

Social Justice Report. 20<sup>th</sup> November 2019

### **Parish pastoral councils - building blocks of future church - 10<sup>th</sup> October**

Father Mick and I attended a discussion on Parish Councils in the Canberra Goulburn Archdiocese hosted by Concerned Catholics and facilitated by Jacinta Carroll from the Bungendore Parish.

Forty delegates attended the event from Batemans Bay, Queanbeyan and Bungendore, Cooma and Yass, and from a number of parishes in Canberra. Attendees included a number of parish priests, members of parish pastoral councils, and members of Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn.

Discussion focused on issues affecting parishes, but broader issues were also heard which impact on the relevance and credibility of the church in the Australian community.

Emerging themes include:

- The need to re-engage with the basic principles of our faith;
- Many Catholics are not practicing their faith because of increasing conservatism in the Church and a focus on exclusion, rules and regulations;
- The diminishing number of priests and the consequent lack of pastoral care;
- All roles should be open to women including as priests and deacons;
- Former priests who left the church to marry should be welcomed back;
- Lay people should be able to host the liturgy in the absence of an available priest;
- Parish pastoral councils should be structured to enable cross-parish engagement;
- Parishes can initiate significant change without waiting for the Plenary Council

### **Murrumbateman Field Days**

The Murrumbateman Catholic Community ran a very successful tea, cake and scone café at the Murrumbateman Field Days again in October. This is their major fundraiser for the year which helps raise money for the annual rental of the Uniting Church Hall and other costs. Many volunteers from the parish helped out at this important community event which contributes so significantly to the common good of the local region.