

Appendix 3: Diocesan Pastoral Priorities

Draft Diocesan Pastoral Priorities in Full

Walking with Jesus and Enabling Encounters with Him

- **Renew sacramental preparation as a journey of accompaniment and encounter.**
We see sacramental preparation as a moment of grace — a place where people meet Jesus personally, not simply a process. We accompany families, as catechists in our parish and in Catholic schools, helping them rediscover faith and deepen belonging.
- **Deepening our communities as places of welcome, safety and belonging — sharing God’s love with all.**
We want every person to know they have a safe place here in our community of communities. We are all created in God’s image, loved by Him and called by name to follow Him. Our parishes grow as joyful, hospitable communities where diversity is embraced as a gift and inclusion reflects the justice and unity of Christ’s Body. *“The Church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open.”* — Pope Francis
- **Creating opportunities to walk with Christ throughout our entire lives.**
We nurture a culture of evangelisation that helps people meet Jesus and walk with Him in the ordinary rhythms of life. We accompany one another with patience and compassion, creating spaces where people can ask questions, share struggles, and experience faith as relationship. *“To follow Christ is not an idea, but a way.”* — Pope Benedict XVI

Living Justly and Caring for our Common Home

- **Stewarding our resources wisely — building a safe and sustainable future.**
We plan boldly and responsibly so that our parishes, schools, and shared resources serve the Gospel and future generations. This work will involve real sacrifice: letting go of buildings we cherish, reshaping patterns of ministry, and accepting that some things we once sustained can no longer continue. Through strategic collaboration and careful stewardship, we make choices that are sometimes painful but necessary, ensuring that what we keep and what we build truly supports vibrant communities of faith and Mission. *“Pastoral structures must be reviewed and renewed to better serve the mission.”* — Pastoral Conversion of the Parish
- **Being a Church that goes out to the margins.**
We learn from and walk alongside those on the margins; they shape our priorities and evangelise us. *‘It is evident that all of us must “let ourselves be evangelised” by the poor and acknowledge “the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them.”’* (DT § 102)

Growing as One Diocesan Family

- **Growing as a synodal Church – learning to listen, discern, and walk together.**
In synodality we discover that the Spirit speaks through every voice, particularly the young. We embed listening, discernment, and shared responsibility. *“The path of synodality is the path that God expects of the Church in the third millennium...”*
– Pope Francis
- **Clergy: sustaining priestly ministry with care and collaboration.**
We support our priests in their vocation to teach, sanctify, and lead. As numbers decline, we commit to patterns of ministry that are shared, realistic, and rooted in trusting relationships with the whole community. We also commit to caring for our clergy when they are sick, ageing, or retired, recognising their lifelong service to the Church.
- **Growing the gifts and vocations of the baptised.**
We affirm the wide range of vocations that sustain the Church — parents, catechists, parish leaders, priests, deacons, religious, chaplains, educators, and all who live their baptismal call in daily life. We commit to offering accessible pathways of growing in formation, discernment, leadership, and support so that every person can respond confidently to the gifts God has given them. *“The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus.”* – St. John Vianney

Being Formed by Christ for Mission

- **Educating for Mission — forming hearts and minds in Christ.**
We commit to strengthening Catholic education as a vital ministry of the Church. Our schools are places of encounter with Christ, where faith and learning grow together. This means safeguarding Religious Education, investing in the formation of teachers and Catholic leaders, and ensuring that every child can flourish academically and spiritually. In partnership with families and parishes, we seek to nurture a generation ready to serve, lead, and witness to the Gospel in today’s world.
- **Walking with our young people — forming faith, hope, and leadership.**
We invest in our young people as disciples and leaders, helping them grow in faith, confidence, and purpose. We encourage peer-to-peer ministry and create space for them to lead in the Church and the wider community. Alongside them, we support those who accompany their journey — parents, educators, clergy, catechists, chaplains, and mentors. *“Young people are the hope of the Church.”* — St. John Paul II
- **Growing our discipleship through lifelong, Spirit-filled formation.**
We recognise where the Spirit is quietly developing Mission in our parishes, chaplaincies, and movements, and we learn from these places that already shine as *beacons of Gospel life* — communities where prayer, service, and discipleship are lived with distinctive depth. Building on these examples, we commit to a more systematic and accessible approach to formation, ensuring that every member of the Church, whatever their circumstances, can grow in faith.