

Thursday, 1 September 2022

MEDIA RELEASE

Catholic Religious have elected a New President and Council Members

Peter Jones OSA, Provincial of the Augustinians of the Province of Australasia was elected as the new President of Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) at the 2022 National Assembly, held in Melbourne from 29 August to 1 September, along with a new Executive and new Council.

Inspired by the theme of the National Assembly, *'Daring to Lead with Hope and Gratitude – the role of Religious Life in the 21st Century,'* the President and Council will be focussed on providing leadership support to CRA's 150 Religious Institute Members and on encouraging the prophetic voice of Religious in the Australian Church and across contemporary society.

"I thank my peers for giving me the opportunity to serve them and the Church at this time when Pope Francis is calling us into a synodal Church," said Fr Peter.

Before being Provincial, Peter was responsible for various aspects of the Augustinian Formation Program and was involved in the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Augustinian Novitiate in Cebu, Philippines. He has been a Council Member since 2019 and has served on CRA Committees. Peter brings humility, integrity and warmth to his new position as CRA President.

At the Assembly, five new Religious Institute Leaders were elected to the National Council, they are:

- Philip Watkins SSS, Blessed Sacrament Fathers
- Gerard Brady CFC, Christian Brothers – Oceania Province
- Mary Ryan OP, Dominican Sisters of Western Australia
- Barbara Brown-Graham FCJ, Faithful Companions of Jesus
- Alan Gibson CM, Vincentians

They joined the eight continuing Council members:

- Melissa Dwyer FdCC Canossian Daughters of Charity
- Asaeli Rass SVD Divine Word Missionaries
- Philippa Murphy FDNCS Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
- Mary-Clare Holland OP Dominican Sisters of Eastern Australia and the Solomon Islands
- Tom McDonough CP Passionist Fathers
- Paul O'Keeffe FSP Patrician Brothers
- Catherine Reuter RSM Sisters of Mercy, Brisbane
- Monica Cavanagh RSJ Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart

"I'm honoured to be working with so many Councillors with their various gifts, who are daring leaders, raising their prophetic voices at this important time in the Church," said Fr Peter.

"I'd like to acknowledge Peter Carroll FMS, Provincial of the Marist Brothers Province of Australia, who steps down as an energetic and vibrant President, and who has made a significant contribution to the mission and vision of CRA over the past two years – we are deeply grateful to him," he added.

Fr Peter is deeply grateful for the courageous leadership of his predecessor. He acknowledges the task ahead and recognises that the Spirit walks with CRA as it helps to animate religious life in Australia and speak up for the issues facing the marginalised.

Mary-Clare Holland OP has been elected Vice-President and Philippa Murphy FDNSC becomes the third member of the Executive with Peter Jones OSA as President; an insightful and faith-filled Executive to lead CRA into the future with hope and gratitude.

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