

Diocese of Lismore
Aboriginal Catholic Ministry
Proposed Overview & Structure

1. Mission

'In dialogue and partnership with the Aboriginal people, the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry in the Diocese of Lismore is part of a national response of the Church to work with Aboriginal people in building up an authentic Goori mission and ministry'.
(Aboriginal Catholic Elders Council, 2001)

2. Overview

The Aboriginal Catholic Ministry (ACM) has a long history in the Diocese of Lismore, is a valued ministry in the Diocese and is an integral part of the mission of the Diocese. The main responsibility for the ACM resides with the Bishop and then the Parish Priest in dialogue with the Aboriginal Catholic Elders.

The Bishop may appoint an ACM Liaison Person to liaise with the Bishop and Parishes as well as other Diocesan bodies, the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Catholic Council (NATSICC) and the NSW AICC. The ACM Liaison person and or Catholic Elder (s) may be nominated to be ACM representatives on the Diocesan Pastoral Council. (See section on 'Networks' for purpose of NATSICC)

The Parish priest is encouraged to liaise with the local Catholic Aboriginal Elders and community members *and may consider appointing a Parish team member to liaise with the Aboriginal community*. This may involve working with a local Aboriginal Liaison group or persons and or appointing an Aboriginal person or persons to the Parish Pastoral Council or Parish team. See list of Parish Contact Persons on p 6.

The Catholic Schools in the Diocese have a special responsibility and commitment to the education of Indigenous students. The CSO has a designated position of Aboriginal Education Officer and most schools have an Indigenous Education Worker. The various Religious Congregations have made a significant contribution to the ACM and their presence and ministry is highly valued throughout the Diocese.

The Catholic Aboriginal population is spread throughout the Diocese with significant numbers in the Nambucca Valley - Gumbaynggirr people - and the Macleay Valley - Dhanggati people. There are smaller numbers in Port Macquarie, Sawtell, Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Lismore, Ballina and Kingscliff.

An ACM Gathering may be called as the need arises and a network of Aboriginal people associated with the Parishes will be established. The Elders Council and the Diocesan Religious Team (DRT) will cease to exist as from the 31st December 2014.

3. Ministry & Priorities

Sacraments, funerals, education, pastoral support & training and advocacy
Informal ministries and networks are to be encouraged and other forms of ministry will evolve in response to local needs.

4. Role of ACM Liaison Person

To liaise with the Bishop and priests of the Diocese on matters concerning the Aboriginal Catholic ministry in the Diocese.

To liaise with NATSICC and NSW AICC and coordinate arrangements for ACM representatives to attend NATSICC Conferences (held every three years).

To facilitate a Diocesan ACM gathering and informal meetings of the parish ACM groups as the need arises.

To encourage ACM members to undertake ministry training and support, for e.g., the LITE program.

To liaise with the Diocesan Business Manager concerning ACM funding and budget matters and the management of accounts.

To represent the ACM at the Diocesan Pastoral Council meetings

To meet with the Bishop annually and present written report

Note: the ACM liaison position may be a shared role between two *or more* people.

5. Resource Persons & Persons with experience of working with Aboriginal people:

Aboriginal Catholic Elders and Community leaders in all parishes

Fr. Richard Foley, Sr. Kathryn Sweeney rsj Bundjalung

Fr. Michael Alcock, Br. Steve Morelli cfc Gumbaynggirr

Fr. Paul Gooley, Br. Steve Morelli cfc Dhanggati

Aboriginal staff in the Catholic schools system - including teachers, Indigenous Education Workers, IT & Special Support staff, secretarial, ground staff and parents.

A list of Aboriginal 'Contact people' for the parishes from the Clarence Valley to the Macleay Valley will be provided to the respective parishes.

6. ACM Website: The website is designed to *promote an awareness, appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal spirituality, culture and issues in the Diocese, the church and society and to provide liturgical, educational and social justice resources and links for parishes and schools*, including:

'Welcome to Country' for language groups & map of the nations in the Diocese.

Approved options for 'Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians'

Outline of Order of Ceremony for funerals, prayers and scripture readings.

Resources and links for students and other reading, projects or study.

A person or persons will be nominated to be responsible for the pastoral oversight and management of the website.

Website to be redeveloped in 2014 and then resources & links updated every three months.

7. Lismore Indigenous Theological Education (LITE)

The Lismore Indigenous Theological Education project was established to help Aboriginal people integrate their Catholic faith and Aboriginal spirituality as well as to support and train ACM pastoral workers and CSO Aboriginal Education staff in faith education, spirituality and pastoral skills. The Diocese of Lismore has been auspiced to conduct these education courses from the Wontulp-Bi-Buya Ecumenical Theological College in Cairns. Students can complete courses at Certificate 111 or at more advanced levels. The project is managed by a LITE committee with the following representatives: *the CSO SEACS Secondary & Primary and Aboriginal Education Officer and at least one representative from the Aboriginal Catholic ministry community.* Note: The CSO provides secretarial services to both the MIEF & LITE committees.

8. Aboriginal Education: Education includes the Catholic schools in the Diocese, boarding schools throughout NSW and catechetics in the Public schools. The increasing number of Aboriginal students attending Catholic primary and secondary schools is a sign of the Aboriginal community valuing Catholic education. In 2013 there were 565 students in primary & 314 in secondary giving a total of 879 students. There are approximately 67 Aboriginal personnel employed or engaged in the Catholic Schools.

Scholarships: *The Australian Aboriginal Education Foundation offers boarding school scholarships for Aboriginal students in a wide variety of boarding schools in NSW. See their website for details.*

Boys boarding schools: St Joseph's College Hunters Hill, St Ignatius' College Riverview,
St Gregory's College Campbelltown

Girls Boarding schools: Kincoppal Rose Bay, St Vincent's Potts Point,
St Scholastica's College Glebe

9. Marist Fathers Indigenous Education Fund (MIEF)

The MIEF fund was established by the Marist Fathers when St. John's College Lismore was transferred to the Diocese of Lismore in order to respect the wishes of the woman who donated the land to the Marist Fathers for education purposes. The trust fund is managed by the Marist Fathers Provincial Office in Sydney and the interest earned each year is forwarded to the MIEF account with the Diocesan Investment fund (DIF), Diocese of Lismore. The purpose of this fund is to support Indigenous students at Catholic secondary schools in the Diocese of Lismore with costs other than school fees. *A MIEF committee of five will administer the applications, approvals, allocation & distribution of funds, will act in*

accordance with MIEF guidelines and will manage the distribution of funds through the DIF office. The committee will consist of the following representatives: Business Manager from St. John's College, Woodlawn, a Marist Fathers representative, the CSO Aboriginal Education Officer, a Catholic schools Indigenous Education Worker and an Aboriginal community representative. The CSO will provide the administrative support including the distributing of applications, a record of funds approved, documentation of receipts and funds allocated. Money authorisations are to be signed by two of the following three people; the Marist Fathers representative, the Business Manager from St. John's College Woodlawn and the CSO Aboriginal Education Officer. An annual MIEF report or statement will be sent to the Director of the CSO and the Provincial of the Marist Fathers Sydney with details of the numbers, class year of the students involved and the funds allocated. See ACM website for details of MIEF, guidelines and application form.

10. Networks & Practices

National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC),

a. **NATSICC** is a national body of Catholic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with representatives from each State and Territory established to respond to issues and concerns of the Catholic & Torres Strait Islander peoples and to act as an advisory body to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. NATSICC holds a conference every three years, elects the NATSICC Council members and a representative of this body to be a representative on the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Bishops Commission for Relations with Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

b **NATSICC** Conference: The practice in the Diocese of Lismore has been for three representatives from each of the three zones (northern, central and southern) to be nominated by the people of their own zone to attend the conference. The ACM has paid the registration/accommodation fee for each representative and the representative has paid their own travel costs. *The ACM may pay the registration/accommodation fee for one ACM religious from each of the three zones.*

c **World Youth Day: WYD** happens every three years and the practice has been for the ACM to sponsor half of the travel/registration cost for two ACM youth from each of the three zones in the Diocese of Lismore - Northern Central, Southern. The participants are expected to fund raise the other half of the travel/registration cost plus their own spending money.

11. NSW Aboriginal & Islander Catholic Council (NSW AICC)

NSW AICC is the state body established to identify and respond to Catholic Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander issues. This body has conducted a Conference or AGM at various times during the last few years and Lismore ACM representatives *have attended.*

12. Finance: The Diocesan Business Manager has oversight of ACM funding and management of accounts. The following items will be allocated to the ACM Diocesan budget:

NATSICC Conference registration/accommodation - *see under NATSICC for guidelines*

NSW AICC registration/accommodation - *see under NSW AICC for guidelines*

World Youth Day - *see under WYD overview for guidelines*

ACM Diocesan & *inter parish* meetings/gatherings

Stipend for ACM Liaison person and/or ACM religious:

Religious Stipend currently at 50% of approved NSW CLRI stipend

plus car service for Sr. Kathryn Sweeney rsj

ACM Contact Person: *two nominated persons from each zone*

ACM Support Worker: *Patricia Nolan*

Professional supervision

Pastoral training and education for ACM ministry team members

including LITE course enrolment fees

Resources including ACM website

Operational funding of Diocesan ACM matters.

Parishes will be responsible for ACM parish matters such as local ACM gatherings including transport and food for the meetings. (*note: contact Local Community Transport for bus hire*)

13. Sacramental Records: *Most past and all recent sacramental* records have been kept in the Parish where the sacrament was celebrated and a copy has been kept with the ACM. This copy will be transferred to Nambucca Valley Parish.

14. Records of Annual ACM meetings with the Bishop, Congregational Leaders and DRT members are kept in the Diocesan Chancery Office and the Marist Fathers Provincial Archives.

Fr. Paul Sullivan sm

Diocesan Religious Team (DRT) Leader

22 August 2014

ACM Lismore	Parish Contact Persons	
<i>Ballina</i>	<i>Sr. Kathryn Sweeney rsj School IEW's</i>	<i>66811048</i>
<i>Grafton</i>	<i>Robyne Bancroft Maxine Hegedus Gloria Phillips School IEW's</i>	<i>0413797524 66431231</i>
<i>Coffs Harbour</i>	<i>Br. Steve Morelli cfc Barry Hoskins - Police Liaison Officer School IEW's</i>	<i>66540642</i>
<i>Sawtell</i>	<i>Mick Bryant</i>	
<i>Nambucca Heads</i>	<i>Aunty Jessie Williams Aunty Emily Walker Aunty Faye Davis</i>	<i>65694466 65694895 65694776</i>
<i>Macksville</i>	<i>Aunty Shirley Ballangarry Cheryl Donovan School IEW's</i>	<i>65681554 65684011</i>
<i>Bowraville</i>	<i>Patricia Buchanan School Principal & staff</i>	<i>0421106541</i>
<i>Kempsey</i>	<i>Bob Mumbler Janet Smith Mavis & Cyril Davis Shirley & Sharon Kelly School IEW's</i>	<i>0448100263 0448776862 0402140890 65621240</i>
<i>Port Macquarie</i>	<i>Elizabeth Ingram Patricia Nolan School IEW's</i>	<i>65813031 0437003709</i>