



FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCES OF OCEANIA

The Episcopal Conferences of Australia • New Zealand • The Pacific •
Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

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Oceania's diverse Church to be represented at Synod of Bishops

MEDIA RELEASE

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The president of the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania says the 10 non-bishop members from the region chosen for the upcoming Synod of Bishops will help amplify the voice of the Catholic population.

Earlier this year, Pope Francis invited each of the seven regions of the world to nominate 20 people who have been involved in local initiatives for the Synod of Bishops for a Synodal Church as possible additions to the Synod's membership.

Pope Francis chose 10 members from each region from the list of nominees, seeking to create a cross-section of the Church in terms of age, sex, vocation and other demographic factors.

"There was no shortage of faithful and qualified people in Oceania who could bring their lived experience to the two sessions of the Synod of Bishops in October this year and October next year," said Bishop Anthony Randazzo, who was elected FCBCO president in February.

"Our region is one of the most diverse in the world, when you consider the 20 or so nations in this corner of the globe. That diversity enriches the Church in Oceania and it will do so at the Synod gatherings in Rome."

The 10 Oceania non-bishop members appointed by Pope Francis are: Mr Manuel Beazley, New Zealand; Dr Trudy Dantis, Australia; Mr John Lochowiak, Australia; Fr Denis Nacorda, New Zealand; Mrs Kelly Paget, Australia; Sr Mary Angela Perez RSM, Pacific; Fr Sijeesh Pullenkunnel, Syro-Malabar Eparchy; Dr Susan Sela, Pacific; Ms Grace Wrakia, Papua New Guinea/Solomon Islands; Professor Renee Kohler-Ryan, Australia.

Brief biographies on each of the members [can be found here](#).

Those members will join the following bishop members from Oceania, chosen by their episcopal conferences, who will participate in the Synod:

Australia: Bishop Shane Mackinlay; Archbishop Patrick O'Regan

New Zealand: Archbishop Paul Martin SM

Papua New Guinea/Solomon Islands: Bishop Dariusz Kaluza MSF

CEPAC (Pacific): Bishop Paul Donoghue SM

Perth Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, will serve as one of nine delegated Synod presidents. Sydney Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP will participate in the Synod as a member of the Council of the Synod of Bishops.

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Bishop Randazzo, as president of the FCBCO, will also attend the Synod sessions along with other presidents of continental episcopal conferences.

The Catholic Church in Oceania has been seeking ways to work more collaboratively to carry out Christ's mission in the region, Bishop Randazzo explained.

The Synod of Bishops process, through its integration into this year's assembly of the FCBCO and now the additional representation at the Synod sessions, has assisted in that effort.

"With Pope Francis' leadership and his assistance, we have been invited into the Synod of Bishops at a local, a national and a regional level, and we now move to the international phase," Bishop Randazzo said.

"By working with the other episcopal conferences in Oceania and with our Eastern brothers and sisters, we have been able to embrace this idea of 'walking together', seeing how the Church in our region can respond to the call for communion, participation and mission."

Five experts and facilitators have also been appointed from Oceania: Dr Sandie Cornish; Br Ian Cribb SJ; Adjunct Professor Susan Pascoe, who served on the Synod of Bishops' methodology commission; Fr Asaeli Raass SVD; and Fr Ormond Rush, who served on the Synod of Bishops' theological commission. Brief biographies can also be found for the experts and facilitators [here](#).

Bishop Randazzo said the inclusion of that group of experts demonstrates the esteem with which the Synod Secretariat holds theologians and other leading thinkers in the Church in Oceania.

"We are a young Church in comparison to many other parts of the world, but we are a Church of people of many and varied talents, which will now feature more prominently on the global stage," he said.