



Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide

Archbishop of Adelaide

27th November, 2023
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Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Re: Ministry Formation Program (MFP)

Grace and peace, I hope this note finds you well.

As an Archdiocese, we value formation of all our people, and in a particular way, those preparing for and engaging in pastoral ministry, and we want to do it the best that we can. I write to inform you of the decision to bring the Ministry Formation Program (MFP) to a close at the end of this year, 'pausing' formation for pastoral ministry for up to two years. This pause will give us time to discern new pathways for formation that attend to the current and future needs of the Archdiocese.

This decision comes as the result of a review which included input from nearly 100 individuals (current and former students, MFP collaborators, MFP and diocesan staff, and parish leaders). The review raised several questions concerning the MFP's capacity to address the current and changing realities of parishes and communities in the Archdiocese. Therefore, the primary recommendation of the review is that MFP is brought to a close and that ministry formation 'pauses' while new forms of formation for ministry are developed.

For nearly two decades the Ministry Formation Program has provided women and men with formation for lay pastoral ministry, service in the faith community, and the permanent diaconate. We are grateful to the MFP team, past and present for their dedication to this ministry and support for students. MFP team members have been offered opportunities for redeployment to other roles.

Current students have been advised of the changes to MFP. Those who are completing the program will receive their certificates at the end of year Mass in December. Students in the middle of their program will receive support from the Archdiocese to continue their studies if desired.

I wish to restate our Archdiocesan commitment to formation, which includes the initial and ongoing formation of lay and ordained pastoral leaders, as is stated in *Drawn into the Joy of the Gospel: Formation in the Archdiocese of Adelaide*.

"The vital task of fostering missionary discipleship in our Parishes and Communities is supported by the pastoral ministry of the Archdiocese, led by our Chief Pastor, Archbishop O'Regan. The many pastoral ministers – Teacher and School Leaders, Pastoral Associates, Catechists, Youth Ministers, Hospital and Prison Chaplains, Diocesan Leaders, Deacons and Priests – all have need of both initial and ongoing formation."

The newly established Archdiocesan Commission for Formation will recommend new strategies for formation including lay and ordained pastoral leaders. The implementation of these strategies will be supported by the Pastoral Services Team.

In Domino,

+Patrick O'Regan
Archbishop of Adelaide