



**CHA Leader Formation Taskforce
Meeting Summary
11 April 2014**

1. Opening Prayer

Susan led a reflection based on Mark: 26-29 – sowing seeds of the Kingdom which bear fruit we know not how - and excerpts from the new book from Templeton Prize winner and Czech priest Tomas Halik, *Night of the Confessor*. Halik writes about the value of a ‘little faith’, one which has undergone ‘the fire of the cross without retreating’, which compared to ‘great and firm faith may appear small and insignificant’ ...like a mustard seed...but which reflects exactly how God operates in the world.

2. Welcome and introductions (apologies)

Invited

Jennifer Stratton

Kevin Mercer

Sr Anne Hetherington

Helen Clarke rsc

Brigid Tracey

Stephen Cornelissen

Kerry Shearer for Stephen Cornelissen

Jan Horsnell

Cath Garner

Rev Dr Joe Parkinson

Rev Dr Gerard Arbuckle SM

Dr Tony Baker

Martin Laverty (Staff)

Susan Sullivan (Staff)

Mary Kenyon (Staff)

Kerry Shearer was welcomed to the meeting in her role of Executive Officer to Stephen Cornelissen. Kerry will participate and liaise with Stephen and Mercy Health given Stephen’s unavailability for most meetings.

3. Summary of previous meeting

This was accepted without amendment.

4. Pathways Member Survey Report

The Taskforce focused its response to the survey report by reviewing its Terms of Reference. It is clear that ‘one size’ won’t fit all organisations. Implicit in the survey responses is a continuing ‘systems-oriented thinking’ rather than collaborative sector-wide vision. It may be necessary to develop a new communication strategy to focus the goals Pathway is trying to achieve particularly with respect to helping members recognise the need for collaboration. Fr Gerry reflected on his sense that tribalism is becoming more rather than less entrenched. Sector unity needs to be forged theologically as well as culturally.

Awareness of formation needs will arise from an understanding of mission as being about more than measuring activities but rather about cultivating Catholic identity in response to ongoing challenges and circumstances.

Trustees have a role in emphasising mission governance responsibilities, with the CEO having a critical role in delivering on these responsibilities. There would be value in Boards having some kind

of framework to assist them reflect on mission and Catholic identity but presently it seems there is no ideal framework being used. The Mission & Identity Committee has set itself the task of developing such a resource but the task aligns also with the work of Pathways as a way of promoting the need for formation. A framework or 'audit' would need to make clear what mission governance means and hence be educative as well as assist evaluation. It would also assist people make sense of the gaps and create momentum for change.

It is important to see formation as more than education events but a process. Its likely members would access particular events and then align these with a process of their own devising.

5. Pathways Project – planning for future implementation

It was suggested there could be value in developing an orientation program for new executives and offer it around the country on a regular basis. The content could cover: mission & ministry, the Catholic approach to health and aged care, practical challenges e.g. ethics, pastoral dimension, being part of Church.

Priorities agreed for further project development, with comments offered by the Taskforce, were:

1. A resource/s to address the issue of language - a glossary as well as a revised version of "So You're Working for the Catholic Church".
2. Ethics Resources
 - a. Healthcare will need to lead the training of ethicists as its unlikely the Church will.
 - b. An online ethics program is of value
 - c. Ethics policies are needed in each organisation based on position statements.
 - d. Ethics needs to be a strong part of senior leader orientation
 - e. CHA may have a role in advising members where to access ethics advice.
3. Mission Leader Formation program
 - a. There is a need to identify the pathways for recruitment of future mission leaders.
 - b. Mission leaders need: faith commitment, an understanding of the Catholic tradition, interpersonal skills, and executive skills.
 - c. Mission needs to be embedded within the whole executive team so that the services are understood as part of the mission rather than as mission contributing to the services delivered.
 - d. There is a need to understand the way the mission leader role is currently operationalised in Australia.
 - e. There is a need for a working definition for the mission role so the gaps can be identified.
4. Assessment of formation needs
 - a. It would be useful to start by clarifying what a well-formed person would look like for each of the roles of trustee, board director, and executive.
 - b. It may be that an organisation needs a skill mix that is not found in one person.
 - c. The focus needs to be on leadership capacity rather than competencies with specificity around the behaviours, knowledge and the context of being a Catholic ministry.
5. Evaluate effectiveness of formation programs
 - a. Here again there is a need to understand what a well-formed person looks like.
 - b. Need to move from evaluating events to an evaluation of the outcome of the formation process over time.
 - c. An inductive process is needed.

If the above resource development is to be successful it is imperative that there is unity among members. It will necessary to name the barriers and obstacles to this unity.

It will also be necessary to clarify what a vibrant mission-based organisation would look like and what is expected of that institution and its leaders if it is to be authentically Catholic. The Taskforce emphasised its belief that some resource for 'auditing' or monitoring mission is essential to contribute to 'mission quality assurance'. What will be the evidence of faithfulness to the mission,

for example, preferential option for the poor? We need qualitative rather than quantitative indicators of mission. A resource would be best developed from key principles e.g. the healing mission of Jesus; Catholic doctrine related to healthcare; Catholic Social Teaching; traditions of the particular congregation/ministry. The reflection process might begin with the fourth (traditions of the particular ministry) in order to arrive at the first (the healing mission of Jesus).

As a consequence of mission-related expectations, there will be different expectations for different positions in order to guarantee authenticity. In financial roles, it could require reflection on the degree to which the organisation is risk averse rather than taking appropriate risks to advance the mission in new contexts. It was suggested that the Mission & Identity Committee could develop a 'mission assurance' tool which can then be adapted by the Taskforce to clarify what is needed at trustee, board director, and executive level in order to implement it.

For an online ethics course it will be necessary to create an impetus to participating. Clinicians would be the most likely participants. A course should be structured around inviting insight into the Catholic ethics discourse, how and why our *Code* is different and an awareness of how to recognise an ethical dilemma and then respond effectively.

The Taskforce discussed how involvement in Pathways might be marketed. What impetus is there to participating? It may be necessary to approach the data gathering task as a way of identifying the organisation's needs then marketing to show Pathways can support addressing that need. Trustees and senior leaders are usually motivated by the need for accountability and by the search for excellence. It's likely that a critical mass of participation will need to be achieved and then others will come on board. It will be important to re-visit the Pathways Communications Strategy.

6. Ministry Leadership Centre program

Key principles driving any future collaboration with MLC will be: transferability to Australia of the content and methodology; ability to embed a desire for ongoing learning. The Taskforce will be looking for a clear recommendation for the future and a strategy for how it might be implemented including the financial implications and time commitment. Fr Gerry indicated his support for the assessment process but has questions about the MLC definition of culture. Cultural analysis needs to be taken into account and the inductive method. Leaders need tools for analysis of what's happening internally especially when mergers and acquisitions occur or even when a system is undergoing significant structural change. It would be valuable to try to connect with graduates of the MLC program to ascertain: how they were nominated for participation; other study they had/have done; the organisational expectations when they return from the course; how they balance the study and their work responsibilities. The Taskforce were interested to consider how the MLC might align with the ACU CHA Graduate Certificate.

7. Pathways future funding

This question will need to be addressed at a future time especially in light of the outcome of the MLC assessment process.

8. Integroe consultancy

There are varying needs and resources for the work of leader formation across the sector given the scale of large and small member agencies. Challenging the system-focussed perspective implicit in the survey responses to create a 'big picture' outlook will be an important goal of the Integroe research. The Taskforce emphasised the value of face-to-face contact to gather the information. Where a mission leader exists this person would be the best starting point for information gathering and as a means to access the higher levels of governance. It may that two phases occur. Once data has been gathered and reported a meeting with each Board would help promote Pathways and what it has to offer in supporting organisations.

9. General Business

The Taskforce acknowledged the size of the task and its challenges but encouraged patience and a focus on celebrating small milestones rather than being daunted by the largeness of the vision. The task might be best understood as 'liberating the prophetic voice'.

Pathways 2014 Revised meeting dates

Next meeting:

Thursday 5 June (Face-to-face, Sydney, MAM offices in Bondi Junction)

Future meeting dates

Tuesday 5 August (By teleconference, 1:30 AEDT)

Thursday 23 October (Face-to-face, Sydney)

Wednesday 3 December (By teleconference, 1:30 AEDT)

10. Meeting Close

The Taskforce reflected again on Mark 4: 26-29 and the writing of Fr Tomas Halik.

The meeting closed at 3:15pm.