



# AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

## Bishops Commission for Family, Youth and Life

Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP (Chairman)  
Bishop Peter Comensoli  
Bishop Mark Edwards OMI  
Bishop Michael Kennedy

28 August 2017

Your Graces, My Lords, Monsignors, Fathers,

### **Re: Nationwide Month of Prayer and Fasting for Marriage and Families – October 2017**

Please find enclosed Dropbox resources for your parishes and schools for the Nationwide Month of Prayer and Fasting for Marriage and Families to be held in October 2017. The Dropbox link is: <http://bit.ly/PrayerFasting2017>

These resources have been prepared by the Australian Catholic Marriage and Family Council. You will recall the bishops' approval of the resources and intended distribution at the ACBC May Plenary 2017.

As you already know, the Government has decided to hold a postal plebiscite on the definition of marriage in Australia. Over the coming weeks and months the future of marriage will receive a lot of attention. We will be called on in many different ways to help promote marriage as between one man and one woman but perhaps the most important thing we can do is to pray. Even though the Month of Prayer and Fasting is a prayer initiative, not a political one, it does take on an extra significance this year as it falls in the middle of the plebiscite campaign. I encourage you to redouble your efforts during this time to pray and preach about the beauty and importance of maintaining the current definition of marriage for the good of the Church and the nation.

The Month of Prayer and Fasting is intended to be held in parishes across Australia during October 2017. I encourage you to support your parishes to celebrate Mass, pray the Rosary and undertake Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during this time with the special intention of marriages and families in mind. The resource also seeks prayer support for people who are same-sex attracted or gender questioning, and their families.

The resource is designed to be downloaded for local printing and distribution. It comprises: (i) a statement explaining the initiative and its importance (ii) a leaflet containing prayer themes and prayer intentions for four of the five Sundays in October – 1st, 8th, 15th & 22nd 2017, (iii) a parish poster for use in A3 format (iv) a prayer card sheet comprising four copies of the Prayer to the Holy Family, designed in bookmark format (v) suggested parish bulletin notices and (vi) an information sheet for parishes about the resources.

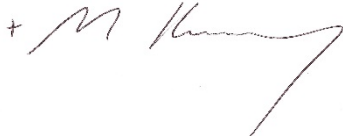
A short video (approx. 2 minutes) has also been prepared to promote this initiative. The video has been designed for use in parishes and schools. The direct link to the video is: <https://youtu.be/wKCRoXd3i6k>

I would be grateful if you would consider promoting these resources on your diocesan and parish websites; Facebook pages; diocesan papers and parish bulletins.

Please note that diocesan Communications Directors have been provided with the Dropbox link to these resources as well as Directors of Life, Marriage and Family Offices.

Thank you for supporting Marriages and Families in our society and Church, particularly through this initiative of prayer and fasting.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a small cross symbol followed by the name 'Michael Kennedy' in a cursive script.

***Most Rev Michael Kennedy D.D***  
***Bishop of Armidale***  
***Bishop Delegate, Marriage and Family***

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