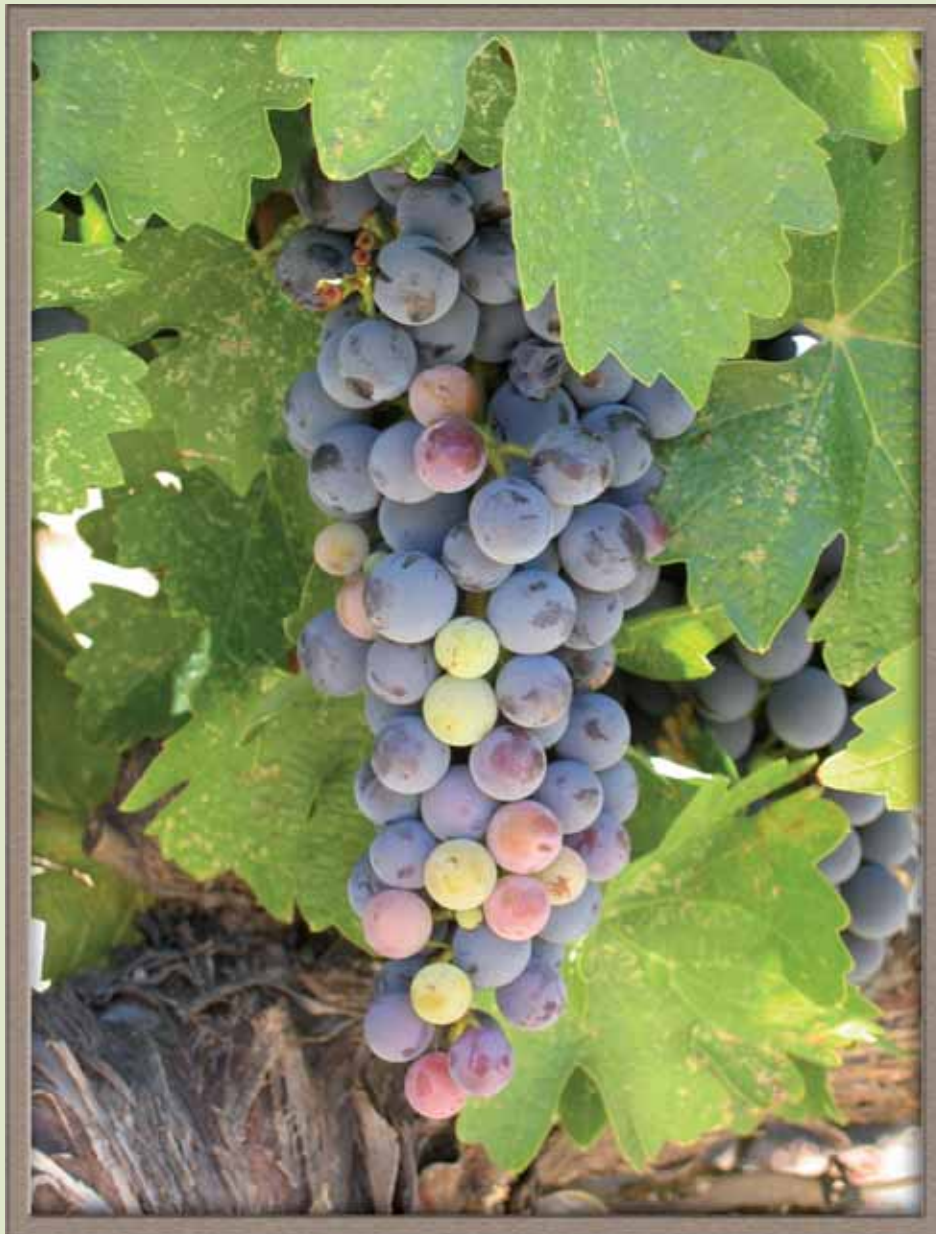
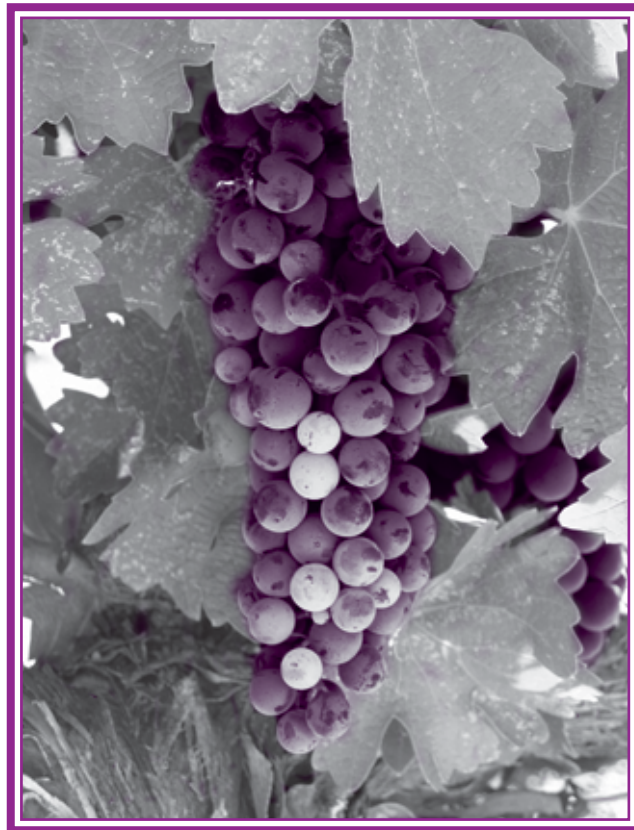


# Go Out and Bear Fruit

**A Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of Portsmouth**



# Go Out and Bear Fruit



A Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of Portsmouth  
2005

Go Out and Bear Fruit: a pastoral plan for the Diocese of Portsmouth 2005  
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Growing Together in Christ · Together in Christ

# Go Out and Bear Fruit

Vision, Pastoral Plan and Implementation  
for the Diocese of Portsmouth, 2005

## The Vision

**W**e live in times which demand of us a vision of what it means to be Christian and part of the witnessing Christian community. Our world today challenges us 'to go out and bear fruit, fruit that will last'<sup>1</sup> – the fruit of a faithful living and proclaiming of the Gospel in obedience to the Lord's command.

At this crucial time in the history of the Church, it is my privilege to be the bishop of our Diocese of Portsmouth. 'For you, I am a bishop, but with you I am a Christian.'<sup>2</sup> I have to find the fulfilment of this vocation in doing my best to offer apostolic leadership. My understanding is that this vocation is essentially rooted in the fact that we share faith together. 'Your journey is my journey; your faith is my faith, and your anxieties, fears and doubts I share with you.'<sup>3</sup>

The vision, which emerges from our shared vocation, finds its origin and shape in the deep reflection and prayer which has engaged us all throughout the Diocese over the last eighteen months. Its watchwords are 'communion' and 'mission'. 'Our vision – and hope – is of ourselves as the gathered community of the disciples of the Lord, united in baptism and bonded together by Christ in the Eucharist. Our mission is so to live out this communion in the power of the Spirit that we proclaim the Gospel by our words and become the Good News by our way of life.'<sup>4</sup> This is how we will begin to bear the fruits of the Kingdom.

## The Pastoral Plan

The vision has to be more than words – it has to be so earthed and shaped in our life as a Diocese that it can become a reality. This is why there has been such extensive 'grass roots' consultation over the last eighteen months. How do we, as Diocese – not how do I, as bishop – translate our shared vision into action and into a Pastoral Plan?

We have been on this journey together from the start – that was always my wish – and I want to pay a huge tribute to you all – literally thousands of you – who have participated so wholeheartedly in the process. We have explored

together the Scriptures, the traditions of the Church and our own personal faith and commitment. Together we have now arrived at the stage when we can name the pastoral priorities for the Diocese and accept responsibility for them. That naming reflects all the work that we have been doing.

Many projects are so named in this document, and others flow from them, but at the heart of them all, there is one that is absolutely crucial and a second that offers a way in which we can ensure that our communion leads to the mission for which we are called.

- The first is the centrality of the Sunday Eucharist, which, more than anything else, establishes us as the gathered community of the disciples of Christ. In the strength of that communion, we are both called and empowered to share in Christ's life and in his work of transforming the world – the building of the kingdom of God.
- The second concerns the development of larger Pastoral Areas, and this will entail a radical reassessment of our parish culture and of the ways in which we can be more effective as a missionary community.

The establishment of larger Pastoral Areas will enable us to harness more effectively the multiplicity of God-given talents and gifts in our diocesan community, together with the ministries that sustain them. This is a particularly urgent priority.

These two crucial projects are at the heart of everything – all other activities and strategies are to be found in them.

### **Implementation**


Visions and strategies can never be just words. If they are going to fulfil the hopes and aspirations which we have together expressed in our gatherings for prayer, reflection and planning, they demand implementation and a proper process for achieving this.

This means continuing hard prayer and hard work for us all. The whole process has to be grounded in the call of the Lord and our loving response to that call and both generosity and sacrifice will be needed from us all.

I myself will be at the heart of this process and will have oversight of it all but, assisting me, there will be two groups – one, under the chairmanship of Fr Paul Townsend, will be working at the day to day detail (Implementation Working Group); the other, under the chairmanship of Mgr John Nelson, will concern itself with the broader issues and consequences (Implementation Steering Group).

Both these groups will be wholly faithful to what has been offered by so many through the process of consultation and reflection that has engaged us all and will seek to 'incarnate' that spirit of exciting engagement in the work of building up the Kingdom which is so clearly dear to us all. We have been called – and the





consultation has clearly affirmed this – and graced with courage, commitment and love ‘to go out to the whole world and proclaim the good news.’<sup>5</sup>

The Lord invites us to journey with him and to have no fear because He is always with us. St Edmund Campion wrote in his famous *Brag*: ‘The expense is reckoned, the enterprise is begun; it is of God, it cannot be withstood. So the faith was planted; so it will be restored’ – stirring words, written for very different circumstances but entirely appropriate for us as, in prayer, commitment and obedience to the Lord’s command, we put out into deep waters to seek out and bear the fruits of the Kingdom.

If I have ever been tentative about the vision that underpins this document, I am certainly not so now. I have lived with this process for many years and I am totally committed to its outcome and to all that is contained here.

*Hughan* →

<sup>1</sup> John 15: 16

<sup>2</sup> St Augustine, Sermon 340

<sup>3</sup> *Growing Together in Christ*, Introduction

<sup>4</sup> *Growing Together in Christ*, para 18

<sup>5</sup> Mark 16: 15

**Jesus said,  
'I am the vine, you are the branches.  
Those who abide in me and I in them  
bear much fruit,  
because apart from me  
you can do nothing...  
You did not choose me, but I chose you.  
And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.'**

(John 15: 5, 16)

**'The future of humanity is in the hands of those  
who are capable of providing the generations to come  
with reasons for life and optimism.'**

*(Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, para 31)*

Many people in our world are increasingly indifferent to God and the message of Jesus Christ. Our Diocesan Plan *Go Out and Bear Fruit* has grown out of a way of seeing the Church as intimately connected to the world in which we live.

This Plan is intended to support us in our efforts to continue building a Church in which people gather to give thanks to God. This is the source of its life and purpose. As we grow in the spirituality of communion we will respect, and respond to, the deepest searching of our brothers and sisters throughout the world. We invite them to find true life and freedom in the Spirit of God and the Christian family.

The Plan seeks to affirm, support and develop the many ways in which people throughout the Diocese are already going out and bearing fruit in their localities, as individuals and as groups.

*Go Out and Bear Fruit* is not intended to be something set in stone but a tool to encourage each one of us in the Diocese of Portsmouth to provide the generations to come with 'reasons for life and optimism'.

The prayer of groups and individuals throughout the Diocese has underpinned all that has happened so far. As we go out and bear fruit we continue to pray and to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to us.







# The Centrality of Sunday Mass

## Why this is important

What happens at Mass cannot be replaced by anything else. It is the heartbeat of the Church.

When we gather together to celebrate the Mass, we are caught up in the movement of Christ's offering of himself to the Father, which is at the heart of the Trinity. What happens at Mass is that we are all called to share in Christ's work of transforming the world and drawing it into the life of God. This is the action of the Eucharist.

Sunday Mass is central to our identity and mission. The whole community gathers to listen to the Word of God and to give thanks and praise with Jesus to the Father in the Eucharistic Prayer of the Mass. As we eat and drink the body and blood of Jesus in Holy Communion, we become more fully the Body of Christ, sent into the world to continue Jesus' mission to transform the world.

The Lord's Day, which is the day of his resurrection, is the day above all when the Church gathers as a Eucharistic community. Ideally, sick and housebound people should receive Holy Communion directly from Sunday Mass in order to highlight their connection with the community and its celebration.

This Diocese wants to ensure that Sunday Mass continues to be celebrated as widely as possible by as many people as possible. For this reason, the current arrangement of parishes will be developed into larger 'Pastoral Areas' over the next few years so that priests and people can celebrate Sunday Mass in a way that truly forms the community for mission and gives glory to God. The role of the priest is crucial to the life of the Eucharistic community.

Existing communities and Mass centres will often continue within the new areas, but the Mass may be celebrated less often. Therefore, it is even more important that each community ensures that every Mass is prepared and celebrated with the utmost care and commitment.

## What will happen

- The leadership teams of the new Pastoral Areas will be responsible for ensuring that the opportunity to celebrate Sunday Mass is available to as many people as possible, while also endeavouring to maintain the distinct identity of local communities.
- In 2005–2006 a diocesan programme of catechesis on the centrality of the Sunday Eucharist will be developed and implemented.

- Formation on the new *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* will be offered to priests, deacons, parishes and schools.
- We recognise the crucial role of the ordained priest in the celebration of Mass. The recently-formed Diocesan Vocation Team will work to foster a sense of vocation in the Diocese through which specific vocations to the priesthood will be discerned and supported.

### **Celebrations in the absence of a priest**

At Celebrations of Word and Communion, the reception of Holy Communion is separated from the action of the Eucharist. This may mean that we no longer see the action of the Mass as something essential to our lives as a Church community, or even that reception of Holy Communion and the action of the Eucharist are seriously disconnected. Receiving Holy Communion can never be a substitute for celebrating Mass.

To maintain the integrity of the Sunday Mass, Celebrations of Word and Communion will not normally take place in the Diocese on Sundays after Easter 2006. If Sunday Mass cannot be celebrated in a particular area, and it is not possible to attend the nearest local celebration, people are strongly encouraged to gather together for a celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours (the Daily Prayer of the Church) or the Liturgy of the Word for the day.

Where weekday Mass is not available, people are encouraged to meet for a Celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours (e.g. Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church) or the Liturgy of the Word for the day.

Centrality of the  
Sunday Mass





## What the Church says

The Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 2177)

The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 2181)

Participation in the communal celebration of the Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and of being faithful to Christ and his Church. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 2182)

If it is impossible to assist at a eucharistic celebration, either because no sacred minister is available or for some other grave reason, the faithful are strongly recommended to take part in a liturgy of the Word... or to spend an appropriate time in prayer, whether personally or as a family or, as occasion presents, in a group of families. (*Code of Canon Law*, para 1248.2)



Centrality of the  
Sunday Mass





# Larger Pastoral Areas

## Why this is important

The present shape and form of our parishes and deaneries has evolved over the life of our Diocese, usually from very small, humble beginnings, and often reflecting the development and changes that have taken place in most areas over the last century or more. The proposals for larger Pastoral Areas are another stage in the evolution of the Diocese.

The development of Pastoral Areas, which will be larger than existing parishes, and, in most cases, smaller than existing deaneries, will

- ensure that Sunday Mass is accessible to as many people as possible on a local basis
- affirm and support priests in the essentials of their pastoral and sacramental ministry
- endeavour to maintain the distinct identity of smaller pastoral groupings, e.g. churches, Mass centres, schools, hospitals
- enable the continuing growth of hospital, prison and school chaplaincy teams, which may include priests, deacons, religious and lay people
- provide pastoral care and catechesis more effectively
- share gifts and expertise on a wider basis
- be an opportunity for the further development of leadership skills by a larger group of people
- promote efficient and coordinated use of resources, especially people and buildings
- create more opportunities for ecumenical and interreligious dialogue and shared initiatives
- enable greater priority to be given to outreach, especially evangelisation and involvement in the local community.

## What will happen

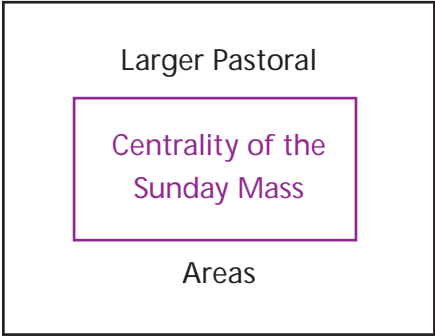
- Starting in September 2005, an analysis and assessment will be made of the existing situation, which will include listening to each local community, learning from past experience and collecting data. This will take into account canonical and administrative (legal, financial and human resources) implications. After a period of consultation and dialogue, the shape, content and leadership needs of the new Pastoral Areas will be proposed by the Implementation Steering Group

by the end of April 2006. The Bishop will make firm decisions on the shape of the new Pastoral Areas by the end of July 2006. The new Pastoral Areas will begin to come into effect from September 2006, and be substantially implemented by July 2008. It is envisaged that there may be, initially, some twenty-five to thirty Pastoral Areas in the Diocese.

- Within each Pastoral Area, there will be a collaborative leadership team, including both clergy and laity (some of whom may be employed and others volunteers), led by the Coordinating Pastor. This team will be responsible for discerning and coordinating the gifts and strengths of the community in the service of communion and mission. Clear role descriptions will be prepared for the Coordinating Pastor, team priests, deacons, religious and lay people within these collaborative teams.

- Priests are valued by their communities, both for their role in the Eucharistic assembly and for their availability at times of parishioners' personal and pastoral need. Wherever possible, priests will live close enough to the people whom they serve to be readily accessible. For this reason, as our Diocese covers a large geographical area, many priests will live individually as at present. However, there may be situations where priests may choose to live in groups of two or three, especially in more densely populated areas.

- As new Pastoral Areas are developed over the next few years, our understanding of 'parish' and 'deanery' will change. This Pastoral Plan uses the word 'parish' to refer both to existing parishes and to future Pastoral Areas. Over time, existing deanery structures and organisations will be replaced by the structures of the larger Pastoral Areas. Some parts of the Diocese are ready to develop a new way of working; for others, this will need more time.



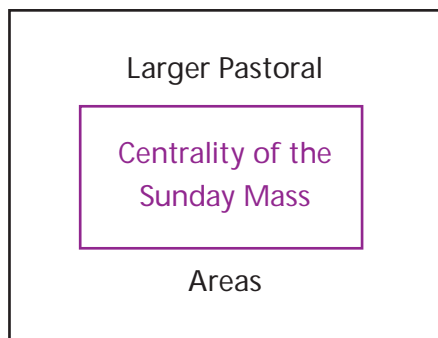


## What the Church says

The parish is not principally a structure, a territory, or a building, but rather, 'the family of God, a fellowship afire with a unifying spirit', 'a familial and welcoming home'. (*The Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful*, para 26)

We need to think about how we organise parish life with smaller and more disparate communities and what we do with our resources, including our buildings and money. Increasingly, we will face choices about which activities we want to maintain, develop or discontinue altogether. (*The Sign We Give*, p. 15)

There is no short-cut to resolving the questions raised by the decreasing number of priests. If there are to be ways forward which enable growth and mission, parishes must be helped to find the maturity and leadership to move into new patterns of life. (*The Sign We Give*, p. 42)







# Liturgy and Sacraments

## Why this is important

Liturgy is the public, communal worship of God through the celebration of the sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours and other non-sacramental rites, and especially the sacrifice of the Mass.

In the liturgy we are drawn into Christ's great work of saving and healing. This is what gives life and meaning to the Church. As Christians come together in prayer and praise, we recognise human experience and the world in which we live as the place where we meet God. Through the sacramental life of the Church we become the presence and action of the healing Christ in the world.

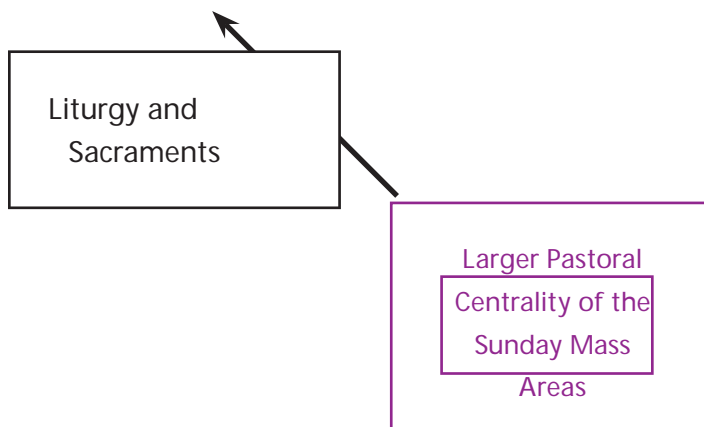
In good celebrations of the liturgy, we experience most intensely God's loving presence and revelation of Himself to us. Celebrations of the liturgy lead us beyond ourselves as individuals and gather us into a community of faith and worship. We call this the Body of Christ: those with whom we gather, the whole Church, those who have gone before us, those in every kind of need, and all those who seek God with a sincere heart. Our celebrations of liturgy must be distinguished by genuine participation, reverence, attentive listening to the Word of God, music which is an integral part of the celebration, effective use of symbols and an appropriate setting and environment. Liturgy has power to move us – in it we can experience the full range of human emotions. All those who participate are made welcome and feel truly involved in what is taking place. Liturgy is something we do together, an action of Christ in which we all take part.

Sacraments are a gift to the Church through which God feeds, heals and strengthens his people. Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist initiate us into the Church, Marriage and Ordination give expression to specific life-vocations, and Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Sick are celebrations of God's healing.

## What will happen

- Every parish is asked to develop a Liturgy Group, with a named coordinator, by Easter 2007. A Liturgy Group is a representative body that takes responsibility for overseeing the liturgical life of the community. This includes looking at the broader issues, supervising development of the community's prayer life, and ongoing evaluation of parish liturgies. Detailed planning and preparatory work will normally be done by smaller subgroups.

- The Department for Pastoral Formation will continue to provide initial and ongoing training for all involved in liturgical ministries.
- There will be a review of current practice, and development of diocesan guidelines for sacramental preparation and celebration, by July 2007.
- A project to enhance sacramental preparation processes will be piloted in a small number of parishes by January 2007, reviewed and then offered to parishes throughout the Diocese.
- The Diocesan Spirituality Development Group will continue to raise awareness of different forms and types of prayer and to share good practice, including the development and promotion of resources.
- The Department for Pastoral Formation will work with parishes to develop the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours.
- The Department for Schools will focus on the area of Liturgy and the Sacraments through support to individual schools and through the Self-Review Process for schools.





## What the Church says

In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, para 8)

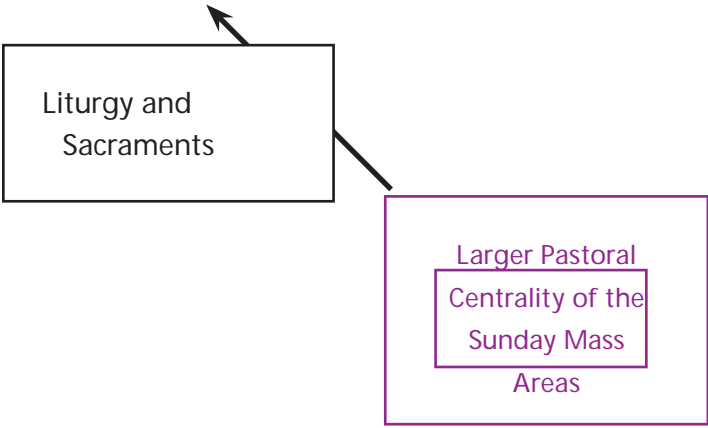
The liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the source from which all its power flows. (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, para 10)

It is very much the wish of the Church that all the faithful should be led to take that full, conscious and active part in liturgical celebration which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people ... have a right and to which they are bound by reason of their Baptism. (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, para 14)

The seven sacraments touch all the stages and all the important moments of Christian life. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 1210)

The life of prayer is the habit of being in the presence of the thrice-holy God and in communion with him. This communion of life is always possible because, through Baptism, we have already been united with Christ. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 2565)

The Holy Spirit is the living water 'welling up to eternal life' in the heart that prays. It is he who teaches us to accept it at its source: Christ. Indeed in the Christian life there are several wellsprings where Christ awaits us to enable us to drink of the Holy Spirit. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 2652)





# Ongoing Formation for All

## Why this is important

In baptism, we are called into a relationship with Jesus Christ and with all those who share our faith. All relationships must be nurtured if they are to grow and develop. It is the same throughout our life of faith: we all have the responsibility of finding opportunities to explore and deepen our relationship with Jesus, especially with those who share our faith. This may be through prayer, scripture, liturgy and theology, faith-sharing groups, and in the ways we live out our faith in our personal lives and the wider community.

Formation in faith (often known as 'catechesis') is not just for children. It is for all of us, at every stage in our lives, whether we are lay, religious or ordained. In fact, the Church says that formation for adults is to be given priority over other forms of catechesis. It is good for priests, deacons, religious and lay people to share formation together.

## What will happen

- Parishes are encouraged to continue to explore methods of formation in faith which will reach the whole community e.g. through the Sunday homily. The Department for Pastoral Formation will also continue to explore such methods and share good practice.
- Individuals, groups and parishes are invited to make use of the wide variety of formation available through e.g. religious houses, videos, DVDs, institutes of higher education, distance-learning.
- The Curia will coordinate an ongoing programme of courses and conferences at venues throughout the Diocese for priests, deacons, religious and lay people, and will also publicise other formation opportunities.
- The Department for Schools will publish an annual programme of theological education for adults in schools.

## What the Church says

(The gifts he gave were) for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. (Ephesians 4: 12–13)

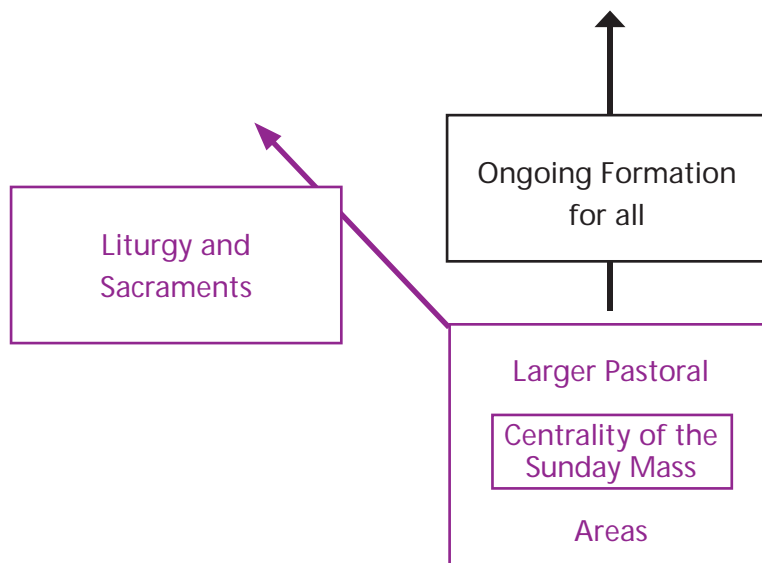
The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but also in communion and intimacy, with Jesus Christ. (*Catechesis in Our Time*, para 5)

All the baptised, because they are called by God to maturity of faith, need and therefore have a right to adequate catechesis. It is thus a primary responsibility of the Church to respond to this in a fitting and satisfactory manner. (*General Directory for Catechesis*, para 167)

The faith of adults must be continually enlightened, developed and protected, so that it may acquire that Christian wisdom which gives sense, unity, and hope to the many experiences of personal, social and spiritual life. (*General Directory for Catechesis*, para 173)

The Gospel and the Eucharist are the constant food for the journey to the Father's House. The action of the Holy Spirit operates so that the gift of 'communion' and the task of 'mission' are deepened and lived in an increasingly intense way. (*General Directory for Catechesis*, para 70)

If the Christian life is to mature, all aspects of it must be cultivated: knowledge of the faith, liturgical life, moral formation, prayer, belonging to community, missionary spirit. (*General Directory for Catechesis*, para 87)





# Outreach: the Mission of the Church

## Why this is important

Our task as the Church is to bring God's healing love to the world in which we live, to be the Word of God to all around us. The work of evangelisation (proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ) is fundamental to our identity as Christians, and involves not only living our faith, but also inviting others to share it. Mission and outreach are essential to our lives as Catholics, both as individuals and as members of a diocesan community.

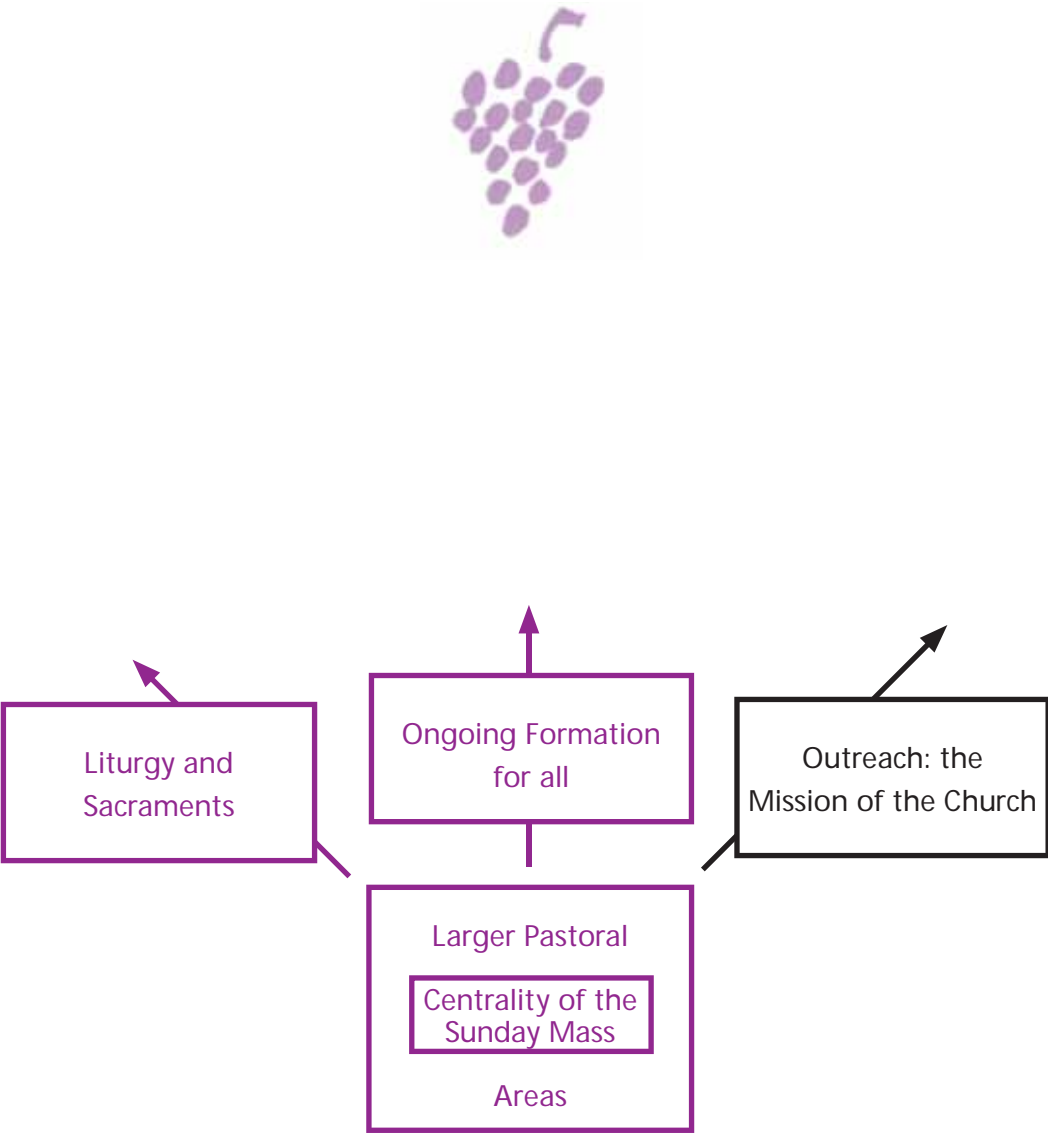
There is no aspect of human life which does not concern us and we respect the dignity of human life from its beginning to its ending. We have a responsibility to sanctify the world and influence all decision-making that affects the common good.

Social responsibility and respect for the world around us are well-established in our tradition.

## What will happen

- Parishes are encouraged to identify local areas with potential for outreach (e.g. shopping malls, colleges of education, areas of social deprivation, migrant workers) and develop plans for working in partnership with them.
- An Evangelisation Resource Group will be set up by January 2006 to explore current projects, network and share good practice.
- The Department for Pastoral Formation will offer regular training days for those involved in the Ministry of Welcome and Ministry to Returning Catholics.
- Parishes and organisations are encouraged to look for and develop opportunities to dialogue and work ecumenically.
- Guided by the Diocesan Christian Unity Committee, Pastoral Councils are expected to develop greater awareness of opportunities for ecumenical involvement and collaboration at all levels – this could include appointing a member responsible for ecumenical liaison and advice.
- An Interreligious Dialogue Coordinator for the Diocese will be appointed to act as a link and resource person in this crucial and developing area.
- A Diocesan Justice and Peace Coordinator will be appointed to encourage and support existing initiatives at all levels and promote the development of new ones.
- The Diocese will continue to move towards Fair Trade status under the guidance of the Diocesan Fair Trade Working Party.

- People in business, public and civic life are encouraged to create networks, to keep themselves updated on the Church's moral and social teaching, to share good practice and offer mutual support.







## What the Church says

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (Luke 4: 18–19)

Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.' (Acts 10: 34–5)

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. (Hebrews 13: 1)

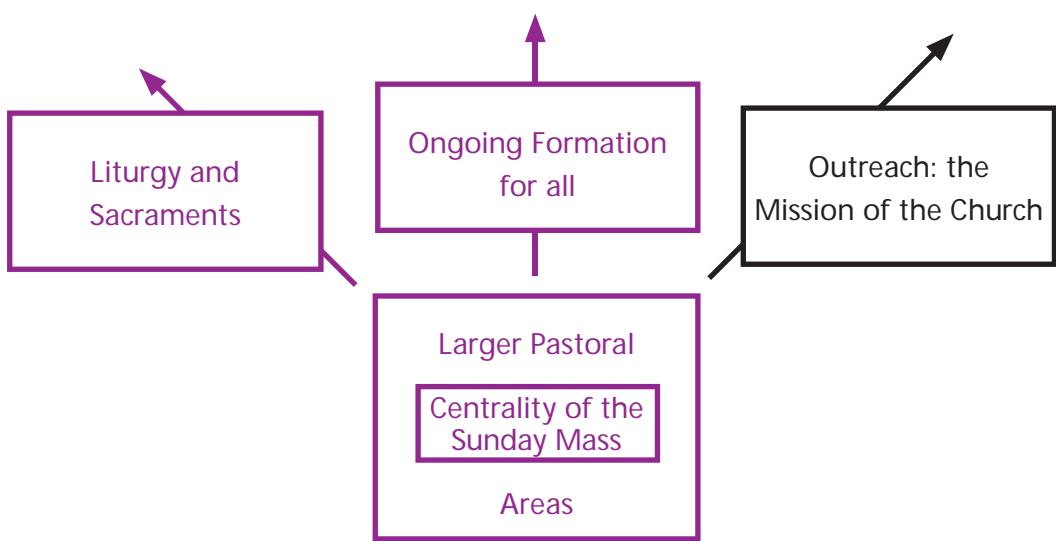
Let Christians, while witnessing to their own faith and way of life, acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral truths found among non-Christians, together with their social life and culture. (*Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions*, para 2)

Evangelising is ... the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelise. (*Proclaiming the Gospel*, para 14)

The intimate life of this (Christian) community ... only acquires its full meaning when it becomes a witness, when it evokes admiration and conversion, and when it becomes the preaching and proclamation of the Good News. Thus it is the whole Church that receives the mission to evangelise, and the work of each individual member is important for the whole. (*Proclaiming the Gospel*, para 15)

All the faithful are asked by the Spirit of God to do everything possible to strengthen the bonds of communion between all Christians and to increase cooperation between Christ's followers. (*That They May Be One*, para 101)

It is the duty of citizens to work with civil authority for building up society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity and freedom. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, para 2255)





# Working Collaboratively

## Why this is important

The relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the Trinity is the model for us in the Church: a life of mutual love and service which is not turned in on itself but is outward-looking. As Christians what we do is part of something larger than ourselves: ministry demands relationship with others. The quality of our relationships with each other is an important part of our witness to what we believe. This includes a deep respect for each other and an attentiveness to different points of view, different ways of working and different ways of living out our faith. Clear and effective communication is vital to the whole process of working collaboratively.

Everybody has a contribution to make to the mission of the Church: lay people, religious, deacons, priests and bishops. It is vital that we all have the opportunity to do so. When individuals are brought together, what is achieved is greater and richer than what could possibly have been achieved by those individuals separately.

All leadership and decision-making must recognise and respect the different contribution of everyone involved, and be for the common good. Planning, decision-making and ministry will bear fruit if gifts at all levels are recognised, encouraged and permitted to flourish. This is the principle of subsidiarity – no activity or decision is to happen at a higher level than necessary.

## What will happen

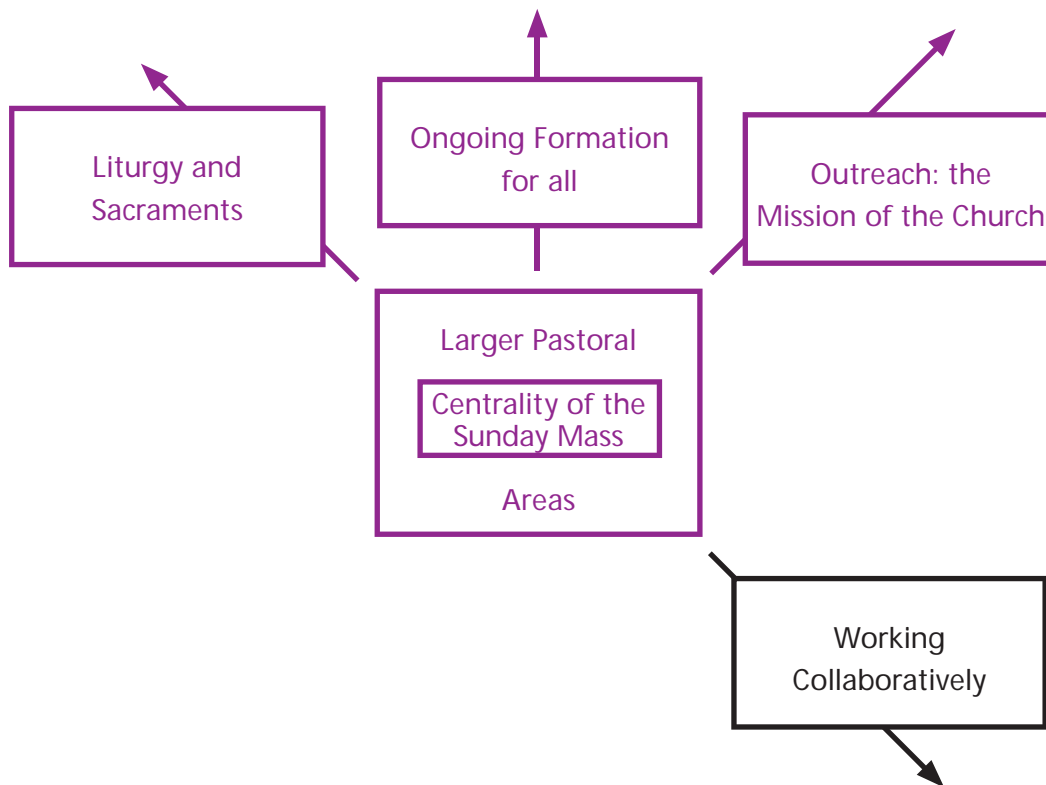
### Relationships

- Parishes are encouraged to celebrate the diversity of people in their communities, especially through the welcome and inclusion of those of different abilities, ages, cultures, ethnicities, and languages.
- Parishes are asked to have named coordinators for each ministry area e.g. readers, catechists, welcomers, maintenance.
- Parish ministry group coordinators are encouraged to meet together on a regular basis to pray, to share information and good practice, and to support each other.
- Each ministry group within a parish is encouraged to develop a description of their work which is available to the parish, and can also be used as the basis for a regular invitation to new volunteers.

- The Diocesan Curia will develop clear role descriptions for Pastoral Councils, Finance Committees and Liturgy Groups by Easter 2006. Each parish is expected to have these three groups, with named coordinators, by Easter 2007.
- The Diocesan Curia will coordinate and foster opportunities for the ongoing development of relationships between those involved in similar ministry groups across the Diocese.
- By May 2006, the Diocesan Department for Schools will devise a strategy to encourage the involvement of pupils and students in parishes.

## Gifts

- Parishes are encouraged to explore ways of recognising, drawing out and affirming the gifts of all so that these gifts can be developed and used for the good of the community and the wider world
- Parishes and religious communities are urged to continue to develop close relationships in work and prayer.
- Parishes are encouraged to be open to the diversity of gifts that are to be found in all people and places.
- The Department for Pastoral Formation will gather and share good practice in the whole area of recognition of gifts by Christmas 2006.
- The Episcopal Vicar for Clergy Formation will coordinate the development and communication of role descriptions for the Bishop, priests and deacons by Easter 2006.





## Leadership

- As a Diocese, we will strive to develop an understanding of all kinds of leadership in the Church, ordained and lay, as being at the service of the community.
- The Implementation Steering Group will work with parishes to identify the leadership needs of the new pastoral areas by the end of April 2006.
- The Department for Pastoral Formation will develop training sessions in appropriate styles of leadership for all in leadership roles within the Diocese by Easter 2006.
- The Diocesan Pastoral Council will publish dates of its meetings a year in advance so that all other Pastoral Councils can ensure that their meeting dates are synchronised with these.
- The Department for Pastoral Formation will develop a support network for lay people in leadership roles in larger Pastoral Areas

## What the Church says

A spirituality of communion implies also the ability to see what is positive in others, to welcome it and prize it as a gift from God: not only as a gift for the brother or sister who has received it directly, but also as a 'gift for me'. (*At the Beginning of the Third Millennium*, para 43)

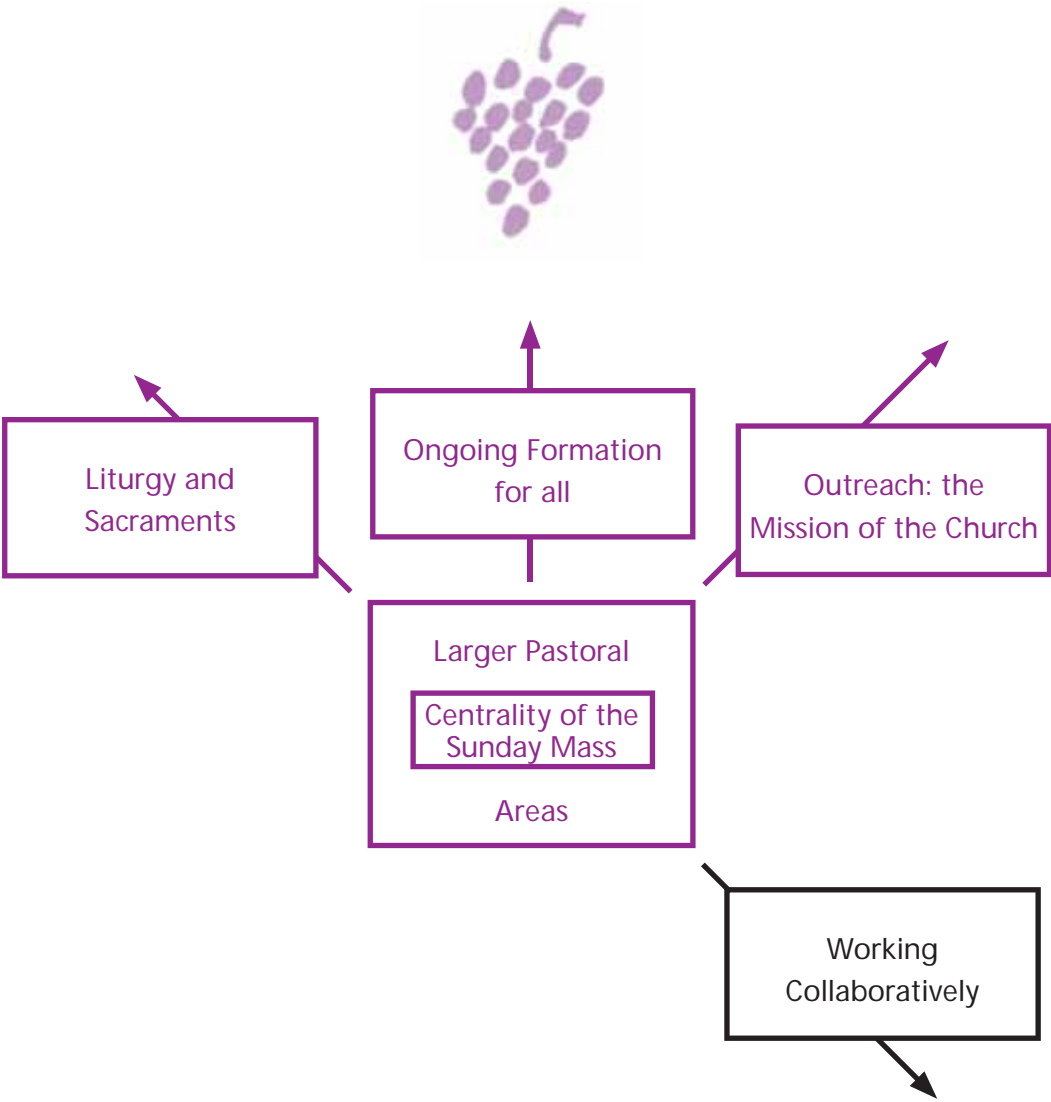
The Church of the Third Millennium will need to encourage all the baptised and confirmed to be aware of their active responsibility in the Church's life. Together with the ordained ministry, other ministries, whether formally instituted or simply recognised, can flourish for the good of the whole community, sustaining it in all its many needs. (*At the Beginning of the Third Millennium*, para 46)

Collaborative ministry asks us to reflect what God is like in the ways we live and work together. (*The Sign We Give*, p. 35)

Collaborative ministry is ministry committed to mission ... it shows to the world the possibility of transformation, of community and of unity within diversity. (*The Sign We Give*, p. 17)

Christian initiation gives us a shared but differentiated responsibility for the life and mission of the Church ... Our different vocations and gifts are complementary and mutually enriching. (*The Sign We Give*, p. 17)

A leader who intends to express and build communion does propose plans and make decisions, and still holds ultimate responsibility, but includes people as far as possible in developing a vision, forming plans, and making decisions. (*The Sign We Give*, p. 23)





# Stewardship: Making the Best Use of Our Resources

## Why this is important

Everything we have and are is a gift from God. We are stewards of the gift of creation and all that life brings: our time, our treasure, our talents and one another. Therefore we have a duty to ensure that we make the best use of all we have, and that we do this in a way which respects the dignity of every person and promotes the common good.

## What will happen

### Parish Pastoral Review Process

- To enable the most effective use of resources in the new pastoral areas, each existing parish is asked to undertake a simple but comprehensive review of all aspects of parish life. For many parishes, this will build on work already completed or in progress.
- An efficient tool for this Parish Pastoral Review Process will be developed by the Curia by October 2005 and piloted in five parishes. After an evaluation, the Process will be made available throughout the Diocese by January 2006. Each parish will be expected to undertake the review by 30 June 2006, and to update it annually.

### Stewardship

- To enable us to reflect on how we recognise and use our time, treasure and talents in the service of the Kingdom, the Diocese is piloting a Stewardship programme in seven parishes in 2005–6. Following a review, the process will be implemented throughout the Diocese from September 2006.

### Communications

- Good and clear communication is essential to all we do as individuals, groups, parishes and as a Diocese. Parishes are encouraged to continue to ensure good two-way communication both within the parish and with the wider community by drawing on available expertise in e.g. use of local media, development of web sites, attractive and effective newsletters. A Diocesan Communications Committee will be formed as a sub-group of the Diocesan Trustees, and will implement a coordinated diocesan communications structure by Easter 2006.

## Use of Buildings

• The Department for Finance and Property will develop a diocesan policy by Christmas 2005 to facilitate decision-making about new and existing buildings, in light of the needs of the whole Diocese and the larger pastoral area and in consultation with local communities.

## Schools

• By July 2007, the Department for Schools will produce a ten year plan for the provision and funding of Catholic schools in the Diocese.

## Employment Procedures

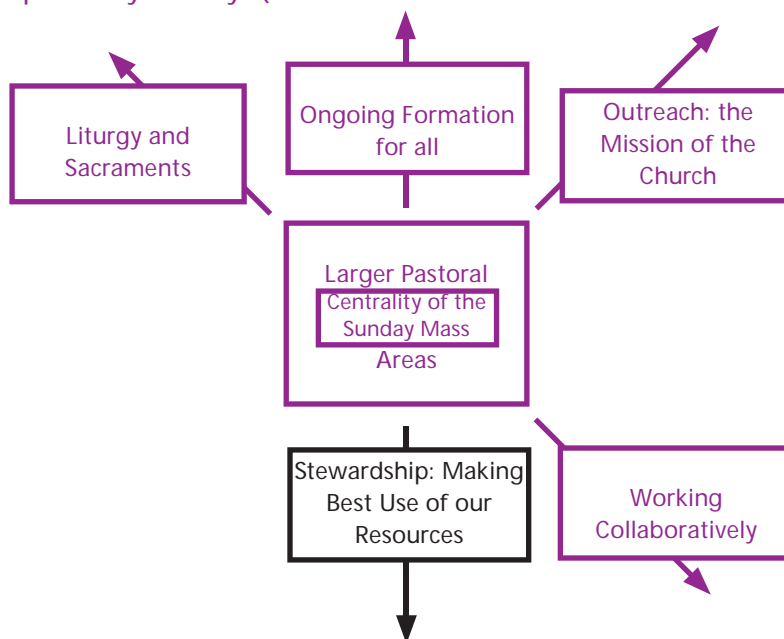
• All paid employees at parish, deanery and diocesan level are employees of the Diocese, not of the parish or deanery. The Diocese as a registered charity has responsibility for all aspects of current employment law. The Diocesan Personnel Committee (a sub-committee of the Trustees) is developing a process to ensure equity and professionalism in employment practice across the Diocese.

## What the Church says

The whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. (Acts of the Apostles 4: 32)

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. (1 Peter 4: 10)

God destined the earth and all it contains for all people and nations so that all created things would be shared fairly by all humankind under the guidance of justice tempered by charity. (*Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*, para 69)







# Supporting Each Other

## Why this is important

It is by our love for one another that we are recognised as the disciples of Jesus. Jesus treated everyone he met as a gift from his Father, and had a particular care and compassion for those who were in any kind of need. He listened to people and welcomed those who were excluded. We are called to do the same.

At every stage of life, each of us needs both to give and receive different kinds of support. When this happens, the presence and action of the Holy Spirit is made visible in our communities.

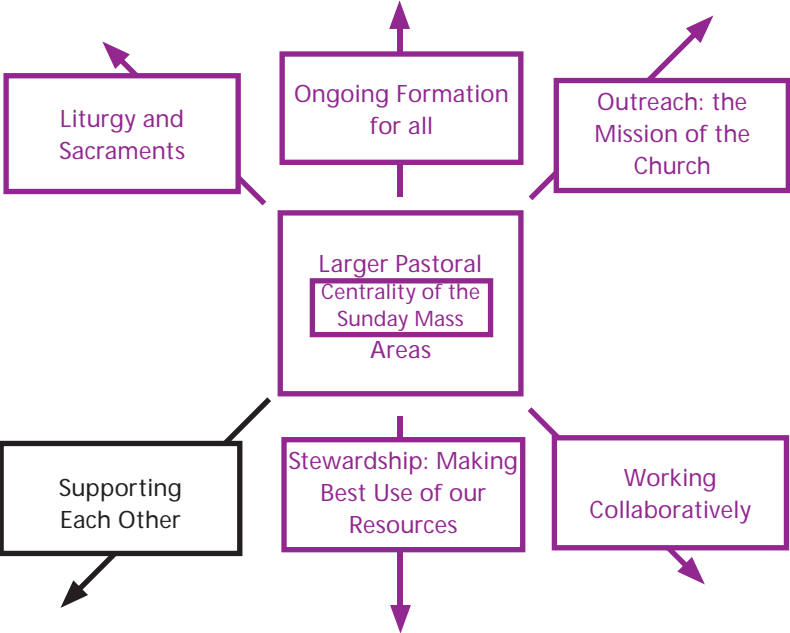
As Christians, we have a responsibility to value difference, recognising the God-given dignity of each person, regardless of their circumstances.

Each of us has a vocation within the community of the baptised – all our different vocations are vital to the life and mission of the Church.

## What will happen

- A new Diocesan Vocation Team has been formed which will work to develop resources and initiatives to encourage everyone to recognise their distinct vocation: personal, professional, pastoral.
- The Diocesan Vocation Team will work through parishes to promote a culture of prayer in which all vocations may be identified and nurtured.
- The Diocesan Director of Vocations has a particular responsibility to promote and encourage vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life.
- The Episcopal Vicar for the Clergy will provide ongoing support for clergy through supervision and appraisal, and at times of transition.
- A group will be formed by the Department for Pastoral Formation by July 2006 to coordinate existing work in the area of marriage preparation and ongoing support for married couples and families, and to continue to develop this.
- Parishes are asked to publicise and promote resources for those experiencing any kind of difficulty and seek to develop support networks across groups of parishes.
- The Diocesan Adviser for Youth Ministry will continue to work with those involved in parish youth ministry to develop an approach for involving young people in parish ministry and to share good practice, and will liaise with the Department for Schools and with school chaplains.
- The Diocesan Adviser for Disability Issues will develop a Disability Forum to ensure that people with disabilities are actively included in Church life and ministry.

- The Department for Finance and Property will ensure that Diocesan property complies with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- The work of the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal will be communicated more clearly in order to enable those who have experienced the breakdown of marriage to seek help through this channel if they wish to do so.





## What the Church says

By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13: 35)

Be hospitable to one another without complaining. (1 Peter 4: 9)

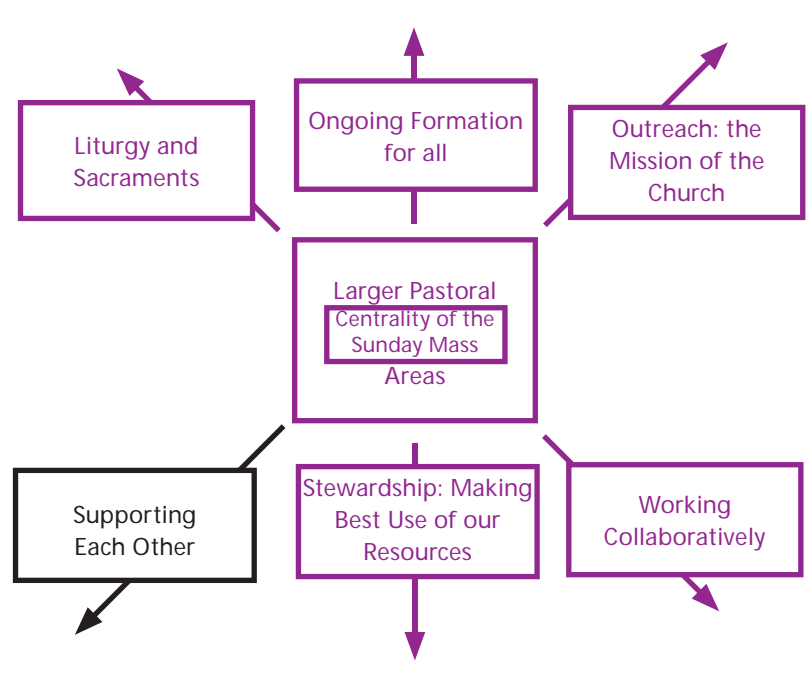
Bear with one another, and if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (Colossians 3: 12)

Just as holiness is for all the baptised in Christ, so there exists a specific vocation for every living person; and just as the first is rooted in baptism, so is the second connected to the simple fact of existing. (*New Vocations for a New Europe*, para 13)

The structure of every vocation, indeed its maturity, lies in continuing Jesus in the world so as, like Him, to make of one's life a gift. (*New Vocations for a New Europe*, para 17)

In the end the Eucharist generates the witness, prepares the mission: 'Go in peace.' We move from the encounter with Christ in the sign of the Bread to the encounter with Christ in every person. ... Fidelity to one's own vocation springs from the source of the Eucharist and is measured in the Eucharist of life. (*New Vocations for a New Europe*, para 17)

Communion means that unity can be found within diversity and that differences can be respected, and accepted as enriching and not divisive. In an important sense, to be inclusive is what it means to be Catholic. In an increasingly fragmented society and world, the Church's ability to live as a sign of communion, and to draw out the implications for human relationships, is vital. (*The Sign We Give*, p. 26)





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All Scripture quotations are from the *New Revised Standard Version*





The **Diocesan Curia** consists of three Departments:

**Pastoral Formation** – provides formation, support, encouragement, inspiration and leadership in the areas of catechesis, collaborative ministry, disability issues, evangelisation, liturgy and youth ministry in the context of *Growing Together in Christ* and *Go Out and Bear Fruit*.

The **Head of Department** is Nicky Stevens.

**Schools** – promotes and develops all aspects of the Catholic nature of our schools, primary, middle and secondary.

The **Head of Department** is Chris Richardson.

**Finance and Property** – provides professional guidance and help to the Bishop, Trustees, priests and parish communities for administering the temporal assets of the Diocese in accordance with civil law and the aims of the Bishop's *Vision for the Diocese*.

The **Head of Department** is Stephen Morgan.

The **Moderator of the Curia** is Mgr John Nelson.

Fr Paul Townsend, the **Episcopal Vicar for the Formation of the Clergy** has responsibility for the support and education of all priests including those who are preparing for ordination and those who are retired.

The **Diocesan Director of Vocations** is Fr Gerard Flynn

The **Personnel Committee** is a sub-committee of the Trustees of the Diocese, and is chaired by Mgr John Nelson. The Trustees, as an employer, have a responsibility to ensure that the rights of people employed in the Diocese are properly looked after. These employees fall into two groups: those employed centrally in the Diocese and those working in parishes. Providing support to parishes on employment-related issues is a growing part of the Committee's work.

The **Diocesan Tribunal** is based in Sandhurst and run by the **Judicial Vicar**, Fr Dominic Golding. It has the responsibility of ensuring justice is provided in the Diocese in accordance with Canon Law (the law of the Church). The bulk of its work involves responding to the needs of those whose marriages have broken down and who seek to establish whether they are able to marry in the Catholic Church (Decrees of Nullity, Annulments). Although sometimes appearing legal and dry, the work of the Tribunal is essentially pastoral as it comes in contact with people who have often been hurt by their experiences.

The **Christian Unity Committee**, chaired by Dom Gervase Holdaway, promotes and resources the development of relationships with other Christian churches and communities across the Diocese.

The **Spirituality Development Group** offers Weeks of Guided Prayer, Days of reflection and formation and advises people looking for spiritual direction. It is chaired by Fr Paul King.









**...fruit that will last**