



## **Press Release**

### **For immediate release**

**30 April 2021**

### **National Virtual Conference to Enliven Catholic Communities**

Our faith communities are hungering for inspiration and support as we emerge from the pandemic and approach the first national plenary session. “Alive in the Spirit”, an innovative online conference, from 8 to 10 July 2021, offers a next-level experience to participants through a variety of keynotes, home-grown workshops and enriching prayer and worship experiences. The mixture of live and on-demand opportunities are fully adaptable to strengthen the mission and aims of local Catholic communities.

The conference site, [aliveinthepirit.com.au](https://www.aliveinthepirit.com.au), launched on Friday 30 April, drew pastoral leaders from around the region who expressed enthusiastic support and excitement centred around the call to be Alive in the Spirit and people of new hope, as expressed through the keynotes: Lana Turvy-Collins (Plenary Facilitator), Fr Richard Lennan (Professor of Systematic Theology, Boston College) and Leisa Anslinger (Associate Director, Pastoral Vitality, Cincinnati Archdiocese).

#### **Watch a replay of the launch here:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEIC1cEZzRo>

One of the key attractions are over thirty on-demand workshops exploring areas such as best practice for RCIA, how we engage beyond the margins of our faith communities, planning for mission and renewal, supporting pastoral care, social justice initiatives and much more. Presenters are drawn from experienced pastoral ministers in Australia and New Zealand who offer practical, down-to-earth wisdom, resources and avenues of new life.

A variety of prayer spaces during the conference provide their own source of inspiration, while there are opportunities to connect with both exhibitors and one-to-one sessions with presenters. The conference also ensures a number of scheduled networking sessions to enable all participants a chance to share their wisdom and learn from others in the mission field.

The conference offers inspiration and support to lay and clergy, staff, leadership teams, finance teams, pastoral councils, pastoral ministers and volunteers, those in education, counselling, pastoral care, youth ministry, family ministry, aged care and chaplaincies and anyone who wants to be Alive in the Spirit.

Lana Turvey-Collins, Plenary Facilitator and keynote speaker, expressed her excitement, believing the conference offers a wonderful space to share “how we’re living, how we’re working together, and what that means for how the Spirit is moving in all of us, and what that means as church.”

Fr Michael Alcock, Parish Administrator of Sawtell expressed his hopes for his parish community: “People are really in the mood for learning and reinvigorating their lay ministry... We need to connect, and if anything our Christianity is about relationship, and drawing our parishes together, and this conference will do that.”

Sr Elizabeth Young rsm, Wilcannia-Forbes Diocesan Pastoral Worker, emphasised the value for rural and remote regions, saying, “now is such an important time to be building relationships, faith and hope as we look forward to the Plenary Council and also to a more compassionate world after Covid.”

Interest is widespread, as noted by Amy Armstrong, Pastoral Ministry Coordinator, Dunedin NZ who said the conference offers “a real great time for us to be refreshed and renewed... Our world and our church are going through some difficult times so it will be a great time to get together and just connect.”

Three long-standing and wide-reaching Catholic networks have combined forces to host this event: the Pastoral Ministry Network, Christian Initiation Australia Network, and the Mission Planners Network Oceania. Platinum Sponsors, Grief Care and the Diocesan Development Fund Parramatta are both passionate about the goals of the conference.

Contact Lisa Bright, Conference Convener, 0448 652 720,  
[info@aliveinthepirit.com.au](mailto:info@aliveinthepirit.com.au)

**[aliveinthepirit.com.au](http://aliveinthepirit.com.au)**