸ Clearly Gleeson lived through a period presenting considerable challenges. As has been shown, he embraced the challenges constructively and with commitment.

In 1994 Gleeson was interviewed by Tony Ryan, archivist of the Australian College of Educators. He deemed the years of retirement to be a 'privileged time' which enabled him to spend more time in prayer, freed him to visit the sick and elderly, and provided the opportunity to help people on a one-on-one basis. Gleeson enjoyed the situation where he could arrange his life, depending on his state of health, without the

¹⁶ *Southern Cross*, 3 October 1985, 9.

¹⁷ Avery Dulles, 'The Church', Abbott ed, *The Documents of Vatican II*, 11.

¹⁸ Donald R Campion, 'The Church Today', in Abbott, ed, *The Documents of Vatican II*, 184.

pressure of the expectations of others. He expressed the hope that he would be able to continue this form of priestly ministry and declared: 'I am very happy knowing how deeply the Lord loves me.'¹⁹ Gleeson regularly celebrated Mass for the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of Saint Joseph, with a special concern for those who were in care.

Gleeson was active until the end. His medical advisers had told him that he needed to take a rest in the middle of the day if he was to survive: there was to be no more non-stop activity. His faithful adherence to this directive undoubtedly prolonged his ministry. The morning he died, he was arranging the room at 'Ennis' for the meeting of the Council of Priests the following day and intended to celebrate Mass at the Convent of Mercy in Angas Street later in the morning. Death intervened and he did not complete either project.²⁰ The previous day he had celebrated Mass for the feast of St Joseph at Tappeiner Court, the nursing home of the Sisters of St Joseph adjacent to the convent, and remained to share lunch with the sisters. Gleeson had celebrated his first Mass at the convent of the Sisters of St Joseph and what was to be his last Mass in the same environment. Gleeson drove his own car, so it was fortunate that he had not set out for the proposed Mass the morning he died.²¹

Gleeson's spirituality

Spirituality is, or should be, the paramount constituent of the episcopal calling.

Biographers do not always appreciate this and some bishops, perhaps regarding their spirituality as a private matter, do not leave much evidence for researchers. Daniel Mannix deliberately burned documents, wrote letters sparingly, and kept no diaries so

¹⁹ *Conversations, an oral history project of the Australian College of Educators*. An Interview with Emeritus Archbishop James W Gleeson (1920-2000), Retired Catholic Archbishop of Adelaide. Interviewer: Tony Ryan FACE, Archivist, Australian College of Educators, Adelaide September 1994, ref 0166-0001, ACAA.

²⁰ Interview with Maureen Brett, house manager at 'Ennis', Magill, SA. 22 January 2014.

²¹ See Faulkner's letter to the 'Directors of Diocesan Offices and Agencies and Executive Officers of Commissions and Associations', 11 April 2000. Series 0001, box 4, ID 31, ACAA.

that posterity could not ‘analyse my soul’.²² Ross Fitzgerald, historian and political analyst, reviewing in the *Sydney Morning Herald* T P Boland’s biography, *James Duhig*, acknowledged that the work was a ‘superb biography’ but deplored the absence of any sign of the subject’s piety:

To my atheist eyes, while Father Boland provides ample testimony of Duhig’s political powerplay, love of property and financial wheeling and dealing, there is not much evidence of profound spirituality or even of the ‘true believer’ in James the Builder.²³

The historian Patrick O’Farrell, a Catholic, in a postscript to his review on the same book, said he had received the same impression of Duhig. O’Farrell claimed that the answer to the question of whether this impression was true or false would affect any appraisal of Duhig and the Catholic Church in Australia.²⁴

Such a question could not be raised regarding Gleeson. Peter Sheedy, who was Gleeson’s clerical secretary in 1980-86, recalled a verse prominently displayed on the wall of the archbishop’s office, which he said expressed the motivation of Gleeson’s actions:

I sought my God and my God I could not find.
I sought myself and myself I could not find.
I sought my brother and I found all three.

Sheedy also noted Gleeson’s frequent quoting of the words of the prophet Micah 6:8:

This is what God asks of you:
To act justly
To love tenderly
To walk humbly with your God.

This passage of scripture was a lodestar for Gleeson. Shortly after his retirement, he was interviewed on the ABC radio programme, ‘Journal of Religion’. He ended the session

²²James Griffin, ‘Mannix, Daniel (1864-1963)’, Australian Dictionary of Biography, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <<http://adb.anu.au/biography/mannix-daniel-7478/text13033>>, published first in hard copy, vol 10, 1986, accessed online 22December 2017.

²³ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 January 1987, 46.

²⁴ Patrick O’Farrell, Review of T P Boland, James Duhig, *Australasian Catholic Record*, vol 64, no 2 (1987), 212-17.

with the exhortation: ‘Let us strive to live, and to encourage others to live, in accord with the call of Micah: “To act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with our God”’.²⁵ Significantly this text was on the memorial card distributed to mourners at his funeral.

In 1982, on the occasion of the silver jubilee of Gleeson’s episcopal consecration, he was again interviewed by Nicholas Kerr.²⁶ Gleeson said that he prayed with those with whom he worked conscious of the Lord’s promise to be present whenever two or three gathered to remember him. Gleeson’s style of spirituality was illustrated by his letter to ‘My dear Sisters in Christ – Monica [Marks], Concepta [Luff], Augustine [Howard], and Marie [Kerin]’, who were provincials of women’s religious orders resident in South Australia. Dated 16 September 1976, it suggested an agenda for the day planned for Monday 27 September at Saint Martin’s Convent, Port Noarlunga. Gleeson proposed that the morning be spent in prayer, private and shared, concluding with Mass about 12 noon. He reminded the women religious to bring their breviary and the Bible. The afternoon was to be devoted to matters of mutual concern, and perhaps, he hinted, some time to relax.²⁷

Gleeson claimed to have a deep consciousness of the presence of Jesus and of the power of the Spirit working in him. He hoped that he would humbly and willingly listen to the promptings of the Spirit, so as to be able to accept what the Lord wanted of him and through him.²⁸ In 1959, when an assistant bishop, he had enrolled in the Sacerdotal Union of Daily Adoration, officially *Pia Unio–Adoratio Quotidiana*

²⁵ *Southern Cross*, 29 August 1985, 9.

²⁶ The interview was published in the *Southern Cross* in five instalments: 13 May 1982, 8-9; 20 May 1982, 8-9; 27 May 1982, 6; 3 June 1982, 6 and 15; 17 June 1982, 8-9.

²⁷ Gleeson to Monica, Concepta, Augustine and Marie, 16 September 1976. Box 207: Archbishop Gleeson Papers, ACAA.

²⁸ *Southern Cross*, 13 May 1982, 9.

Perpetua Sacerdotalis. Members were required to spend one hour each day in adoration before the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Gleeson's Spirituality and the Holy Land

In September 1981, Gleeson met Bishop Leonard Faulkner at Leonardo da Vinci International Airport in Rome. This was the beginning of a visit to the Holy Land. The two bishops went as pilgrims, not tourists. Gleeson's diary entries for this pilgrimage are replete with references to the celebration of Mass, days of retreat, prayer and scripture readings. On one occasion he listed all the places visited and noted that at all of them 'we had read the Scriptures and prayed together'.²⁹ There are indications that Gleeson's grasp of the Scriptures had not advanced much since his time in the seminary. The seminary course in Sacred Scripture, as noted in Chapter 1, took little account of modern scholarship and Gleeson does not appear to have enriched his knowledge by much reading in this area since his ordination. He admitted to this when interviewed by Josephine Laffin in 1997. He said that he differed from Beovich, who 'always remained a student' and was 'always studying, books of theology, books of history'. 'He was a man of the book', whereas 'fixing engines and things, that was my life'.³⁰

An example of Gleeson's literalist understanding of the Bible was his account of a visit to the Milk Grotto, a shrine a short distance south of the Church of the Nativity, in Bethlehem, a site sacred for both Christian and Muslim pilgrims. Gleeson said that it was possible that Mary went there following the birth of Jesus and before the flight into Egypt. Most modern biblical scholars do not see this event as historical. Like other passages in the Bible, it is a type of writing known as midrash that allowed for the inclusion of a wide variety of edifying lessons, a reminder that history is not the only

²⁹ Gleeson, diary, entry 10 October 1981, Gleeson Papers, Series 129, ACAA.

³⁰ Josephine Laffin interviews Archbishop James Gleeson, 8 October 1997, at 'Ennis', 4.

medium for conveying religious truth.³¹ This episode suggests that work-orientated bishops, perhaps especially such prelates, should make the effort to keep themselves up to date with developments in theology and especially Sacred Scripture. The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church, *Christus Dominus*, said: ‘The order of bishops is the successor to the college of the apostles in their role as teachers and pastors, and in it the apostolic college is perpetuated.’³² The author recalls saying to Gleeson: ‘You are a bishop and part of the teaching Church, so I have a question for you’. He responded that he was cautious when a question was preceded by such a comment. I then said that I had been reading works concerned with the Resurrection and the opinions expressed by some authors. His unequivocal response was: ‘I believe in the Resurrection’. Clearly, he was not interested in the deeper reflections of scripture scholars and theologians on this pivotal doctrine of faith.

In October 1981, after departing the Holy Land, Gleeson and Faulkner went to Fiesole, a town near Florence where, at 9pm on Friday 23 October, they received the news that Archbishop Beovich had died in Calvary Hospital at 5.15am South Australian time on Saturday morning. Gleeson recorded that, with Faulkner, he prayed for the soul of Beovich, for the consolation of all who had been involved in his life and ministry, and praised God for that ministry.³³ The diary recorded that on 22 October he had received a call from Marie Shevlin telling him that Beovich was not expected to live more than a few hours. He noted in the diary: ‘Bit upset at first about not being home for his possible death’, but added that Shevlin, on behalf of Bishop Kennedy, assured him that it was not expected as Archbishop Beovich had made it clear that he did not

³¹ John L McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co, 1965), 574-76.

³² *Christus Dominus*, par 4.

³³ Gleeson, diary, entry 23 October 1981.

want Gleeson's badly needed vacation interrupted.³⁴ In fact, there was some criticism, heard by the author, of Gleeson's failure to return for the funeral service.

Gleeson's health

From youth Gleeson had suffered health problems. A two-page document, containing forty-one entries listing his ailments and medications, was prepared in case he required medical attention when away from Adelaide. The record commenced from the years 1940-45 during which time Gleeson, as a seminarian, was hospitalised in Saint Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne, for an appendectomy and nasal resection. The final entry, 1 November 1984, recorded Gleeson's return to 'Ennis' after the trauma of his heart attack and coronary artery bypass surgery. In between these entries the document lists continuing attacks of bronchitis, bronchopneumonia, and pleurisy. Finally, a chronic asthmatic condition was confirmed and treatment provided some relief. The surgical procedure known as myringotomy (draining fluid from ears), lung function tests, and treatment by physiotherapists and chiropractors, are listed.³⁵

Probably as a result of heavy lifting during his early years working on the family farm, Gleeson often endured back pain and spasms. Later in life he injured his neck when moving a refrigerator at 'Ennis' and had to wear a neck brace for a while. He was a poor sleeper. It says much about his commitment to his calling that he achieved so much, despite considerable health problems. During his retirement he tried to remove a swarm of bees that had taken up residence at 'Ennis' by spraying them with fly spray. The bees turned on him and he suffered some forty stings. He was hospitalised and was

³⁴ Gleeson, diary, 22 October 1981. Series 129, ACAA.

³⁵ Records Concerning Archbishop Gleeson's Health and Illness. Ref. 0021-0023 ACAA. The document was prepared by Marie Shevlin.

very fortunate not to have developed more serious complications, given the state of his heart.³⁶

Michael Whiteley, national director of Australian Catholic Relief, wrote to Gleeson on 19 March 1990, asking him to provide a short article of 3-400 words, for the annual report for 1989, the 25th anniversary of ACR.³⁷ Gleeson responded with A 1600-word document and a covering letter, dated 29 March. He claimed to be reasonably well but ‘I lack energy and am frequently very weary’. He apologised for not responding immediately but explained that they were ‘heavy days’. The article was typed because: ‘My poor typing is probably easier to read than my bad writing.’³⁸ The article appeared in full in the report. Despite health problems, Gleeson was still committed to justice for all.

³⁶ Interview with Marie Shevlin, Kensington Park, SA 18 August 2015.

³⁷ Whiteley to Gleeson, 19 March 1990. ACAA Box 312, History of ACR.

³⁸ Gleeson to Whiteley, 29 March 1990. ACAA Box 312, History of ACR.

It seems a reasonable assessment of Gleeson's ministry to say that it lacked balance. An article from the Department of Health New York State, dealing with 'Physical Inactivity and Cardiovascular Disease', claims that regular physical activity reduces the risk of dying prematurely from CDV, and the American Heart Foundation is quoted as recommending 30-60 minutes of aerobic exercise three to four times a week to promote cardiovascular fitness. Judged by these standards, Gleeson appeared to have neglected his own health and wellbeing; in fact, he was forced into early retirement in 1985, when at the age of 64, he suffered a massive heart attack.³⁹

The final farewell

Gleeson died at 'Ennis' at 9.30am on 21 March 2000. The cause of death, as given on the death certificate was: 'Coronary Artery Disease –16 years: Myocardial Infarction –5 minutes.' At 10.30am, on Monday, 27 March 2000, the funeral Mass for Gleeson was celebrated in St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, followed by the interment in the Catholic section of West Terrace cemetery. His successor, Archbishop Faulkner, was the

³⁹ Department of Health New York State, 'Physical Inactivity and Cardiovascular Disease, <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/chronic/cvd.htm>. Accessed 16 February 2019.

principal celebrant at the funeral Mass and the concelebrants included 22 bishops and 120 priests. The congregation gathered in the cathedral was in excess of 1500. Fourteen members of the Heads of Christian Churches in South Australia accepted invitations to the ceremony and were provided with reserved seating.⁴⁰

A condolence letter from Pope John Paul II to Archbishop Faulkner was read during the service and also printed in the Mass booklet. The pope sent his condolences, thanking God for the late Archbishop's years of ministry as pastor of the church which is in Adelaide 'as he guided the church with strength and compassion through a time of great change and continued in the years of his retirement to be a welcoming presence and a wise choice among God's people'.⁴¹ The letter, signed by Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State, could be regarded as merely a pro-forma document issued when bishops or archbishops died. But there was probably something of a more personal nature here. In 1973, Gleeson was host to the then Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, Archbishop of Krakow, Poland, who blessed and opened Copernicus Hall at the Polish Cultural Centre in the Adelaide suburb of Athol Park and later celebrated Mass in the cathedral. When Pope John Paul II visited Australia in December 1986, he spent the one night during his time in Adelaide as Gleeson's guest at 'Ennis'. At the Second Vatican Council the participants were assigned seats in St Peter's Basilica according to seniority. Gleeson and Bishop Wojtyla, then auxiliary bishop of Krakow, were both born in 1920; Gleeson was ordained to priesthood in 1945 and to the episcopate in 1957 in each case one year before Wojtyla. Both were the youngest bishops in their nation at the time of their episcopal consecration. Hence they were seated near each other and a friendship developed. Both came from poor families. According to the *Advertiser* 'He

⁴⁰ Those present were: Bishop Joseph of Arianzos and Archbishop Stylianos (Greek Orthodox); Archbishop Ian George and Bishop Keith Rayner (Anglican); Dr Don Hopgood, Rev Nairn Kerr and Rev Don Catford (Uniting Church); Rev Mike Semmler, Rev David O Paech and Dr L G Steicke (Lutheran Church); Bill Vasilakis and Pastor Hans Voortman (Christian Revival Crusade); Rev Barry Lines (Baptist); Rev Vicki Waller (SA Council of Churches). ACAA, Series 21, Box 9, ID26. *Advertiser*, 28 March 2000, 4.

⁴¹ Mass booklet prepared for the celebration.

[Gleeson] befriended the Pope when, as young bishops, they attended the sessions of the reforming Second Vatican Council.⁴² Gleeson possessed a photograph showing the two bishops seated in close proximity in the St Peter's Basilica during the Council.

Messages of condolence

Gleeson's successor, Leonard Faulkner, received many expressions of sympathy on the death of Gleeson. These came from individuals, religious communities and various other sources. These have been preserved in a large file in the Adelaide Catholic Archdiocesan Archives.⁴³ Four examples will suffice.

A letter dated 24 March 2000 came from the Rev Don Catford, Moderator of the South Australian Synod of the Uniting Church in Australia:

All our Moderators and General Secretaries have enjoyed the hospitality of James Gleeson through their attendance at meetings of the Heads of Church Committee at Ennis.

We have appreciated James Gleeson's leadership, his ecumenical spirit, his living faith hope and love, his genuine interest in people and his hospitality. He has made a great contribution to the life of the South Australian community and will be sadly missed. He has in the words of Micah done what is just, shown constant love and walked humbly with God.

Senator Rosemary Crowley wrote from the Australian Parliament on 31 March 2000. In the late 60s-early-70s, she and her husband Jim were prominent in the Newman Association of Catholic Graduates and the Sunday Mass at Aquinas College. She claimed to be but one of thousands who came to 'know and care for the Archbishop'. She said he had taught her about pastoral care, something she had found invaluable in her political life. Crowley claimed that Gleeson had listened to her when she argued for all sorts of change in the Church: 'He had a great regard for me and my family, and I looked forward to his Christmas note each year.' On 15 April 2000, Justina Viergever,

⁴² *Advertiser*, 27 March 2000, 3. Karol Wojtyla was appointed auxiliary bishop of Krakow on 4 July 1958; named archbishop of Krakow 30 December 1963; created a cardinal 26 June 1967; elected to the papacy 16 October 1978.

⁴³ Series 21, box 9, ID 27. ACAA.

president of the Calvary Past Nurses Association wrote: 'We will miss seeing him visiting patients in the Hospital, which he did on a regular basis. He was a great friend to all, in particular to all of the Calvary Nurses.'

A letter from the Uniting Church-Catholic Church Dialogue of South Australia, dated 5 May 2000 and signed by Joan M Housego, expressed 'our deepest thanks for the gift which His Grace Archbishop James Gleeson has been to this group'. 'His generous style of hospitality was a wonderful example to us of Jesus' command to serve lovingly, while the welcoming sight of this gentle man, often with sleeves rolled up, tending to our comforts, did wonders for the unity we in this group seek.'

Gleeson was a contributor to the church community literally until the last five minutes of life. He was a spiritual man, deeply aware of the presence of God in every facet of life. St Paul told the Christians at Corinth that he preached the Gospel despite a 'thorn in the flesh' which is widely interpreted as a psychic or physical ailment (2 Cor 12:7). Gleeson's 'thorn in the flesh' was spelled out in the document containing forty-one entries relating to his health. The funeral Mass and the subsequent shoal of expressions of sympathy were testimony to a life of a humane and pastoral bishop who faced up to massive changes in society and the Church, saw them as 'signs of the times' and responded to them with courage and conviction.

CONCLUSION

The thesis has examined the life of James William Gleeson, commencing with his early years in a Church formed in large part by the Council of Trent, until his death as a member of a Church that was being re-shaped by the Second Vatican Council. Gleeson contributed to this Council and to its implementation in the Archdiocese of Adelaide and on the world scene.

Gleeson was formed in a devout Catholic farming family, faithful to attending Sunday Mass when possible and to the accepted devotional practices of the time. At a time when attending a Catholic school was deemed the preferred way to absorb the faith, he attended a state school for his primary education and spent only two years in Catholic schools during which time he completed his secondary education. At Sacred Heart College, where he obtained the Leaving Certificate, he joined the St Vincent de Paul Junior Conference and the Sodality of Our Blessed Lady. During his second year in Corpus Christi seminary he became a member of the Total Abstinence Society of Corpus Christi College. The Saint Vincent de Paul conferences reached out to the needy while the Sodality of Our Blessed Lady and Total Abstinence societies were expressions of traditional piety.

Following his ordination to the priesthood in 1945, Gleeson performed his ministry in the archdiocese of Adelaide, faithful to the accepted rules and conventions of the day. After twelve years of priestly ministry he received episcopal consecration in 1957. He assumed episcopal ministry in the mould that had been accepted for the previous four hundred years. He was fortunate in being encouraged by Archbishop Beovich to fully exercise his office as a bishop: some assistant and coadjutor bishops in

Australia were not given this freedom. During these years Gleeson was invited to participate in various civic functions and he became a public figure in South Australia.

Like Cardinal Gilroy in Sydney, he was ‘a church manager rather than a scholar’.¹ He admitted that he had not kept up-to-date with the theological advances coming from Europe. The draft schemas of matters to be considered by the Council, prepared by the Preparatory Commissions, were in Gleeson’s words, ‘put in a bin’ but they expressed what he understood and accepted. This revealed just how much change was asked of bishops who had been formed before the Council and taught from the standard theological manuals. Not all bishops managed to cope with the required challenges. Gleeson, however, attended three sessions of the Council and his knowledge was updated. Together with Beovich, he promoted the new vision of Church emanating from the Council and when he became the archbishop he continued to promote the reception and implementation of the Council in the archdiocese.

Pope Paul VI said ‘the liturgy was the first subject to be examined [by the Council] and the first too, in a sense, in intrinsic worth and in importance for the life of the Church’.² Vatican II taught ‘the liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows’.³ Gleeson accepted the importance of the liturgical reform instigated by the Council and promoted it vigorously. He was an outspoken promoter of the rightful participation of the laity in the liturgy at meetings of the Australian Episcopal Conference.

The Council had given a new impetus to the implementing of the Catholic Church’s social teachings. The Church’s involvement in the social and political orders was required because of the social and institutional character of sin. The Church,

¹ John Luttrell, *Norman Thomas Gilroy: an obedient life* (Sydney: St Pauls Publications, 2017), 320.

² Quoted by McNaspy, C J, ‘Liturgy’, *The Documents of Vatican II*, ed, Walter M Abbott, (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966), 133

³ Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, par 10.

therefore, must be involved in the struggle for social justice, peace and human rights as an essential aspect of its ministry. Gleeson was widely acknowledged for his contribution to the wellbeing of all peoples.

At the same time, Gleeson was active in ecumenical and inter-faith dialogues. He contributed to education both as a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators and as a promoter of Catholic and independent schools. He was committed to the religious formation of Catholic children in state schools. They were, he insisted, not to be regarded as second-grade Catholics. He was not intimidated by the media and involved himself in public debates in areas involving justice and human rights. He was especially concerned with the need to assist the developing world.

As the archbishop of Adelaide his governance, in accordance with the requirements of Vatican II, was generally synodal. He relied on consultation and dialogue with bodies such as the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Bishop's Council of Priests, and the South Australian Commission for Catholic schools, to form the decisions he had to take. He viewed this way of acting as time-consuming but as good for the community.

However, at times Gleeson reverted to a more traditional episcopal style as exemplified in his appointment of John McDonald as head of the Adelaide Catholic Education Office. The position was not advertised so there was no need for interviews. In the process of restructuring Catholic education in the South-West Region of Adelaide there was considerable consultation but when the scheme was challenged by those opposed to the changes Gleeson demanded obedience.

Gleeson did not live in an exclusively male environment. His close associates and friends included members of the diocesan administration, male and female religious, lay women and men. Personal friendships with women influenced Gleeson's

outlook. He had sought the involvement of women in the life of the diocese through their membership of the Diocesan Pastoral Council and especially of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools, a decision-making structure.

As emeritus archbishop of Adelaide, Gleeson continued to contribute to the Church in Adelaide. He welcomed to 'Ennis' meetings of the South Australian Dialogue of the Roman Catholic Church and Uniting Church, the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue and the Heads of Christian Churches. He visited hospitals and celebrated Mass for the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St Joseph who were in care.

Gleeson was a man of prayer and deep spirituality. Unlike archbishops Mannix and Duhig he has left enough evidence for this to be recorded. As guest speaker at a luncheon of the Commonwealth Club in the Adelaide Town Hall in August 1971, Gleeson affirmed that loving God with his whole being was his first calling: this demanded that he manifest this love by seeking social justice for all, with special concern for those marginalised by society at home and abroad. This was an outstanding and public profession of his spirituality.

A flaw in Gleeson's life was his failure to take responsibility for his health: he was too work-oriented. Most likely this caused his retirement at the age of 64 following a severe heart attack. His attempts to be involved as a property developer indicated he was insufficiently skilled in this area, or perhaps he was badly advised. His inability to empathise with those who chose to leave their religious vocation, to embark on another path in life, appeared harsh. However, this was the prevailing attitude at the time.

The Second Vatican Council was unique in that it adopted a style and matching vocabulary differing from all previous councils. Whereas previous councils pronounced anathemas against dissenting voices, Vatican II used words such as cooperation, partnership, dialogue, and collaboration.⁴ The Council only condemned war and the arms race, which it described as ‘one of the greatest curses of the human race’.⁵

The Roman Synod of 1960 was planned and summoned by Pope John XXIII as a ‘solemn forerunner’, an ‘exemplary foreshadowing’ of Vatican II. The synod confirmed Latin as the language of the liturgy, promoted Gregorian chant, forbade women to enter the altar area of the church, and passed many Canons anathematising errant ideas and conduct. The synod was a ‘massive reaffirmation of traditional discipline’. It was contradicted and negated in almost every detail by Vatican II.⁶ Reflection on the Roman Synod brings into relief just how much Vatican II was a massive change of style and vocabulary. Gleeson adopted, conformed to, and promoted the new style of being a Church, unevenly but consistently.

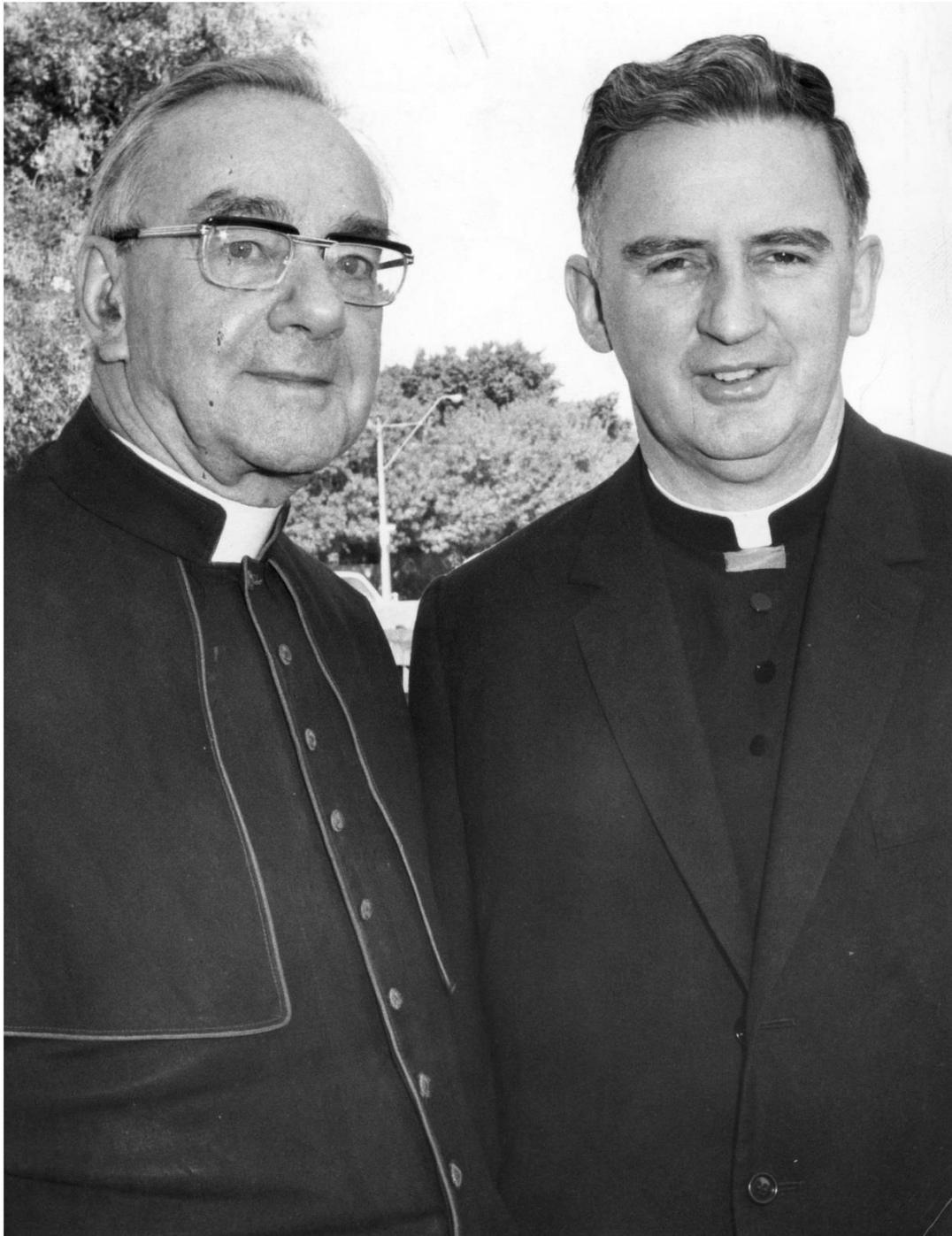
⁴ President Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, at a vital moment of the American Civil War (1861-65), is a secular example of this genre.

⁵ Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, pars 79-82.

⁶ Romano Amerio. *Iota Unum. a study of changes in the Catholic Church in the 20th Century* (Sarto House, Kansas City, 1996), pp. 54-56. <https://rorate-caeli.blogspot.com/2010/12/roman-synod-of-1960>. Accessed 12 April 2018.

APPENDIX

The photographs included in the thesis are by courtesy of the Adelaide Catholic Archdiocesan Archives with the exception of the photo of the pupils in the Catholic school at Terowie that is in the author's possession.



Archbishops Matthew Beovich and James Gleeson shortly before Beovich's retirement in 1971



A prayerful service for the Pope in St Francis Xavier Cathedral, 05.06.1970

(Album 24A, No. 22)



Archbishop Gleeson donated blood regularly at the Red Cross Centre. This photograph was taken in 1974.

(Album 24A, No. 35)



Above: Archbishop Gleeson in the pulpit at St Peter's Anglican Cathedral in 1974

(Album 24A, No. 36)



Left: Archbishop Gleeson, the Guest of honour at the Commonwealth Club luncheon at the Adelaide Town Hall, 27 August 1971

(Album 24A, No. 28)



Sir William Slim, Governor-General investing Archbishop James Gleeson with the Order of St Michael and St George (CMG) insignia in 1958

(Album 24A, No. 23A)



Above: Archbishop Beovich, Mr. Brewer, Fr R Aitken at Archbishop Gleeson's installation at Archbishop of Adelaide, 1 May 1971

(Album 24A, No. 24A)



Bishop-elect Gleeson with his co-consecrators, Most Reverend B. Gallagher (on Gleeson's right) and Most Reverent A F Fox.

(Ref. 0075-0073, Album 48, White Photograph Album)



Archbishop Gleeson at Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting showing John Murphy and Sr Carmel Wauchope the medal he received after his investiture as an Officer of the Order of Australia, 26 April 1979

(Album 24B. No. 82)



Visiting Rome in 1986 - Archbishop Gleeson and Marie Shevlin meet Pope John Paul II

(Album 24C, No. 147)



James Gleeson's Funeral, Monday, 27 March 2000



Pupils at the Terowie Catholic School about 1944. The author is in the back row, 2nd from the left.

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