

Anglican Church of Australia Diocese of Bathurst



The Right Reverend Ian Palmer
The Bishop's Registry
3 Church Street (PO Box 23)
Bathurst NSW 2795

Saturday 20th December 2014

A Pastoral Letter to the Clergy and Parishes of our Diocese

Beloved in Christ,

This Pastoral Letter is to bring you my greetings and good wishes and to assure you of my prayers for you all this Christmas. I also want to keep everyone in the Diocese informed about some decisions made earlier this week and their consequences.

On Wednesday after weeks of thought, prayer and preparation the Bishop in Council agreed a budget for 2015. Very simply, they passed a budget that has no increase in the parish assessments for 2015 and shows a small surplus.

The cost of this is great. This decision has meant that I have had to terminate the employment of four people in our Bishop's Registry: Graham and Debbie Higham, David Ross and Erik Bieniek. In different ways each has served the Diocese well and we are grateful to them all.

The only person to be retained is the Bishop's Registrar, Karen Trafford. Karen and her husband Andrew are worshippers in the Parish of Oberon, and Karen, who joined the Registry in October, comes with significant experience in business, law and finance. Her passion is rescuing abandoned dogs.

Because of the financial state of the Diocese I cannot continue as your full-time bishop. For years the capital of the Endowment of the See has been spent so my future is now like that of every parish priest in the Diocese: I rely not upon the generosity of past parishioners but the goodwill of people giving to the Episcopal Ministry Fund launched last week.

At the end of January Liz and I will move out of Bishopscourt and in early February I will be commissioned as the Rector of Dubbo at the same time as remaining Bishop of the Diocese. I am grateful for the prayer-based invitation of people in the parish and the careful discernment of many over several months.

These are huge changes, but they are to ensure not only the survival of our Diocese, but to advance the worship, mission and ministry of the work of our Lord here. I ask for your goodwill, prayers and patience.

May our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be honoured and his will be done.

Warmly in Christ,

The Rt Revd Ian Palmer,
Bishop of Bathurst

...still on pilgrimage...