



# Anam Cara Community Statement

## 1.0 Mission

1.1 The Anam Cara Community is a dispersed Christian contemplative community of prayer and support for the inner journey into God.

## 2.0 Objectives

2.1 The Anam Cara Community will serve God, the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland and the wider church by:

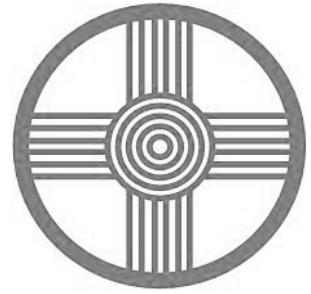
- Forming a community of individuals (associates) who seek to live the contemplative life, in all its dimensions;
- Providing resources for individuals, parishes and other groups to support the inner journey into God;
- Being a community of prayer, worship, the Bible, reflection, discernment, justice and mutual support.

## 3.0 Values

3.1 The Anam Cara Community is a *Christian* community, rooted in the historic faith. We recognize and celebrate the many and varied expressions of the Christian tradition within the Anglican Communion, and in our sister churches. We also recognize and celebrate the wisdom of other religious traditions, and seek to understand and learn from their experiences. We acknowledge the importance of the traditions and wisdom of Australian Indigenous spirituality, particularly the understanding of the link between spirit and earth.

3.2 The Anam Cara Community is a *contemplative* community, committed to the understanding that God calls us to make an inner journey the end of which, ultimately, is union with God. We celebrate the ways of prayer, prayerful reading of scripture, worship, spiritual direction / soul care, reflection and silence. While we value the contemporary, we also value the historical wisdom drawn from the mothers and fathers of the tradition.

3.3 The Anam Cara Community is a community of the *Word*. Jesus, the Word, is communicated to us through the texts of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures, in which we seek truth, wisdom, nourishment, correction and guidance.



3.4 The Anam Cara Community is a community committed to *equality, peace and justice making*. We believe that response to God's call to the inner journey is a call to make peace and work for justice.

3.5 The Anam Cara Community is a community of *renewal and reformation*. We hear God's call to make all things new, and to continually examine our expression of faith to determine what supports, and what hinders our growth in God, and our service of the world.

3.6 The Anam Cara Community is an *open* community. We are open to all, and undertake to work co-operatively, respectfully and transparently with parishes and other ministries in the Diocese.

3.7 The Anam Cara Community is a *dispersed* community. Whilst we do not live together, or even close to one another, we acknowledge that we are sisters and brothers, and fellow pilgrims.

## 4.0 Leadership

4.1 Leadership within the Anam Cara Community is modelled after the leadership and ministry of Jesus, who taught his disciples:

So Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else."<sup>1</sup>

4.2 We understand this to be ***servant leadership***. Robert Greenleaf describes servant leadership in this way:

The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are two extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.

The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. The best test, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Mark 10:42-44 NLT, cf Matthew 20:25-28, John 13:12-15



difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit or at least not be further deprived?<sup>2</sup>

4.3 Servant leadership within the Community is mediated through human beings, gifted and called by God and commissioned by the Bishop and the Community to serve the Community.

4.4 The **Community Soul Carer** is the chief servant leader of the Community. The Community Soul Carer is appointed by the Bishop to guide, support, lead, teach and inspire the Community, and the individuals within it. We understand our Soul Carer to hold an important place within our Community, to have much responsibility and to be in need of our love, support and prayer.

4.5 **Soul Carers** are nominated by the Community's Leadership Group on the recommendation of the Community Soul Carer in accordance with Diocesan policy and procedures on the ministry of Spiritual Directors. Together with the Community Soul Carer they guide, support, lead, teach and inspire individuals within the Community.

4.6 **Gatherers** are nominated by the Community's Leadership Group, and are responsible for supporting and leading individuals in designated geographical areas (Meeting Places).

4.7 The Community Soul Carer, Soul Carers and Gatherers together with others nominated by the Community Soul Carer form the **Community's Leadership Group**. This group is responsible to the Bishop for the good order, leadership, direction and care of the Community. The Community Soul Carer is the leader of the Leadership Group, but may delegate specific leadership tasks to any member of the Group. The Leadership Group will appoint individuals to specific responsibilities, including a treasurer, newsletter editor, web servant, secretary, and other offices as required.

4.8 Individuals who wish to become members of the Community are known as **Associates**. Associates commit to regular prayer, Bible reading, worship, and to walking in the steps of Jesus, as they are called. Associates may be from any Christian denomination. The Community's Leadership structures exist to serve the Associates, and others who may choose to access resources provided by the Community.

---

<sup>2</sup> Greenleaf, R. K. (1991). *The servant as leader* ([Rev. ed.]). Indianapolis, Ind.: Robert K. Greenleaf Center.



## 5.0 Organisation

5.1 In order to care for a dispersed Community, the Community's Leadership Group will create **Meeting Places**. A Meeting Place is a geographical area, in which associates live and activities such as quiet days are held. At present these Meeting Places include, West Gippsland, South Gippsland, Sale, East Gippsland, Latrobe Valley and Raymond Island. The Leadership Group may also, subject to the approval of the Bishop of Gippsland and the bishop of the other diocese, create Meeting Places for associates in other diocese of the Anglican Church of Australia. Associates who do not live in a geographic meeting place are served by the Virtual Meeting Place, which is mediated through print and electronic resource materials. The Leadership Group will appoint one or more Gatherers and Soul Carers for each Meeting Place. Gatherers and Soul Carers together will be responsible for the creation of schedules of activities in each Meeting Place.

## 6.0 Oversight

6.1 The Anam Cara Community is a ministry of the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland, offered by the Diocese to the whole church.

6.2 The Leadership Group and Community Soul Carer are responsible to the Bishop of Gippsland and the Synod of the Diocese of Gippsland for the good order of the Community.

6.3 The Leadership Group and Community Soul Carer will take all steps to ensure that the Community's activities function in accordance with Diocesan requirements, including (but not limited to) professional standards, power-and-trust, accounting, authorization for ministry, and privacy.

*Approved by the Community's Leadership Group  
7 August 2010*