



THE ARCHBISHOP OF BRISBANE

10 July 2017

Dear Parish Priests, Pastoral Associates & Youth Ministers,

As we look to 2018 it's time to consider how your parish might engage with the upcoming Year of Youth. The Year will be celebrated around the nation but it also has to happen at the local level. That's why I write to you now.

The Year has as its theme, "Open new horizons for spreading joy: Young people, faith and vocational discernment". It's a bit wordy but it invites us to consider new ways of inviting young people into the circle of our Catholic communities, even as leaders.

Like the Year of Mercy, the Year of Youth will be not just a series of events for young people but a shift in focus to include young people in everything we do in the parish and the diocese. We need new eyes to see that young people are not just the Church of the future but are the Church of now.

This comes at a time where we are being called to become a listening Church, a Church attuned to the voice of the Holy Spirit. As Pope Francis has said:

A synodal Church is a Church which listens, which realizes that listening is more than simply hearing. It is a mutual listening in which everyone has something to learn. The faithful people, the college of bishops, the Bishop of Rome: all listening to each other, and all listening to the Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of truth" (John 14:17).

I invite you to consider how you might listen anew to the voice of the young and imagine how you might include them in the life of your community. Pastoral councils, the liturgy, care of the poor, schools, catechesis, missionary outreach: all of these and more are points where the young might serve. The suggestions in this resource pack might help inspire your community to envisage new ways of connecting with young people. The Year of Youth is not just for those already involved in our Catholic communities: it's for all young people across the Archdiocese, even those who may not share our faith.

As always in the Lord,

Archbishop of Brisbane

The Most Reverend Mark Coleridge

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