

25/93 Archbishop's Olympic Games Task Force

(Progress Report to Synod for Year 2000 Olympic and Para/Olympic Games)

Introduction

1. "The winner is Sydney!"
2. So, under the sovereign providence of God, a grand opportunity to tell the world about Jesus has come to us through Sydney being "awarded" the Olympic Games in the year 2000.
3. The Archbishop during his 1993 October Synod Presidential Address said, concerning the Games, "I invite the Synod to see this as a unique moment, and join me in planning to make it an outstanding period in the life of Sydney and its Churches".
4. Synod members accepted this opportunity for evangelism, for four motions were submitted, and one later to Standing Committee.
5. As time did not allow the motions to be addressed, they were referred to the Archbishop for "noting".

Establishment of the Task Force

6. Standing Committee was subsequently informed that the Archbishop wished to establish a Task Force with Bishop King as Chairman, in order to fulfil the general intent of the motions.
7. The following accepted invitations to join the Task Force –
Revs R. Harding, J. Mason, Messrs G. Marks, J. Watch, and Mrs K. Sowada (movers of the Synod motions), Messrs T. Treseder, D. Grenot, K. Castle, Mrs M. Soulos, Archdeacon D.D. Nicolios, Revs P. Knife, M. Robinson, S. Gyngell, D. Mansfield, and D. Tyndall (Secretary).
8. It has met monthly since December 1993, and has toured the Homebush Bay site.

Guidelines

Vision

9. To develop Anglican Ministry to the Sporting community with particular focus on the lead up to the Sydney 2000 Olympics and beyond.

Mission

10. To encourage, empower and assist local parishes, and the Diocese as a whole, in the ministry of the Gospel, using the Olympics as a catalyst, and sport as a focus and tool.

Aims

11. To fulfil the intent of the Synod motions –
 - (a) to further the Gospel;
 - (b) to avoid distraction from our social justice ministry in Sydney;
 - (c) to encourage churches to pray for wisdom for the Task Force;
 - (d) to minister to those preparing and visiting for the Games, and those competing;
 - (e) to consider hospitality ministry;
 - (f) to consider a major celebration during the Games; and
 - (g) to investigate premises for worship and mission in the Olympic Village.
12. To Cooperate with other relevant and appropriate ministries –
 - (a) to avoid duplication;
 - (b) to benefit from expertise not otherwise easily available; and
 - (c) to present a united Christian witness.
13. To seek reimbursement for expenses approved, and to prepare a budget of anticipated expenditure.
14. To pursue similar ministry at the Para-Olympics.
15. To be accountable to the Archbishop.

Strategies

16. The following spheres of ministry have been identified as probable means to coordinate the above aims, and are being investigated –

- (a) Evangelism * through a continuing sports ministry focus * in parishes * with evangelism teams * through hospitality * cross-culture * youth * business * media * literature distribution * at all venues.
- (b) Chaplaincy * at Olympic Village * other venues.
- (c) Church Planting * Homebush Bay after Games.
- (d) Social Justice/Welfare * in Sydney * on site.
- (e) Prayer * through parishes * leadership.

Rationale for Sports Ministry

17. Over the next 6 years sport in general and the Olympic Games in particular have presented our city and nation with an unprecedented opportunity to share the truths about Jesus Christ. We can join our Archbishop to make this time "an outstanding period in the life of Sydney and its churches". The Task Force thinking is therefore as follows -

- (a) We take seriously our task to proclaim the Gospel to all people.
- (b) There will be heightened interest in "things sporting" in the general community. Here is a bridge and forum that provides an opportunity for the Churches to make primary contacts for the Gospel, using sporting themes.
- (c) The celebratory context of the Year 2000 provides a suitable environment for other creative and large gatherings, e.g. parish evangelistic dinners, community rallies.
- (d) The unprecedented focus on sport provides an opportunity for evangelism of sports people themselves - a major neglected social group. "Top" athletes, down to local sports people, have been out of reach of the Gospel for far too long.
- (e) Some denominations already have special sports ministries and Olympic ministries in place. A Combined Church Committee is well advanced.
- (f) We live in a "post Christian" country and easily forget we can involve ourselves in the social fabric of our city. This is an opportunity to give the Christian Church in general, and our Anglican ministry in particular, a more public face. The 4 motions at the October 1993 Synod, and 1 later at Standing Committee, show the Anglican constituency is expecting involvements.
- (g) Therefore, to promote the Olympics ministry as enduring and worthwhile, we envisage a continuing specialised sports ministry beginning now as an imaginative diocesan initiative maximising our existing facilities, with a specially appointed person as its focus.

Objectives for Immediate Action

18. In addition to investigating the ministries listed under "Strategies", current proposals are -
- (a) That the department of Evangelism be invited to appoint in 1995 a consultant to focus on Sports Ministry, and that application be made for continuing funding through Synod Grants.
 - (b) That an Anglican presence on the Homebush Bay site be established as soon as practical.
 - (c) That Anglican input be ensured in the Olympic Chapel and its ensuing ministry.
 - (d) That the possible purchase of land, house, or building, in or near the Olympic Village, be recommended to Vision 2001 for enduring Homebush Bay area ministry after the Games.

Conclusion

19. An eminent Australian author and academic, Donald Horne, wrote "Sport to many Australians is life, and the rest a shadow". How can we bring the church out of this shadow and into the spotlight?

20. The choice of Sydney to host the Olympic Games in the year 2000 has presented us with an unprecedented opportunity to share the truth about Jesus. Sport is a vital cultural link in Australia.

For and on behalf of the Committee

THE REV D. TYNDALL
Secretary

July 1994