

Bishop John

On the occasion of your retirement, on behalf of all members of this council I want to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation, to deeply thank you for your 15 years of ministry and leadership. We rejoice in your ministry time with us, and the legacy you leave. You have shepherded this Diocese through significant challenges and changes both in the Parishes, and on a societal level. From day one you have courageously shone light and love into some of the darkest places of this diocese and its communities. You have been an advocate for those who most needed it.

But, much has already been said at Synod and the Regional Farewells, and will indeed be said again tomorrow at the Cathedral Farewell, about your immense contribution to the diocese, and the people of Tasmania.

Today we thank you for your ministry to us, as Diocesan Council.

Ephesians 4 tells us that "...Jesus gave the church the gift of pastors and teachers, to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ..."

We are indeed grateful that in his wisdom, God chose to give us you.

You have challenged us over the years to be a passionate, imaginative, risk-taking, prayerful, people of God.

As a Missioner-Bishop you have encouraged us to step out without fear, as a pilgrim people into the mission field of Tasmania. As our leader at Diocesan Council you have led us always with a heart for Christ and Christ's people. You bear witness to the spirit within you, and you have led us with humility, wisdom and grace.

Tasmania has its regions, each with their own peculiarities and habits. We acknowledge we come together from very diverse communities, however, regardless of region, regardless of lay or clergy, you have encouraged and granted all members of Council the

opportunity to be heard in all debates. You have led us to seek the heart of issues before us, and patiently guided us through times of reservation or disagreement. You have led us to address many difficult issues, and become more accountable.

You always ensured sufficient time for deliberation of business, though some have seen 'the look' that said 'we have digressed enough', or 'we are getting very repetitive'.

You perfected the all-important art of Afternoon Tea motions, and somehow, we always managed to close the meeting in time for the return trip to Hobart.

As a man with such an incredibly busy role, we give you special thanks for your approachability, and gentle, thoughtful and patient way. You were always able to find time for each of us. You have come to know us, and walked alongside us, as pilgrims together. You have been listening to our stories and encouraged us to know our true self, and to live in that truth with courage. As we walk paths we leave footprints. As you have walked with us in Tasmania, you have left footprints on our hearts, and we are never ever the same.

You leave now, a Diocese which has grown in confidence and commitment to mission and social engagement;

a healthier Diocese, transforming life...

A transforming Diocese, growing in Christ's life, light and love.

Noting this, your last meeting as a member of Diocesan Council, this motion puts on the record our sincere gratitude and appreciation for all you have given us Bishop John, our thanks to God for you, and our prayers for God's continued blessings for the new ministries you will exercise in the future.

*Kathryn Anderson (for Diocesan Council)*