

PRESS RELEASE
Monday 13 July 2026

Applications for the Areté Centre's Foundations of Missionary Leadership Program Open for 2027

The Areté Centre is pleased to announce that applications for the 2027 Foundations of Missionary Leadership program are now open. Now entering its eighth year, the program continues to form missionary leaders from across Australia and New Zealand through a unique blend of theological formation, human development, spiritual formation, and practical leadership skills designed specifically for the Australian context.

This year's cohort reflects the growing diversity of people seeking deeper formation for mission. Participants include parish volunteers, emerging leaders, experienced ministry leaders, Catholic Educators, and for the first time, three Catholic priests undertaking the program alongside laypeople. Their presence highlights a core conviction of the Areté Centre: that formation is lifelong, and God always has more to teach those who desire to serve His Church.

The inclusion of clergy also responds directly to one of the strongest themes emerging from this year's Synod in the Archdiocese of Sydney: the longing for shared formation between parish priests and lay leaders, learning together as collaborators in the Church's mission. Areté's model uniquely offers a concrete and hopeful answer to that call.

Rev Dr Chris Ryan MGL, Director of the Areté Centre, says this development is both encouraging and timely.

"It has been a great blessing to have three priests undertaking the program this year alongside lay participants. Their involvement is a powerful reminder that none of us ever 'finish' formation, and there is always more the Lord wants to give us. When clergy and laypeople learn together, it strengthens the unity, trust, and shared purpose our parishes are longing for. This was a clear theme in the Synod, and Areté is helping to make it a lived reality. I would love to see even more priests join us in 2027 and embrace this model of formation that can truly renew parish life."

The program comprises four integrated units:

- Spirituality of Missionary Leadership
- Theological Foundations of Mission in the Australian Context
- Principles of Missionary Leadership
- Evangelisation and Leadership in Practice

The Areté Centre warmly invites laypeople across the Church including parish volunteers, ministry leaders, youth ministers, Catholic educators, Family Educators, and anyone discerning how to use their gifts in service of the Church, to consider applying for the 2027 program. Whether you are beginning your journey of mission or seeking to deepen your formation, the Foundations of Missionary Leadership offers a transformative pathway to grow in confidence, clarity, and spiritual maturity as a missionary disciple.

Applications are now open, and places are limited. Interested applicants can visit **aretecentre.org** to apply and download the e-prospectus.

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