



**The Eighth Annual General Meeting  
of Australian Reforming Catholics was held  
on Saturday 20 August 2016  
at the crypt at St Patrick's, Church Hill, SYDNEY**

**MINUTES**

- **PRESENT:** Barbara Brannan, Ann Lomas, Carol Miller, Margot Taverne, Winsome Duffy, Margaret Coffey, Pat Bates, Brian Page, Margaret McLellan, Bill Crowley, Maureen Brian, Jack Callaghan, Adele Cunningham, Rob Butler, Gideon Goosen, Ron Watts, Gloria McGrath, Shirley Lohman, Harding Burns, Peter Meury, Don Humphrey, Rob Brian, John Buggy and Margaret Knowlden

- **APOLOGIES:** 16 names

- **MINUTES OF SEVENTH AGM:**

Moved by Gabe Lomas and seconded by Bill Crowley that the Minutes be approved.  
**CARRIED.**

At the 2015 AGM the guest speaker, Kerin Tapsell, outlined how through Canon Law bishops were prevented from reporting sexual abuse cases to the police. The meeting passed a resolution that ARC write to the Bishops Conference requesting that police be informed even where civil authorities do not demand it. ARC went further than this and in conjunction with CCRI the petition was sent to all bishops throughout the world whose e-mail addresses we could find. The Australian Bishops Conference have now adopted the recommendation that was expressed.

- **REPORT BY ARC Spokesperson:** John Buggy.

**ARC relationships with CCRI:** John has stepped down from the CCRI Strategic Committee but is in regular contact with them as an Advisor.

**ARC Website:** As there had been no replies to appeals for assistance in keeping the website up to date, John has decided to take this on himself and will update it progressively.

- **FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Rob displayed the Financial Statement.

It was moved by Peter Meury and seconded by Barbara Brannan that the statement be accepted. **CARRIED**

- **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

Nil.

- **ELECTION OF NEW SECRETARIAT**

The following were elected:

Barbara Brannan  
Rob Brian  
John Buggy  
Rob Butler (new member)  
Alan Clague  
Margaret Knowlden  
Peter Meury  
Ron Watts

- **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **8.1 Discussion regarding ARC's relationship with CCRI**

John reported that, in accordance with the wish of ARC members, he has continued to foster relations with an international reform group as a way of building the pressure for genuine reform in the Church. Catholic Church Reform International (CCRI) is attempting to be that but many of the members merely represent only themselves and not a group. He expressed some disappointment that they have drawn back from taking a strong public stand on key issues and have preferred to put energy into forming discussion groups in various countries. He is also concerned that they have not developed the relationship with media in the northern hemisphere in order to be the prophetic voice that was desired. He asked that the AGM reflect this sentiment back to CCRI and this was endorsed by the meeting.

### **8.2 Discussion regarding ARC's approach to women deacons**

After some discussion, it was agreed:

- ARC would support the investigation proposed by Pope Francis;
- ARC considers that deaconate for women should be a possible step towards women in the priesthood;
- ARC holds that any role such as deaconate given to women must be accompanied by appropriate decision-making power.

### **8.3 Discussion on internal communications – e-mail, website**

It was generally agreed that e-mails and *ARCVoice* are the best forms of communication. Possibly very few members refer to the website but it would be useful to provide links to it in some of our communication so that members will be drawn to new content.

A "Chat Room" was tried some years ago but it didn't work well so it was abandoned.

**8.4 First thoughts on the proposal for an Australian Synod – ARC to be involved?**

Archbishop Coleridge’s proposal for this Synod was very favourably received by members and it was hoped that ARC will provide a document to the Synod and also seek personal representation.

**8.5 Outreach to potential new members – use of *ARCVoice*, brochure**

Gideon Goosen reported on his efforts to recruit new ARC members in the Blue Mountains. This was first tried a few years ago, without much success. But now he has found that the same people are keen to join.

Members were asked to take back copies of *ARCVoice* and the brochure and prayer and give out to friends or leave at the back of their church.

John suggested that two copies the next issue of *ARCVoice* would be sent to each member, with a request that the second one be handed to someone else in the hope that it might generate interest in joining ARC. This suggestion was well received and will be undertaken.

**8.6 Other matters**

**Overseas Priests:** There were many complaints about priests from overseas coming into parishes to fill vacancies, both regarding their poor English skills and/or for their lack of cultural awareness. Many express pre-Vatican II values and outdated approaches to theology.

**Tribute to Jim Taverne:** Rob recalled all the work Jim did for ARC, including financial management and maintenance of the Members Lists, and especially for the personal contacts he made. His presence is sadly missed.

**Thanks to John Buggy:** Rob spoke of the enormous contribution which John has made to ARC, especially with the policy schema he prepared for CCRI that was adopted in full and for the position documents that he wrote or co-ordinated.

**Thanks to Maureen Brian:** Maureen arranged for the excellent catering to be done by Rose Bay school canteen.

**Venue for Meeting:** It was noted that, under Archbishop Fisher, there has been no objection to holding this conference in Church property – unlike previous conferences when Cardinal Pell refused permission.

Signed: .....

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