

## Australasian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform

# MEDIA RELEASE

### Lay leaders to present vision for renewal in the Catholic Church

22 August 2021

*“The credibility of the church is shot to pieces”*. That comment by Archbishop Coleridge, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference must be a catalyst for the Australian Plenary Council to push for renewal so desperately needed in the church.

Powerful voices for lay Catholics seeking new directions and a fresh vision for our Church will advocate for the way forward for the church at an online Convocation on 26 August.

The Convocation will be opened by Dr Miriam Rose Ungunmerr Baumann, the 2021 Senior Australian of the Year. It will be addressed by other prominent and thoughtful Catholic leaders; Debra Zanella, Dr Jessie Rogers and Robert Fitzgerald. Professor Emeritus John Warhurst will provide the concluding summary.

With the Plenary Council first session, now less than seven weeks away, they will address issues related to deepening connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions and the implications of the Plenary Council for the international church. The Convocation provides an opportunity to hear the voice of the people in the Church to foster inclusion, ensuring the equality of women, synodality or consultation and governance reform.

The Australian Plenary Council is part of the global movement of renewal longed for by Catholics across the world. Called in response to the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and other challenges and failings, it is an opportunity for significant reform in the Australian Church.

ACCCR Co-convener, Eleanor Flynn said: “A momentum for renewal is building. This convocation will bring us another step forward in discerning our future and creating the Church we seek.

“The Plenary Council must respond to Pope Francis’ hopes for a new era of synodality, create a Church that listens to the voices of the people, a model of church that is fit for this millennium.

“This is not a time to be faint-hearted. The task ahead will require changes in how we do and are church. We Catholics desire a ‘grown-up’ Church,”.

This will be the second Convocation of Catholics, called by the Australasian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform (ACCCR). ACCCR is a collaboration of 19 member groups across Australia seeking Church reform.

**Registration is free and open to all at [accr.com.au](https://accr.com.au)**

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