



# COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH DIOCESE OF SYDNEY & AFFILIATED REGIONS

NEW SOUTH WALES • QUEENSLAND • NORTHERN TERRITORY • SOUTHEAST ASIA

4 August 2020

## Joint statement by His Grace Bishop Daniel and the Interim Board of Trustees

Dear Reverend Fathers and beloved brothers and sisters,

We hope this finds you all well in the grace of God, and may God keep you and protect you in these difficult times.

We wish to update you on recent developments. His Grace Bishop Daniel met with Nick (Naguib) Kaldas, representing the Interim Board appointed by H.E Metropolitan Tadros (Appointed Board) on Sunday 2 August, along with a number of other members of our Church.

We are happy to advise that there is agreement on a number of points and the dialogue will continue in the same collaborative fashion. We are sending this joint message as a sign of unity and cooperation and we pray the community also adopts the same approach.

HG Bishop Daniel and the Appointed Board are in full agreement on the need to move forward with reform and improvements in the administration of Diocese affairs, in full cooperation.

HG Bishop Daniel and the Appointed Board are also in full agreement that a review of the Church Constitution and other relevant documents is essential and must continue with everyone's support. The process will be a transparent and planned consultation effort with clergy, the community and then government.

We want to make it very clear there is complete agreement on the need for updating the Diocese's administrative framework. We collectively assure you nothing has been or will be done until that consultation process is completed. No draft has been completed, nor tendered at this stage, contrary to rumours. We will soon be announcing the timing and how the process for consultation is to proceed. Please be patient and do not assume anyone will go unheard, that was never intended. Further to this, His Holiness Pope Tawadros will have the final say on the proposed changes.

As to the conflicts that have existed in our beloved community: Both His Grace Bishop Daniel and the Appointed Board are united here in saying, not in our name. We are all brothers and sisters in Christ and we call on each and every one of you to reflect on the words of St. Paul: ***"Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving of one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."*** ***Ephesians 4:31-32***

We call on you all to put your differences aside and let us all look ahead, forgive, and do no harm to any members of our community. Issues can be raised in a polite, respectful manner, with dignity for all. That must be our aim. Let this be a new beginning.

We look forward to discussing the various issues with as many of you as possible in the coming weeks, and we pray for harmony in all corners of our community.