

Board of Nominators

COMMUNICATION TO SYNOD MEMBERS
19 DECEMBER 2024



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MELBOURNE

Dear Synod members,

We are writing to update you on the work of the Board of Nominators as part of the process of election of a new Archbishop of Melbourne. The Board has been meeting fortnightly since our first formal meeting on 10 August, and at the time of writing there have been ten meetings of the full Board.

Thank you for your participation in the election process, especially for your prayerful support over the last few months.

Since we began meeting, we have made three requests for your input. These closed at the end of October, and we are deeply grateful for the extensive feedback provided by Synod members and others from across the Diocese and beyond. We can now report back as follows.

Nomination of potential candidates

The Board received a total of 494 nominations for 66 different people. 16 of these 66 nominees received nominations from 10 or more members of Melbourne Synod. In accordance with section 21 (4) (a) of the *Archbishop Election Act 2022*, the Board of Nominators has discussed each of these 16 nominees individually as part of its discernment process.

The online nomination form also gave opportunity for submissions to explain why they were nominating a particular individual. This information has been very helpful to the Board not only for considering a specific nominee, but also in understanding what Synod members and others are looking for in the next Archbishop.

Board of Nominators Consultation Survey

We received 565 individual responses to the consultation survey, including 201 responses from members of Synod. Overall, 68% of responses were from lay people and 32% from clergy. While 88% of respondents said that English was their first language, 12% reported one of 20 other languages. 28% of respondents spoke multiple languages, and 1% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

Survey responses included extensive quantitative and qualitative data, with some answers running to several hundred words. The Board has considered this feedback at multiple meetings, supported by analysis prepared by our consultant Revd Sandy Jones. This has shaped the development of selection criteria for the role of Archbishop and of questions for potential candidates.

October Synod small groups

We made a presentation on the Board's work to the October Synod meeting including initial analysis of the consultation survey. This presentation is available on our website. We then invited Synod members to break into small groups and provide feedback on the question "What information do you need to know about the candidates at next year's Election Synod in order to make your decision?". We received 259 responses, evenly split between clergy and laity. Areas identified included: theological and doctrinal beliefs, leadership experience, commitment to inclusion and diversity, personal faith and spirituality, vision and strategy.

All of this feedback – nomination forms, survey responses, and small group input – is invaluable for shaping both the Board's engagement with potential candidates and what we present to the Election Synod in 2025.

Next steps and the Election Synod

As previously advised, the Election Synod is planned to be held in May 2025, and must be held not later than 10 August 2025. The Board has recommended a date for the Election Synod Meeting to Bishop Genieve Blackwell (who will be the Administrator of the Diocese).

The proposed dates are Friday 23rd and Saturday 24th May 2025. If required, the second sitting of the Election Synod would be on the 31st May 2025. Please put these dates in your diary now and we will update you next year.

We ask that you continue to pray for us in your parishes and congregations, and especially for those we will consider as potential candidates, that in our discernment we may always seek to follow God's call.

Dr Jenny George
Chair, Board of Nominators

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