

ARCHBISHOP SIONE SILONGO ULUILAKEPA

CHARGE

41ST SYNOD

DIOCESE OF POLYNESIA

7th – 11th May 2023



GRACE AND PEACE BE WITH YOU ALL.

Ni Sa Bula Vinaka, Talofa Lava, Kia Ora, Namaste, Noa'ia, and Malo e Lelei.

1. It is indeed an honor to welcome you all to our Cathedral where the Chair (Cathedra) of the Bishop is located. It is a symbol of the Ecclesiastical Role of the Bishop as the Focus of Unity of the Diocese. The Bishop's Chair signifies the liturgical, theological and pastoral TEACHING role. The Diocese gathers here in the Cathedral for teaching and sharing of stories to update, enrich and empower our fellowship and to discern our way forward with our ongoing engagement in God's Mission.
2. I welcome you all in this my first Diocesan Synod as the 8th Bishop of Polynesia, especially our sisters and brothers who travel across the vast ocean by air from Aotearoa, American Samoa, Samoa, the Kingdom of Tonga and from different parts of Fiji.
3. Welcome to the Reverend Venerable Canon Michael Hughes, The General Secretary of the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia. I invited the General Secretary to be here as there are certain matters that need our synod's assent, in addition to other matters of General Synod Te Hinota Whanui, and of the General Synod Office that require the Diocesan Synod's attention. The Reverend Canon Michael Hughes, we as a Diocese and Tikanga, wish to thank you for your ongoing assistance and assure you of our prayers on the many responsibilities that you and your staff continue to shoulder for our Church. Vinaka Vakalevu.
4. I also welcome Church Leaders and other special dignitaries, friends of the Diocese who are here with us today with open arms. Thank you for availing yourself to be with us.

IN MEMORIAM

5. We remember all those whom have gone before us. For those well known to us even those whom were less known to us but have faithfully served God. In silence, we remember before God – Rev. Falesima Fuko, Ofa ki he Laumalie Ma'oni'oni Auckland, Rev. Waise Radrodoro, Church of Resurrection Maniava, Rev. Charlie Leeman, St Thomas Labasa, Rev. Henry Bryce, All Saints Apia, Rev. Peter Sarawan Kumar, St Marks Newtown, Rev. Viliame Manumanutosi, St John's Wailoku, Rev. Sam Koi, St Mark Newtown, Rev. Lola Koloamatangi, St Barnabas Nuku'alofa, Rev. Malakai Tukuafu, St Mathias Nuku'alofa, Rev. Bili Anisi, St Timothy Wainunu, Rev. Jone Wainoqolo St Bartholomew Caubati, Rev. Sekitoa Pelaki Tuita, St Barnabas Nuku'alofa. Sr. Vutulongo Tu'ineau Moana St Clare/St Christophers' Naulu. Mrs. Fulori Vosatata, St John's Theological College MAST. The Late Archbishop Fereimi Cama.
6. We remember with deep gratitude the faithful devotion of all lay people and the ordained who have gone before us. REST ETERNAL GRANT UNTO THEM O LORD, AND LET LIGHT PERPETUAL SHINE UPON THEM.

ACKNOWLEDGE OF LEADERSHIP DURING CHALLENGING TIME OF OUR JOURNEY

7. We cannot ignore the events that shattered our lives as individuals, families, communities, Nations, the regions, and globally. While we were grappling with the sudden passing of our former Archbishop, our confidence in medical science was crushed as we helplessly watched and experienced the impact of COVID 19 in the world. We were affected in so many ways even our sense of being people of God and Church. The Most Powerful Volcanic Eruption in Tonga and the destructive Tsunami waves it produced make the scientist in the world wonder why an island called Tonga still exist. The Russia-Ukraine war and its negative economic impact in the world economy has directly affected us all right now and with more to come. We thank God for the Grace that still allows us to gather here in His Name. During these challenging times, we as a Diocese still managed with the Grace of God. On your behalf, I would like to



acknowledge the leadership of our Diocesan Secretary Registrar, the Rev. Sepi Hala'api'api, who as the CEO of the Diocese, handled the pressure from all angles to steer our Vaka of the Diocese in the midst of very rough seas. The Diocesan Treasurer, Mrs. Vishika Gohil, stood alongside Rev. Sepi and the Executive of the MAST during those cloudy days until we finally saw bright rays of the sun.

8. Tough decisions were made, and actions followed but they were made for our stability during those turbulent times. Thank you for all your prayers. We know it is God's Grace alone that brought us thus far.
9. I would like to thank Archbishop Emeritus, The Most Reverend Dr. Winston Halapua for his prayers and encouragement during these most challenging time. Malo 'aupito. At other parts of this charge, we acknowledge the leadership of our Commissaries and the Standing Committee.

INTRODUCTION

10. *Introductory remarks paying tribute to past Archbishops and respective achievements to date.*

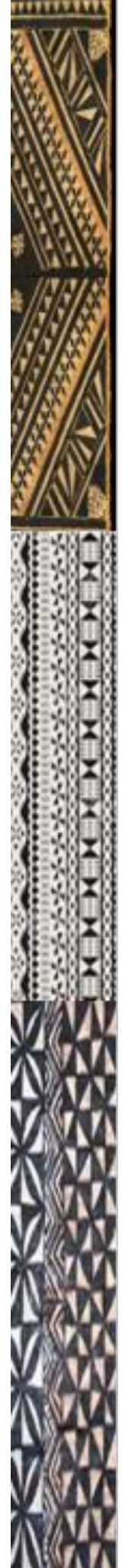
- a. The pathway to this Synod has been an interesting and challenging one. All praise and glory be to our Lord and Saviour who has shown us perfection in all its essence. We, imperfect as we are, aspire for perfection with God's help and his constant presence in walking alongside us as we journey as imperfect human beings in an imperfect world.
- b. This journey continues from the roads and paths that were walked on by my predecessors and in whose light and blessing I stand here as your humble servant. I pay a special tribute to the late Archbishop Fereimi Cama for creating pathways for many of us in our beloved church to benefit from in more ways than most of us would know. His untimely passing left a gaping hole in the leadership of the church and for many of us, he left us too soon. May his soul rest in peace and rise in glory and may his loved ones continue to journey with us and with him spirit.

11. *Acknowledgements of the Accompaniment of the Fellow Archbishops and Their Guidance*

- a. The sudden departure of the late Archbishop Cama of our Diocese caused anxiety and feelings of uncertainty over the future leadership of the Diocese. One of the great attributes of this Church is our Constitution and our leadership of the 3 Primates acting as the head of our Church. In so many ways, Archbishop Philip and Archbishop Don took the leadership of our Diocese and steered the Diocese through uncertain waters to bring us to this day where we are now able, with God's grace and mercy, to convene our Diocesan Synod. May I thank my fellow Archbishops for the guidance and prayers during these last few months and for your unending support. Malo 'Aupito e 'ofa moe lotu 'Eiki Alekipisope Filipe mo Don.

12. *Gratitude for the support and prayers since the Electoral College and through the Episcopal Ordination*

- a. As Synod representatives of the various parishes, may I humbly request that you take back with you to your parishes the most humble gratitude from my wife Taina, Fifita, Kaliopasi, and I for your prayers and support during the period leading up to, and during my Episcopal Ordination. My family sensed that we were with you all in prayer and for that, I cannot find those words to express my most deepest thanks. Perhaps a simple "Malo 'aupito" from us to you encompasses all our feelings of gratitude and love to all of you who prayed for us and for our Diocese.
13. I have spent these last few months in prayerful reflection and discernment on the challenges that face the Diocese of Polynesia, first and foremost as a church and then as a voice for the poor and the marginalized of our communities. How the Diocese navigates the turbulent waters can only be done in prayerful discernment and in the strong belief in a God of Hope and in a God of Love and Compassion



for Justice. Our task is first to Act Justly, secondly: To Love Mercy, and most importantly Our Lord calls on us to walk in humble fellowship with our God. (Micah 6:8).

OUR VISION

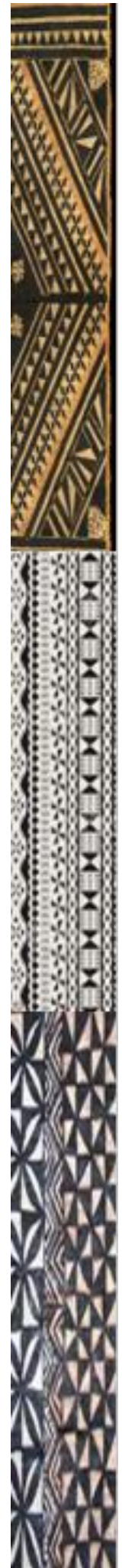
14. The Diocese of Polynesia is a relevant, responsive, inclusive and resilient Church.
15. We strive to be a Church that is relevant to the needs of our people and the changing times, to **review**, adapt and evolve to provide meaningful ministry. We aim to be a resilient Church, able to withstand the challenges and adversities of the future, **reinforce** the strengths and learn from lessons of the past. We seek to **revitalise** our responses to the challenges we face as a community of believers. Finally, we are the Diocese of Polynesia, embracing our diversity and celebrating the richness of our cultures.
16. The Sections of the Charge are reflective of the key areas the Diocesan Synod is to consider: Review; Reinforce; and Revitalise

REVIEW

17. In this first category of the Charge, I would like to focus on issues and matters that will need to be revisited and reviewed. Our first and urgent task is to get our house in order. The following are issues that will need to be reviewed and our task as the Synod is to ensure that our governance structures do address them.
18. ***Ministry of the Church and Capacity of the Priests:***
 - a. The Ministry of the Church needs to be reviewed and made relevant for today's challenges and tomorrow's issues. As the Diocese of Polynesia, we cannot play our part if we do not know the basic and essential liturgies and practices that are core elements of our Identity as Anglicans. I would like our Diocese to focus on the following:

Appropriate and Relevant Training

- b. The role of a priest goes beyond leading worship services and administering sacraments. As priests we are also called to be spiritual leaders and counselors to our parishioners, offering guidance and support during times of difficulty. Our training provided in our respective theological institutions will need to address this shortfall. It is crucial that our priests receive further training to address the various issues and challenges faced by their communities, including mental health, addiction, poverty, and social justice. By receiving additional training, priests can develop the necessary skills and knowledge to provide effective pastoral care, support their congregations, and address issues that impact their community. This helps to build trust and confidence in the leadership of the church, strengthening the bonds between the clergy and their congregation.



Refresher Courses

- c. As spiritual leaders of the Anglican Church, our priests have a responsibility to maintain a deep understanding of Anglican theology, history, and tradition. However, as time passes, I have observed that level of knowledge has become outdated. More so our newer priests lack a comprehensive understanding of Anglicanism. This is why refresher courses on Anglicanism are necessary for priests to refresh their knowledge of the Anglican faith, its history, liturgy, and practices. This, in turn, helps them to better serve their congregations, communicate the teachings of the Church, and understand the evolving needs of their community. In addition, refresher courses can help to deepen a priest's personal faith and spiritual growth.

Coherence and Standards in the Liturgy

- d. The Anglican liturgy is a beautiful and meaningful expression of our faith and worship, and it is essential that priests are trained to uphold the coherence and standards of the liturgy. This means that as priests you must have a deep understanding of the liturgical texts, music, and symbols used in Anglican worship, as well as the importance of pacing, tone, and ritual.
- e. Proper training ensures that priests are able to lead the liturgy with confidence and grace, creating a reverent and inspiring atmosphere for their congregation. Additionally, as a well-trained priest, you can better communicate the meaning and significance of the liturgy to your congregation, helping to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the Anglican faith.

19. Stipendiary vs Non-Stipendiary Clergy:

- a. Our Diocese faces challenges in determining the appropriate balance between stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy. The primary challenge is in determining the needs of the parish and how best to address those needs while balancing financial and personnel resources of the Diocese. In some cases, a parish may require a full-time stipendiary priest to provide the necessary level of pastoral care and support, while in others, a non-stipendiary priest may be sufficient.
- b. Another challenge is in ensuring that both stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy are treated fairly and equitably. Stipendiary clergy receive a salary and benefits, while non-stipendiary clergy are volunteers who may receive little or no compensation. This can create tension and resentment within a parish, particularly if non-stipendiary clergy are asked to take on significant responsibilities without adequate support or recognition.
- c. To address these challenges, it is essential that we as a Diocese seek clarity on the needs of the parish and determine the appropriate provision of priests. This requires open and honest communication between parish leadership, clergy, and our training institutions. It may also involve re-evaluating existing structures and policies to ensure that all clergy are treated fairly and equitably. Ultimately, the goal should be to create a parish environment where all members feel valued and supported, and where the needs of the congregation are met in the most effective and efficient way possible.

20. Maximizing the use of the Lay-Ministry to Assist in the Ministry in Parishes

- a. Our Diocese should maximize the use of lay-ministry to assist in the ministry of parishes by identifying the gifts and talents of lay members and empowering them to serve in various roles. This involves creating opportunities for training and development, as well as ensuring that there is clear communication about expectations and responsibilities. Lay ministers can serve in a variety of capacities, including pastoral care, music ministry, youth and children's ministry, evangelism, and social justice initiatives.



- b. By utilizing the skills and passions of lay members, the Church can expand its reach and impact, while also creating a sense of ownership and investment among the laity. This can lead to increased engagement and participation in the life of the Church, and a stronger sense of community and shared mission. This is a need we will have to nurture and develop. Our priests do not have all the knowledge, they need our lay people to help them find solutions and ways forward.
- c. One such parish structure that addresses this matter is the model of local shared ministry (LSM Structure). Under the LSM structure as practiced in the Diocese of Auckland, members of the Ministry Support Team are 'called' from within the congregation and have specific roles. Typically, these roles include coordinators of administration, pastoral care, preaching, and worship, along with those called to be deacons and priests to ensure the provision of sacramental ministry. The coordinators are to work within dedicated teams in the various areas of ministry.

21. ***Review the Relevance of Current Educational Models and Priorities*** and a clear shift in focus of the Church to provide a conducive academic environment to develop expertise in the provision of academic and vocational training curricula through our schools.

- a. As the world continues to evolve, there is a need for educational models and priorities to adapt to the changing needs of society. In particular, there is a growing need for academic and vocational training curricula to prepare individuals for the workforce and address the skills gap in many industries.
- b. For this Charge, our Diocese will need to play a significant role in addressing this need by developing expertise in the provision of vocational training curricula through our schools. As a Church, our education institutions must provide practical skills and knowledge that will enable those who attend our institutions to contribute meaningfully to their communities and the economy.
- c. The relevance of current educational models and priorities is important in this context because it highlights the need to integrate practical skills and vocational training. Traditional academic models are no longer sufficient to provide the necessary preparation for individuals to thrive in the modern workforce, where practical skills and experience are highly valued and are in demand.
- d. As a Diocese, we will address this by providing vocational training curricula in our schools that focus on developing practical skills in areas such as technology, healthcare, and trades. This can be done through partnerships with industry leaders and employers to ensure that the curricula are relevant and up-to-date. Our 3 Tikanga Church is also set up to allow for our students to do apprentice training as needed.

Engage the Process to Review the Diocesan Strategy and Structure

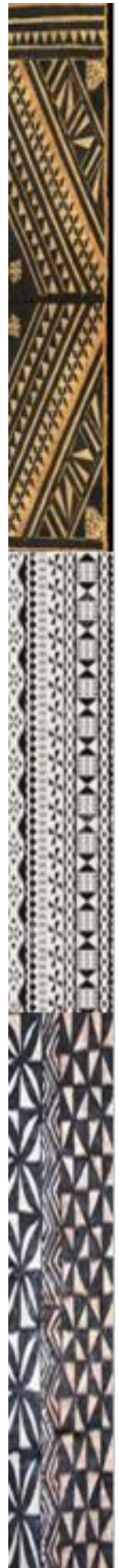
22. In Matthew 9:16-17, Jesus speaks of new wine needing to be poured into new wineskins. This metaphor suggests that the new and dynamic message of Jesus cannot be contained within old and rigid structures. Instead, new structures and approaches are needed to accommodate the growth and change that comes with the message of the gospel. This passage encourages Christians to be open to change and

innovation in their approach to spreading the word of God and renewing the structures of the church as needed.

23. As a Church in the Pacific, we face unique challenges related to climate change, poverty, and social injustice. This Charge raises a number of key issues that will need to be integrated into a Strategic Plan. Whilst there is a need for a review of the existing Strategic Plan, I am of the view that we should not expand too much on the review but focus on how these issues I raise in this Charge can be integrated into a Strategic Plan for the coming years.
24. Furthermore, the structures of the Diocese will need to be reviewed to see how best they respond to the needs of the church as a whole. I would suggest that once we agree on the priorities of the Church, then we review our structures to ensure that they can deliver on the priorities that we, as the Synod of the Diocese, will adopt that are in line with those raised in this Charge.

REINFORCE

25. The Diocese of Polynesia is a Church of the Pacific region that has constitutional anchors in Aotearoa New Zealand. As such, our Church has had to pick up from its links with the Colonial powers and integrate that history into our identity as a Church. Reinforcing these realities is an important, yet often ignored part of our identity as a Church. Secondly, as a Church our present and future reality will be Climate Change. As a Church we will need to factor that into our lives with urgency and with purpose.
26. ***The Plight of the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu Descendants and their Future as a Community of the Church.***
 - a. Our Solomon Island and Ni-Vanuatu Descendants in Fiji are a marginalized community that has been historically neglected overtime resulting in significant socio-economic challenges, including limited access to education, healthcare, and employment opportunities. Our Church has taken on a significant responsibility to provide support to this community, with many of the descendants cared for by the Church.
 - b. Even though- this matter has been a priority concern raised in previous Synods, as a Church, we have not given this issue the space within the structures of the church. One way I would recommend that we address these challenges is to establish a Diocesan Commission within the Structures of the Church.
 - c. This Commission would be answerable to the Diocesan Synod through the Standing Committee and would be responsible for addressing the issues faced by these communities and ensuring their future as a community in the Church.
 - d. The commission would be composed of individuals who have experience and expertise in areas such as community development, social justice, and advocacy. It would also involve representatives from the Solomon Islands and Ni-Vanuatu descendants' communities to ensure their voices and perspectives are heard.
 - e. The Commission's primary role would be to identify the challenges facing these communities and develop strategies and programs to address them. These strategies would focus on building capacity within these communities, empowering them to become self-sufficient and active



participants in the life of the Church and wider society. It would also provide a platform for advocacy, and capacity building, empowering these communities to define an identity of their own that is intricately linked to our core priorities as the Diocese of Polynesia.

- f. In addition, the proposed Commission would work to strengthen the relationship between the Anglican Church and these communities. This would involve promoting dialogue and understanding between different groups, fostering a sense of shared purpose, and promoting reconciliation and healing.
- g. Establishing a Diocesan Commission within the Structures of the Church to address the plight of Solomon Islands and Ni-Vanuatu descendants would send a powerful message of solidarity and support. It would demonstrate the Church's commitment to these communities and its willingness to work towards a better future for all its members.

27. *Promoting Disaster Preparedness as the Core message of the Church addressing Climate Change*

- a. The push for greater resilience towards climate change is now an urgent matter within the Anglican Communion, as the impacts of global warming continue to be felt around the world and in particular in our Church and our Diocese. Yet our understanding and ownership of the call for disaster preparedness still needs to be further emphasized as a core element of our mission to be stewards of God's Creation.
- b. As the Diocese, our emphasis will need to be placed on the following priorities:

Developing a Theology on Disaster Preparedness

- c. Theology plays a critical role in shaping our understanding of the world and our place in it. As such, we must develop a theology of disaster preparedness that recognizes the importance of caring for our planet and protecting vulnerable communities. A Pacific Theology of Disaster Preparedness emphasizes the need to care for and protect the most vulnerable members of society, especially those who are most affected by climate change. This requires a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and cultural contexts in which disasters occur, as well as a commitment to promoting social justice and addressing the root causes of climate change.
- d. In practical terms, a proposed Pacific Theology of Disaster Preparedness also requires the development of specific strategies and interventions to help communities prepare for and respond to disasters. This include prepositioning emergency supplies and support to those affected by disasters, establishing early warning systems, and developing sustainable agriculture and livelihoods strategies that can help communities weather the impacts of climate change over the longer term.
- e. Overall, a proposed Pacific Theology of Disaster Preparedness is an essential component of the Church's response to climate change in our Pacific Ocean. By drawing on the values and teachings of the Anglican tradition, as well as the insights of scientific and social research, the Church can help to build greater resilience and adaptability in the face of these complex and challenging issues.
- f. Through this work, we can play a critical role in protecting and supporting those who are most affected by the impacts of climate change, and in promoting greater social and ecological justice.



Building Our Capacity In-House to Address Climate Change

- g. Accessing climate finance is essential for promoting disaster preparedness and building resilience in vulnerable communities. However, accessing this finance can be challenging, particularly for Faith Based Organisations. Our Diocese must build its capacity to access climate finance through the provision of scholarships to allow for our students to gain further knowledge who will, in turn, come back to assist our Diocese with this specific skillset. By doing so, the Church can ensure that it has the resources it needs to promote disaster preparedness and protect vulnerable communities.
- h. With the establishment of the Office of the Climate Commissioner for the Anglican Church, it is imperative for the Diocese of Polynesia to build our inhouse capacity to be able to best serve this office of the Climate Commissioner through formation and training of staff to take on the climate change related programmes as offered by the Office of the Climate Commissioner for our 3 Tikanga Church.

Allocating Training Resources for Community Integrated Vulnerability Assessment (CIVA Model)

- i. The CIVA model is a powerful tool for promoting disaster preparedness and building resilience in vulnerable communities. It emphasizes community-based approaches that engage local people in planning and decision-making, empowering them to take control of their own futures. Our Diocese must allocate resources for training on the CIVA model, including providing training for student priests. By doing so, the Church can ensure that its members have the skills and knowledge they need to promote disaster preparedness and build resilience in their communities.

Rolling Out of the Community Integrated Vulnerability Assessment (CIVA) Programme and the Diocesan Focus on Disaster Preparedness to the Remaining Episcopal Units.

- j. The CIVA programme and the Diocesan focus on disaster preparedness have been successful in many parts of our Diocese. However, there are still many Episcopal Units and parishes that have not yet adopted these approaches.
- k. Our Diocese must work with the other Tikangas and Episcopal Units on the CIVA programme and Our Church's focus on disaster preparedness providing support and resources to ensure their success. The CIVA model and the diocesan focus on disaster preparedness must be adapted to the specific needs of each Tikanga, taking into account their cultural and linguistic diversity.

28. Lead a 3 Tikanga wide institutional Reflection on our Institutional Ability to Respond to the Increasing Frequency, Multiplicity and Severity of Human Induced Natural Disasters

- a. With the impacts of climate change disproportionately affecting Pacific Island communities, it is imperative that the church takes a proactive approach in building our resilience and ability to respond to these disasters. The institutional reflection should focus on assessing our current



disaster preparedness and response mechanisms, identifying areas of strength and weakness, and developing strategies to address any gaps.

- b. One particular concern is our ability as an institution to respond adequately to the increasing frequency of extreme weather patterns affecting our region. Our institutions are equipped to respond to one disaster at a time affecting one to two countries at the most.
- c. Additionally, the institutional reflection should emphasize the importance of incorporating indigenous knowledge and practices in disaster preparedness and response. Our communities have a deep understanding of their environment and have developed strategies to cope with natural disasters for generations. By integrating this knowledge into our institutional approach, we can enhance our resilience and effectiveness in responding to disasters.

REVITALISE

- 29. There is an urgent need to revitalize the programmes and structures of the Diocese of Polynesia to ensure that it remains relevant, responsive, and resilient in the face of current and future challenges. This revitalization can include re-evaluating governance models and updating policies and procedures, as well as strengthening youth programs and investing in the training and development of young candidates for the priesthood.
- 30. By prioritizing the development of a strong foundation and infrastructure for the Church, the Diocese can better serve its communities and be better equipped to address social, environmental, and economic issues. The Church must also actively engage with its congregations and local communities to ensure that its programmes and structures are meeting their needs and are aligned with their values and aspirations. Ultimately, this revitalization will ensure that the Diocese of Polynesia becomes a relevant and vibrant Faith Based institution, capable of adapting to the changing needs of its people and the world around us.

Youth programme

- 31. Revitalizing the youth programme in the Diocese of Polynesia to align with the CIVA model is essential. The CIVA model emphasizes community-based initiatives that prioritize local knowledge, resources, and resilience in addressing the effects of climate change. To achieve this goal, the youth programme must be designed around the CIVA model to be inclusive, engaging, and empower the youth to lead in their communities. The youth programme should be revitalized to address the specific needs of the youth, such as spiritual development, leadership skills, and environmental stewardship.
- 32. Revitalising the youth programme should also involve developing partnerships with other organizations and agencies to create opportunities for the youth to access resources and training on climate change adaptation and mitigation. Additionally, the programme should incorporate traditional knowledge and cultural practices to foster a sense of pride in the youth's cultural heritage and identity.
- 33. As a Church, we must prioritize the revitalisation of the youth programme to achieve a sustainable and resilient future. The youth are the future leaders of the church and the communities they serve. A revitalised youth programme will empower the youth to lead in addressing the challenges facing their communities, including the impacts of climate change. It will also enable the Diocese of Polynesia to align with the CIVA model, enhancing the diocese's capacity to address the effects of climate change in a community-led, culturally sensitive, and holistic manner.



Call for Priesthood.

34. As a Church, we need young candidates for priesthood to ensure a future sustainability of the Church. This call is for young people with a passion for service and a calling to Ministry. The Church needs leaders who are committed to the Church's mission, values, and teachings.
35. As a Church, we should encourage young people to explore their call to Ministry and provide them with opportunities for training, mentorship, and leadership development. The Church should also create an environment that welcomes and supports young leaders, providing them with the resources they need to be successful in their Ministry.
36. I invite you as Synod members to make this a priority for your respective Parish, Episcopal Unit and Archdeaconry.

The Governance Structures for the Future

37. The Diocese of Polynesia is facing a rapidly changing world, and to remain relevant and responsive, it needs to revitalize its structures for the future. One of the key areas that will require the attention of our Diocese is the governance model of the church. The Episcopal Unit of Tonga has aspirations to become a Diocese within the existing model of the Diocese of Polynesia. The current model may not be sufficient to address the emerging challenges and opportunities that face the Diocese.
38. We should consider adopting a more adaptable governance model that can respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. To enhance the church's financial sustainability, the Diocese also needs to adopt innovative fundraising strategies, that can enable the Diocese to generate additional revenue streams that can support its activities and programs.
39. Finally, we as the Diocese, need to embrace technology and innovation to enhance our outreach and engagement with our parishioners. This can be achieved through the development of a comprehensive digital strategy that leverages various technologies to enhance communication and engagement with members.

CLOSING

40. Thank You to all who have contributed to the Planning of this 41st Synod. I am most Grateful for your leadership.
41. I would like to conclude by reminding us that we gather here because God Has Called us to be His Church. We were reminded by the Epistle of this morning from 1st Peter 2:9 ***“That you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”***
42. Our privilege is for God’s Glory and in the next couple of days, we are to listen deeply to the voice of God directing us, informing us, and inspiring us to discern a response to this Charge put before us in prayerful reflection.
43. I pray that God continues to shower his Blessings upon you all and that God’s Loving Embrace unites us in the Bond of Peace for we are bound by the Love of God in Jesus Christ. May we declare together the mystery of Faith from our Eucharistic Liturgy.



44. **Glory to you Lord Christ; your Death we show forth; your resurrection we proclaim; your coming we await. Amen, Come Lord Jesus.**

The Lord be with You.

Amen.

