

The Rt Rev. Rob Forsyth
Bishop of South Sydney



Sydney Diocese
Anglican Church of Australia

12 July 2013

Dear Synod member,

I am looking forward to joining with you when we gather at the Election Synod on Monday 5 August.

I do not have to tell you what an important task has been given us in electing the next Archbishop of Sydney. You will be receiving the final official mailing from the Diocesan Secretary later this month giving details of the two nominated candidates, Bishop Glenn Davies and the Rev Canon Rick Smith, as well as other further information. However I thought I should write to you now about the coming Synod session itself and how I expect things will flow.

I have included a simplified diagram of the basic process of the Election Synod. This session will be run according to the Archbishop of Sydney Election Ordinance 1982. In order to get my own head around this complex ordinance I have tried to summarise its workings in a diagram. I thought it might be helpful for Synod members also to see what I came up with. Needless to say it is no substitute for the Archbishop of Sydney Election Ordinance itself and I have adapted it for the circumstances of our coming Synod where there are so few nominations.

Here's how I expect the timing of the Synod to develop. We will gather on Monday 5 August at 2.30pm for the opening service of the Lord's Supper in the Cathedral. The Bishop of Singapore, Rennis Ponniah, will be preaching. I know this is an early time but it will be good for as many synod members as possible to gather to hear God's word and feed on Christ in our hearts by faith before we get down to business.

The first session will commence at 4.30 pm in the Wesley Theatre when I will give the Presidential Address. This is the only session that is open to the public. After that on Monday afternoon we will transact various preliminary matters and break for dinner at 6 pm.

At 7.30 pm on Monday evening we will consider the question of what nominated names we will put on the Select List. At this stage the Synod does not have to choose between candidates, unless it wants to. When the matter is decided we will adjourn until the next day.

We will gather again at 6.30 pm on Tuesday 6 August and, after a Bible study by Bishop Ponniah, consider what names on the Select List we will now put on the Final List. Again the Synod does not have to choose between names, unless it wants to. If there is only one name on the Final List, we will then vote on the motion I will put, that the person be invited to become Archbishop of Sydney. If the motion is passed by the requisite majorities then the Synod would end on Tuesday night.

On the other hand, if there are two names on the Final List we will adjourn until the next day. We will then gather again at 6.30 pm on Wednesday 7 August and, after a Bible study by Bishop Ponniah, hear speeches as to which name should be invited to become Archbishop of Sydney. As the Ordinance prescribes, we would then adjourn without yet voting on the question until the next day.

When we meet on Thursday evening we will, after the Bible study and any other preliminaries, finally vote as to which of the names on the Final List should be invited to become Archbishop of Sydney. If a candidate receives the requisite majorities then I will declare him elected and the Synod would end on Thursday night. It is just possible the session could last until Friday night if there were some difficulty in achieving a resolution to the matter.

As you know most of the votes at this Synod are by secret ballot. Both the votes of the laity and clergy are counted separately. It is customary for any candidate to absent themselves from the Synod after the Presidential Address until their name is no longer being actively considered.

There will be a protocol forbidding members using social media to report about the Synod proceedings during the sessions.

The new Archbishop will take office at a special service at the Cathedral on the evening of Friday 23 August 2013.

Needless to say, as well as being lobbied, or lobbying yourself, I trust you are continuing in prayer that God in his mercy will grant us in this diocese a shepherd after his own heart who will walk in his ways and with loving care watch over his people so that the God's name may be glorified.

With every good wish in Christ,



Administrator of the Diocese of Sydney

The Election of an Archbishop of Sydney

