

*DIOCESE OF SALE  
DIOCESAN CONSULTATION*

***PHASE TWO REPORT***

***LOOKING FORWARD TO  
THE NEXT FIVE YEARS***

*2026 - 2030*



**our stories,**  
**our church,**  
**our mission.**

*Diocese of Sale*

# Diocesan Consultation & Assembly Prayer 2024-2025



Holy Spirit of Wind and Fire, come!  
Startle us anew with your power and energy.  
Blow fresh life through our tired dreams.  
Fan into a flame the gifts you have given us.  
Light up the windows of our joy and purpose.  
Spark bright fires of optimism deep within us.  
Reveal more clearly a vision of what is possible.

May we listen attentively  
to your quiet whisper at our very core.  
May we discern your call  
expressed in the voices and stories of others.  
May we build a Church  
that radiates and nourishes our unity of faith.  
May we be at one with all of humanity  
and the rest of God's creation.

May we develop the courage to be people of mission,  
alert to opportunities,  
always on the move,  
bringing Good News to our needy world,  
Wind and Fire for one another.  
Amen.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Pray for Us.

*Composed by Michael Hansen  
Traralgon, 2024*

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# Introduction

Phase Two of the Diocesan Consultation, titled "Looking Forward to the Next Five Years," was conducted in September and October 2024. It involved a significant and diverse group of participants from across the Diocese in a process of prayer, reflection, and spiritual conversations centred on three key questions:

- a. *What are the GREATEST STRENGTHS that our people, parish communities, and the Diocese of Sale, should continue to build on?*
- b. *What are the GREATEST CHALLENGES we now face as people of faith, as parish communities, and as a Diocese, as we look to the future?*
- c. *What PASTORAL PRIORITIES & ACTIONS do we believe the Holy Spirit is calling us, as individuals and faith communities, to focus on during the next five years, to give renewed life and purpose to our shared mission?*

This report is a compilation of all the feedback received from a diverse range of communities and individuals, including all parishes, numerous school students, school leadership teams, the DOSCEL Board and Secretariat, diocesan bodies, and various Catholic organizations. In total, sixty-five group reports and twenty-five individual responses were submitted. Additionally, approximately 1,200 students participated by providing input through a simplified version of the key questions.

Bishop Greg and the Animation Team were encouraged by the inspiring stories shared about the positive experiences participants had during the consultation meetings and process. Although the organizers had hoped for greater participation in the consultation meetings, reports highlighted that those who did attend deeply appreciated the opportunity to connect and engage in dialogue with others in a spirit of peaceful prayer, faith, mutual respect, and attentive listening. Many participants also valued the chance to have their voices heard and to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing development of the Diocese of Sale's life and mission.

In compiling the feedback, the editors have sought to organize the numerous responses, ideas, and suggestions into the common themes that emerged. While the exact wording of the feedback may not always match the text of this report, we hope that the essence and spirit of what was communicated are faithfully captured in what is presented.

The aim of this report is not only to gratefully share the results of the consultation with the people of the Diocese of Sale but also to present its outcomes to the delegates of the 2025 Diocesan Assembly, aiding their reflection and discernment on pastoral priorities for the Diocese over the next five years.

We thank God for the ways the Holy Spirit has inspired so many to engage in prayerful dialogue and attentive listening. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who participated in the consultation process. A special thanks also goes to those people who dedicated their time and talents as organizers and facilitators of the consultation meetings.

May the Holy Spirit continue to encourage us to be people of communion and mission.

*Diocesan Animation Team.*

## SUMMARY

The STRENGTHS *that our people, parish communities, and the Diocese of Sale, want to continue to build on:*



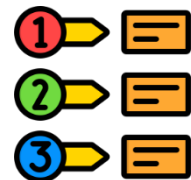
1. Strong sense of Community and Inclusivity
2. Commitment to Faith and Spiritual Life
3. Valuing and Preserving our Tradition
4. Excellence in Catholic Education & Potential of Young People
5. Social Outreach and Service
6. Gift of our Diversity and Cultural Strengths
7. Strength of Leadership and Vision

The GREATEST CHALLENGES we now face as people of faith, as parish communities, and as a Diocese?



1. Overcoming Generational and Cultural Gaps to Engage Youth in an Aging Population
2. Reversing Declining Church Membership: Tackling Loneliness, Building Community, and Embracing Cultural Diversity
3. Addressing Gaps in Spiritual Formation: Bridging Catholic Identity, Tradition, and Modern Expectations to Reignite Evangelization
4. Securing the Future of Church Leadership: Sustaining Clergy, Lay Formation, and Women's Evolving Role
5. Strengthening Parish-School Partnerships and Sustaining Educational Excellence
6. Managing Financial Challenges and Measuring Impact Effectively
7. Enhancing Communication Strategies to Bridge the Technological Divide

The PASTORAL PRIORITIES & ACTIONS we believe the Holy Spirit is calling us, as individuals, and as faith communities to focus on during the next five years to give renewed life and purpose to our shared mission?



1. Engaging Youth & Nurturing the Future Church
2. Building Stronger Parish-School Collaboration & Partnership
3. Strengthening Community Bonds
4. Fostering a Culture of Listening and Inclusion
5. Promoting Healing, Building Trust & Strengthening Relationships
6. Cultivating Spiritual Growth
7. Renewing Evangelization Efforts
8. Developing Leadership and Faith Formation Programs
9. Enhancing Liturgy, Worship & Prayer Experiences
10. Fostering Communication & Engagement Through Technology
11. Faith and Justice Integration & Collaborative Outreach to Marginalized Groups
12. Caring for Creation & Developing Ecological Stewardship

## GREATEST STRENGTHS



What are the **GREATEST STRENGTHS** that our people, parish communities, and the Diocese of Sale, should continue to build on?

### 1. Strong sense of Community and Inclusivity

- Strong community spirit within parishes and the Diocese.
- Welcoming atmosphere.
- A welcoming and inclusive culture that embraces diversity.
- People who are willing to contribute and volunteer their time and skills.
- Resilience and Adaptability.

**Implication:** The diocese thrives on relationships, resilience and collective efforts, which serve as a foundation for further growth.

**Opportunity:** Strengthening these ties through events and targeted programs could enhance participation and engagement.

### 2. Commitment to Faith and Spiritual Life

- Deep commitment to faith, prayer, and spiritual growth.
- Active participation in religious activities such as Mass and sacraments.
- Commitment to Church teachings and traditions.
- Dedication to upholding Catholic traditions and values.
- High attendance at Mass and sacramental programs.
- Strong participation in spiritual activities like retreats and prayer groups.
- Music ministry and Worship are creative ways to involve parishioners.
- In some Parishes, the presence of youth in faith-based activities.

**Implication:** Faith acts as a unifying and motivating force across all activities.

**Opportunity:** Building on faith education, retreats, and youth engagement can sustain and deepen spiritual growth.

### 3. Valuing and Preserving our Tradition

- Longstanding Catholic heritage and identity.
- Celebrations of feast days and traditional practices.
- Preservation of liturgical customs.

**Implication:** There's a recognition of the need to preserve traditions while adapting to modern expectations.

**Opportunity:** Introducing creative, culturally relevant approaches while respecting traditional elements can bridge generational gaps.

#### 4. Excellence in Catholic Education & potential of Young People

- Excellence in Catholic education.
- Engagement of students in religious teachings and values.
- Sacramental preparation programs.
- Integration of faith into academic and extracurricular activities.
- Strong focus on engaging youth through programs, schools, and leadership opportunities.
- Catholic schools and education as a cornerstone of the Diocese's mission.
- Encouragement of young people to take part in faith-based and community activities.

**Implication:** Education is a key avenue for instilling values and fostering faith in younger generations.

**Opportunity:** Expanding programs and integrating digital tools can modernize and broaden the reach of these initiatives.

#### 5. Social Outreach and Service

- Active volunteerism.
- Effective outreach programs that support marginalized and vulnerable groups.
- Outreach to vulnerable populations.
- Social justice initiatives and care for the wider community.
- Emphasis on serving others and addressing societal needs.
- Community service initiatives.
- Charitable work supporting those in need.

**Implication:** The strong social outreach and volunteerism reflects the value of community service and care of neighbour that many people have committed to in how they live out their faith.

**Opportunity:** Expanding programs and opportunities for outreach and service are avenues for developing co-responsibility, the sharing of gifts and talents and engagement with the poor and those on the margins locally and internationally.

#### 6. Gift of our Diversity and Cultural Strengths

- Recognition and celebration of cultural diversity within the Diocese.
- Integration of different cultural groups into parish life.
- Mutual respect and unity despite differences.
- Support for diverse groups and marginalized individuals.

**Implication:** This reflects a strength that attracts and retains members while fostering a sense of belonging.

**Opportunity:** Expanding inclusion efforts, particularly for underrepresented groups, can build a stronger and more diverse community.

## 7. Strength of Leadership and Vision

- Dedicated parish priests and clergy.
- The leadership and engagement provided by Bishop Greg.
- Strong lay and clerical leadership within the Diocese.
- Leadership in guiding spiritual and community initiatives.
- Visionary efforts to adapt to challenges and grow the faith community.
- Encouragement of collaboration and shared responsibility.
- Strong governance structures within parishes and the diocese.
- Women's Participation and Leadership in the Church:
- Commitment to Safeguarding to ensure continued trust and transparency

**Implication:** The community values leaders who inspire and provide guidance, as well as actionable service efforts.

**Opportunity:** Empowering lay leadership, strengthening governance and enhancing service programs can build resilience and increase impact.





# GREATEST CHALLENGES



*As we look to the future, what are the **GREATEST CHALLENGES** we now face as people of faith, as parish communities, and as a Diocese?*

## 1. **Overcoming Generational and Cultural Gaps to Engage Youth in an Aging Population**

### **Youth Engagement**

A significant challenge lies in bridging the gap between traditional practices and the preferences of younger generations, necessitating modern, relatable approaches to attract and retain youth in faith communities.

### **Bridging Generational and Cultural Gaps**

Generational and cultural diversity often leads to tensions and differing expectations, making it challenging to achieve cohesion. Promoting mutual understanding, open dialogue, and shared values is essential for fostering unity within diversity.

### **Aging Population**

An aging demographic poses challenges in ensuring accessibility, fostering intergenerational engagement, and sustaining active membership and leadership. Addressing these issues requires creating inclusive environments, encouraging youth involvement, and promoting leadership development across all age groups.

## 2. **Reversing Declining Church Membership: Tackling Loneliness, Building Community, and Embracing Cultural Diversity**

### **Declining Church Membership**

Many parishes struggle with shrinking attendance, challenges in re-engaging lapsed or new members, and competition from modern lifestyles. These issues are further exacerbated by limited resources, making it essential to prioritize outreach, community-building efforts, and innovative strategies to revitalize parish life.

### **Community Engagement**

Challenges include limited participation across demographics, struggles to sustain volunteer initiatives, and the risk of exclusivity within groups. Overcoming these requires fostering inclusivity, broadening engagement strategies, and providing support to sustain volunteer efforts.

### **Community Loneliness and Isolation**

The absence of meaningful social interactions and outreach can leave members feeling disconnected, leading to disengagement and weakening parish cohesion. Strengthening community bonds requires intentional efforts to foster relationships, create inclusive gatherings, and prioritize outreach initiatives.

### **Cultural Diversity and Inclusion**

The Church faces challenges in uniting its diverse community, as cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings or exclusion. Fostering inclusivity involves respecting diversity, encouraging participation, and maintaining shared Catholic values

### **3. Addressing Gaps in Spiritual Formation: Bridging Catholic Identity, Tradition, and Modern Expectations to Reignite Evangelization**

#### **Spiritual Formation and Catechesis Gaps**

A lack of understanding of Catholic teachings among parishioners and school staff creates a disconnect from Church values. Limited faith formation and secular influences further hinder spiritual growth. Lifelong catechesis is crucial to deepen faith, strengthen evangelization, and reinforce Catholic identity.

#### **The Disconnect in Catholic Identity**

Many Catholics face challenges connecting with their faith due to societal pressures and misunderstandings of Church teachings, leading to confusion and weakened engagement. Clear teaching, active participation, and spiritual growth are key to integrating faith into daily life.

#### **Balancing Tradition with Contemporary Expectations**

The Church struggles to uphold traditions while adapting to modern expectations. Some prefer innovation, while others value tradition, causing division and disengagement. Striking a balance requires integrating modern approaches without compromising core teachings to stay relevant and inclusive.

#### **Evangelization and Outreach to Non-Practicing Catholics**

Secular influences, busy lifestyles, and negative perceptions have left many Catholics feeling disconnected and unaware of the Church's relevance. Limited outreach efforts often fail to meet their needs. Reconnecting requires inclusive, welcoming, and relevant approaches that emphasize the Church's role in their lives.

### **4. Securing the Future of Church Leadership: Sustaining Clergy, Lay Formation, and Women's Evolving Role**

#### **Sustaining Future Provision of Clergy and Vocations Crisis**

The Diocese is currently well-served by its clergy, but sustaining vital parish life and meeting spiritual needs is challenged by declining vocations. With fewer young people pursuing priestly vocations, clergy and lay leaders often face heavy burdens, especially in rural areas. Promoting vocations through mentorship, visibility, and community support is crucial to ensuring the Church's long-term vitality.

#### **Formation of Lay Leaders**

The Diocese is blessed with generous lay volunteers who play a vital role in supporting the Church. However, many lack the training needed to effectively fulfill their leadership responsibilities. As laypeople take on greater roles in ministry, events, and pastoral support, investing in structured training and formation programs is essential to empower them and sustain parish life.

#### **Women's Role in the Church**

Women are essential to the Church, but their leadership opportunities are often limited. Greater involvement in ministry and governance requires recognizing their contributions, expanding their roles, and fostering inclusivity while staying faithful to Church teachings.

#### **Sustaining Parish Leadership**

Maintaining strong leadership is challenging due to insufficient training, reliance on a few key individuals, burnout, and a lack of effective succession planning. Addressing these issues requires investing in leadership development, fostering teamwork, and creating sustainable succession strategies.

## **5. The Strengthening Parish-School Partnerships and Sustaining Educational Excellence**

### **Parish & Catholic School Partnerships**

The relationship between Catholic schools and parishes appears to many to have diminished, with many families engaging with schools but not parish life. Strengthening this bond requires joint initiatives, improved communication, and shared faith experiences to foster a seamless faith journey for students and their families.

### **Sustaining Educational Excellence**

Recruiting qualified educators for Catholic schools and balancing academic excellence with spiritual priorities remain persistent challenges. Addressing these issues requires offering competitive incentives, fostering a mission-driven culture, and integrating faith seamlessly into education.

## **6. Managing Financial Challenges and Measuring Impact Effectively**

### **Financial Challenges & Resource Limitations**

The Church is under financial strain from abuse settlements and rising insurance costs, with smaller parishes struggling to remain viable. Limited resources tend to hinder program expansion, facility maintenance, and community outreach. Transparency, careful financial management, and exploring new revenue sources are vital for the Church's long-term sustainability.

### **Measuring Impact**

Tracking the success of initiatives and incorporating feedback for improvement is a persistent challenge. Establishing clear metrics, regular evaluations, and open channels for feedback are essential for fostering accountability and ensuring continuous growth.

## **7. Enhancing Communication Strategies & Bridging the Technological Divide**

### **Need for More Effective Communication Strategies**

Effective communication is key to engaging parishioners and keeping them informed about Church activities and teachings. Many feel disconnected due to insufficient or irrelevant information. Enhancing communication through diverse channels, like digital platforms and in-person outreach, can bridge gaps and foster greater community involvement.

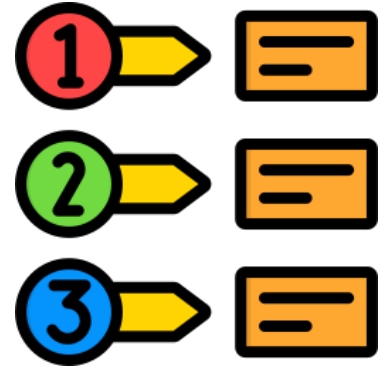
### **Technological Divide**

A digital divide hampers community engagement and modernization, particularly for older members, while the potential of online platforms remains underutilized. Bridging this gap requires digital literacy initiatives, user-friendly tools, and expanded online outreach to engage all demographics effectively.

## PASTORAL PRIORITIES & ACTIONS

What **PASTORAL PRIORITIES & ACTIONS** is the Holy Spirit calling us, as individuals and as faith communities, to focus on during the next five years to give renewed life and purpose to our shared mission?

- Recommendations for the Diocesan Assembly.



### 1. Engaging Youth & Nurturing the Future Church

*"Let me conclude on the importance of continuing to listen to young people. A real listening, not one that is "half-hearted" or merely "window dressing". Young people should not be pushed into promoting ideas and activities already decided by others, or that do not really meet their needs. Young people should be empowered, involved in dialogue, in planning activities, in decisions. They should be made to feel that they are an active and full part of the life of the Church; and above all that they are called to be the first to bring the Gospel message to their peers."*

*Pope Francis May 2024  
to the International Congress on Youth Ministry*

#### **Focus:**

**"To engage with young people by addressing their challenges, integrating their perspectives into church life, and creating dynamic youth engagement programs that foster their involvement."**

**"To empower youth leadership, equipping young people to take active roles in shaping the Church's future and mission."**

#### **Recommended actions:**

- Develop programs to actively involve and integrate youth in parish activities.
- Actively address the needs, concerns, challenges & criticisms faced by younger generations and create a supportive environment.
- Host forums where young people can express concerns, share their challenges and ideas and propose solutions.
- Recognize the challenges youth face in connecting with traditional church structures and practices.
- Ensure the church is vibrant and relatable to future generations.
- Creating opportunities for leadership and mentorship.
- Use social media platforms to engage younger audiences & to foster communication and engagement.

- Establish & foster mentorship opportunities and programs pairing young individuals with experienced parish leaders & members.
- Establish youth councils to involve young people in parish and Diocesan decision-making.

## 2. Building Stronger Parish-School Collaboration & Partnership

*"You are called to develop and transmit a new culture, a new culture, based on the encounter between generations, on inclusion, on the discernment of the true, the good and the beautiful; a culture of responsibility, both personal and collective, to face global challenges such as the environmental, social and economic crises, and the great challenge of peace. At school you can "imagine peace", that is, lay the foundations for a more just and fraternal world, with the contribution of all disciplines and the creativity of children and young people."*

*Pope Francis, January 2025 to Teachers.*

### **Focus:**

**"To build on the current strengths of schools and parishes, fostering meaningful connections and collaborations that address ongoing challenges and create synergies in Catholic education."**

**"To align the missions of parishes and schools, using partnerships to promote the Gospel message, enhance spiritual growth, and connect with younger generations and their families."**

**"To collaborate in addressing shared challenges, ensuring both parishes and schools work together to support faith education and spiritual development."**

### **Recommended actions:**

- Leverage the existing strengths of schools and the Church to provide resources and solutions to current issues.
- Build and foster stronger connections between schools and parishes to align their missions.
- Encourage clergy to actively engage with school communities to foster mutual support.
- Develop shared events and initiatives that bring parish and school communities together.
- Strengthen the relationship between schools and churches to build leadership capacities in youth.
- Engage young people early, creating a pipeline of future leaders.
- Encourage collaborative programs that integrate faith-based education in both school and parish settings.
- Leverage schools as platforms to promote sacraments and parish engagement among families.

- Create youth-focused initiatives jointly led by schools and parishes to foster engagement and participation.
- Highlight the role of schools in supporting youth leadership within parish life.
- Develop joint evangelization strategies that integrate parish and school communities.
- Strengthen communication channels between school leaders and parish clergy to ensure a unified approach to faith.
- Work together to address the criticisms and challenges that youth and families face in faith formation.
- Create joint programs to support families navigating the modern challenges of faith and education.
- Encourage the creation of faith-based extracurricular programs co-sponsored by schools and parishes.
- Encourage collaboration between schools and parishes to address shared challenges effectively.

### 3. Strengthening Community Bonds

*"Parish communities increasingly need to become places from which the baptized set out as missionary disciples and to which they return, full of joy, in order to share the wonders worked by the Lord through their witness,"*

*Pope Francis, May 2024 to the World Meeting of Priests*

#### **Focus:**

**"To nurture faith communities as primary touchpoints for implementing change and engaging with the wider community, while fostering relationships within and among parishes and across the diocese to build a shared sense of mission."**

**"To promote shared leadership and collective responsibility, address the evolving needs of parishioners and communities, and empower individuals and communities to reflect, grow, and thrive in the face of challenges."**

#### **Recommended actions:**

- Strengthen inter-parish collaboration and sharing of resources. Organize joint parish initiatives & events to foster cooperation.
- Create Inter-Parish Leadership Task Forces: Groups formed to address specific diocesan challenges collaboratively.
- Organize community outreach initiatives to connect with non-active members.
- Develop small faith-sharing groups to nurture relationships and foster mutual support.
- Enhance hospitality within parishes to ensure inclusivity and belonging.
- Focus on listening to, including, and addressing the needs of the people within the church and broader community.
- Develop a pastoral approach that prioritizes relationships and human connection.

- Emphasize the need for stronger connections, better resources, and revitalization at the parish & school level.
- Enhancing inclusivity and belonging.
- Supporting families and individuals in need.
- Encouraging volunteerism and active participation.
- Host open-house days to welcome new or inactive members.
- Create a volunteer appreciation program to recognize efforts.
- Organize inter-parish events.
- Develop small group ministries for prayer, support, and connection.
- Host open-house events to welcome inactive or new members.
- Establish programs to support families, such as childcare or food pantries.
- Provide targeted support to parishes facing unique challenges, including resource shortages and declining attendance.
- Facilitate diocesan-level initiatives to address shared concerns across parishes.
- Explore non-traditional methods of ministry to address modern challenges, including lay-led initiatives.
- Develop faith-based programs that are relevant and appealing to the needs of today's families and youth.
- Reflect on what can be done as individuals and communities to cope with changes and strengthen resilience.
- Foster personal growth and collective action in response to current and future challenges.

#### 4. **Fostering a Culture of Listening and Inclusion**

*"Whenever people listen to one another humbly and openly, their shared values and aspirations become all the more apparent. Diversity is no longer seen as a threat, but as a source of enrichment. The path to justice, reconciliation and social harmony becomes all the more clearly seen."*

*Pope Francis January 2015, arrival ceremony, Colombo.*

##### **Focus:**

**"To ensure all voices, especially those of marginalized groups, are heard and valued, fostering an inclusive church community that celebrates diversity and promotes equity."**

**"To include and value women in all aspects of Church life, strengthen connections between women and key Church institutions, and promote shared goals."**

**"To celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through multicultural events and liturgies, while promoting their inclusion in church leadership and decision-making processes through targeted leadership training programs."**

### Recommended actions:

- Listen to the voice of the people and provide appropriate training for leaders to address their concerns.
- Invite family members who have lapsed from the Church to rejoin the community through welcoming initiatives.
- Listen to the voices of women in the community to understand their needs and concerns.
- Foster a culture of equality where women have equal opportunities to contribute to the Church's mission.
- Offer mentorship & development opportunities for women leaders.
- Establish listening sessions to hear the concerns and suggestions of parishioners.
- Promote inclusivity by addressing barriers that exclude certain groups.
- Ensure leadership reflects the diversity of the community it serves.
- Amplify diverse voices within the community.
- Support marginalized groups.
- Create multicultural liturgies celebrating cultural diversity.
- Conduct listening sessions to gather feedback from parishioners.
- Develop outreach programs for marginalized groups, such as refugees or the homeless.
- Celebrate cultural diversity with multicultural liturgies and events.
- Develop initiatives to celebrate and promote the role of women in the life of the Church.
- Develop faith formation programs that include teachings about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spirituality and its connection to Catholic values.
- Provide resources and workshops to educate parishioners about the history and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Address systemic barriers that hinder the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in church life.
- Advocate for social justice initiatives that align with the needs and rights of these communities, including equity and reconciliation efforts.

## 5. Promoting Healing, Building Trust & Strengthening Relationships

*"Every member of the Church, and especially its leadership, is entrusted, then, with the imperative to foster and develop a culture of safety for everyone. At every level we must work together especially to protect children and vulnerable adults from abuse or harm. This obligation to safeguard all those within the community is moral, legal and spiritual. It is underscored by the fundamental sanctity of each human person. Making the Church a safer place is at the heart of our commitment to the mission that has been entrusted by the Spirit of Pentecost to the community of faith."*

*From the Introduction to the National Response Protocol, ACBC 2022*

### Focus:

**"To actively listen to the concerns of the community, foster open communication, and create opportunities for connection and mutual support to heal fractured relationships."**



**“To support victims of past Church scandals by offering compassionate and practical support to victims, ensuring they feel heard, valued, and supported in their healing journey.”**

**“To address past wounds, promote forgiveness and reconciliation, and ensure the Church provides a safe space for all members to grow and heal.”**

**“To leverage small groups and localized efforts to facilitate healing, rebuild trust, and reconnect with individuals and groups who have become disconnected or disenchanted with the Church.”**

**Recommended actions:**

- Listen to the voice of the people and provide clear responses to their concerns.
- Hold healing services & ensure counselling services are available for those needing support.
- Promote accountability and transparency in decision-making processes to rebuild trust within the faith community.
- Publish regular parish newsletters summarizing feedback and plans.
- Foster connections between parishes, schools, and families to create a supportive network.
- Promote community-building programs that nurture relationships and strengthen bonds.
- Build trust through transparent communication and regular updates on parish activities and decisions.
- Develop programs to address past conflicts or grievances within the community.
- Offer pastoral care and support services for those seeking healing and reconciliation.
- Provide training for parents and parish leaders on creating supportive and caring environments.
- Emphasize the importance of safety and trust in all community interactions.
- Encourage initiatives that focus on small-group interactions for mutual support.
- Develop faith-sharing groups that provide a platform for expressing concerns and fostering healing.

## **6. Cultivating Spiritual Growth**

*“Jesus tells us to set our hearts on the kingdom. Setting our hearts on something involves not only serious aspirations but also strong determination. A spiritual life requires human effort. The forces that keep pulling us back into a worry-filled life are far from easy to overcome.”*

*From Henri Nouwen, Making all things new.*

**Focus:**

**“To support personal and communal spiritual development by strengthening their connection to faith and their spiritual journeys & fostering opportunities for growth in faith and community engagement.”**

**“To encourage a deeper comprehension and appreciation of Catholic doctrines, traditions, and values to inspire a faithful and informed community.”**

**“To address gaps in catechesis and lifelong faith education by developing and implementing comprehensive programs to enhance faith formation across all age groups in parishes.”**

**Recommended actions:**

- Provide opportunities for spiritual renewal through retreats, adoration, and workshops.
- Utilize multimedia resources to educate on Catholic teachings.
- Emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in guiding the community.
- Encourage personal prayer and communal worship to enhance spiritual vitality.
- Establish parish prayer groups and opportunities for communal worship with diverse meeting times.
- Organize annual retreats focused on spiritual growth.
- Conduct Holy Spirit seminars highlighting its transformative power & to inspire and deepen faith experiences.
- Offer parish-wide retreats focusing on prayer and renewal.
- Create resources to encourage individual spiritual practices.

## **7. Renewing Evangelization Efforts**

*“The Spirit continues to guide us in our translating the Good News into different contexts, so that the words of Jesus continue to resound in the hearts of men and women in every age. That is why I like to quote Gustav Mahler, that “tradition is not the repository of ashes, but the preservation of fire.”*

*From Let us Dream, Pope Francis*

**Focus:**

**“To spread the Gospel and revitalize faith among both existing and new members by fostering a culture of joyful evangelization and active faith-sharing within communities.”**

**“To encourage faith formation that inspires active participation in evangelization and to empower clergy and leaders to take an active role in sharing the Good News and cultivating a missionary spirit.”**

### Recommended actions:

- Train and empower parishioners to confidently share their faith stories.
- Spread the Gospel through contemporary means. Utilize modern communication methods to spread the Good News effectively.
- Create evangelization workshops and retreats aimed at deepening understanding of the faith.
- Develop a clear diocesan strategy for mission-driven outreach.
- Empowering laity in missionary activities.
- Revitalizing outreach to lapsed Catholics.
- Facilitating personal and communal prayer.
- Encouraging retreats and spiritual renewal programs.
- Promoting the role of the Holy Spirit in everyday life.
- Offer evangelization training workshops for parishioners.
- Train laypeople in evangelization strategies and techniques.
- Launch a digital evangelization initiative, including social media and video content.
- Develop a diocesan YouTube channel featuring weekly Gospel reflections.
- Implement outreach campaigns targeting lapsed Catholics, such as "Come Back Home" initiative to reconnect with inactive members.
- Develop engaging workshops and retreats to deepen understanding of the Gospel.
- Develop programs that reach out to non-practicing Catholics and the broader community.
- Use creative approaches to bring faith and mission into modern contexts, addressing current challenges.
- Strengthen community ties as a foundation for collective evangelization efforts.

## 8. Developing Leadership and Faith Formation Programs

*"To serve means to minister, to love and to care for others, and to recognize in them the heart of God. A true disciple of Jesus will always go to where people are feeling weak, broken, sick, in pain, poor, lonely, forgotten, anxious, and lost. It is often hard to go to places of weakness and rejection and to offer comfort. It is possible only when we discover the presence of Jesus among the poor and weak and realize the many gifts they have to offer. Therefore, spiritual formation always includes responding from the heart to the needs of the poor in a spirit of true compassion."*

*Henri Nouwen*

*Spiritual Formation: Following the Movements of the Spirit.*

### Focus:

**"To form the people of the diocese and priests in spirituality, mission, and leadership, equipping clergy and leaders with the knowledge, skills, and spiritual grounding necessary for their roles."**

**"To support parents and families as primary educators of faith, emphasizing the Church's values and teachings as a foundation amid cultural changes."**

**"To ensure faith formation programs are welcoming, accessible to all, and provide resources and training that enhance adaptability and resilience among families and leaders."**

**"To build a culture of vocational awareness to address the clergy shortage by encouraging and supporting individuals discerning a call to priesthood, religious life or lay ministries that serve the Church."**

**Recommended actions:**

- Foster a culture of shared responsibility between clergy and laity.
- Provide structured programs for faith development across all age groups.
- Develop inclusive catechetical programs that address the spiritual needs of people from diverse backgrounds.
- Develop initiatives that prioritize inclusivity in faith education, addressing age, gender, race, and interfaith engagement.
- Develop programs that reaffirm Catholic values and identity in the face of secular trends.
- Foster community discussions on how faith can provide stability and guidance in a changing world.
- Equip leaders with spiritual and practical skills strengthens both their personal growth and their ability to guide the community.
- Equip and mentor emerging leaders for active roles in parishes.
- Prepare individuals to take on significant roles within the community, ensuring leadership continuity.
- Provide regular formation and training sessions focusing on skills like communication, conflict resolution, and team building for parish leaders.
- Promote training and workshops for parents to enhance their role in their children's faith formation.
- Create resources that help families integrate faith practices into their daily lives.
- Link seasoned clergy or lay leaders to mentor emerging leaders in spiritual and administrative roles.
- Intensive weekend retreats focusing on prayer, discernment, and the theology of leadership.
- Organize meetings where leaders across parishes share experiences, challenges, and solutions (Learning Circles).
- Provide courses for laypersons on how to lead ministries such as youth groups, RCIA, or charitable initiatives.
- Youth Leadership Academy: A program for secondary students to learn leadership principles, rooted in Gospel values.
- Continue to support the ongoing Professional Development of the clergy: Regular courses for clergy on topics like pastoral care, administrative leadership, and social justice.
- Create online Leadership Formation Modules: E-learning platforms providing flexible access to leadership training.

- Provide workshops and formation sessions focused on evangelization and mission.
- Equip parishioners with the tools to confidently share the Gospel in their communities.
- Promote workshops and training for parents to enhance their ability to guide children in their faith journey.
- Promote training and workshops for parents to help them navigate challenges and support their families effectively.
- Equip leaders with the skills to lead communities through periods of change with confidence and adaptability.
- Foster peer learning and collaboration among leaders to address shared challenges.
- Encourage young people to discern their vocations to lay leadership, priesthood, religious life & marriage.
- Conduct discernment retreats and vocational workshops.
- Provide pastoral accompaniment for those considering vocations of service to the Church.

## 9. Enhancing Liturgy, Worship & Prayer Experiences

*“Nevertheless, the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time, it is the font from which all power flows.”*

*Sacrosanctum Concilium, n. 10*

### **Focus:**

**“To improve liturgical celebrations by enhancing the quality, engagement, and inclusivity of liturgical celebrations to ensure they are vibrant and meaningful for all.”**

**“To strengthen the Eucharist’s role by fostering a deeper integration of the Eucharist as the central focus of parish life and community worship.”**

**“To educate and support individuals in deepening their understanding and participation in the sacraments, while equipping leaders and participants with the skills needed to enhance liturgical practices.”**

### **Recommended actions:**

- Explore creative ways to make Mass more inclusive and spiritually enriching.
- Introduce contemporary worship elements while maintaining traditions.
- Offer formation for liturgical ministers, musicians & volunteers.
- Conduct training and workshops for parents to enhance their role in preparing children for sacraments.
- Develop resources for families to engage meaningfully with sacramental celebrations.
- Highlight the importance of the Eucharist in personal and communal spirituality.
- Promote Eucharistic adoration and prayerful devotions.

- Create retreats or workshops focused on Eucharistic theology and its role in daily life.
- Promote youth participation by creating a more engaging and vibrant liturgical experience.
- Actively involve young people in the church's liturgical and sacramental life.
- Foster youth-specific prayer gatherings and Eucharistic adoration events.
- Provide leadership opportunities for young people in liturgical ministries (e.g., lectors, altar servers, musicians).
- Host workshops on the meaning and practice of the liturgy for all parishioners.
- Create liturgical experiences that are inclusive and accessible to all groups, including the youth.
- Tailor faith formation and sacramental preparation programs to accommodate diverse needs.

## 10. Fostering Communication & Engagement Through Technology

*"I dream of a communication capable of making us fellow travellers, walking alongside our brothers and sisters and encouraging them to hope in these troubled times. A communications capable of speaking to the heart ... of focusing on beauty and hope ... a communication that can help us in "recognizing the dignity of each human being and working together to care for our common home."*

*Pope Francis, World Day of Social Communications, January 2025*

### **Focus:**

**"To build relationships and foster engagement within the faith community by utilizing modern technology to improve communication and create a sense of belonging."**

**"To expand the reach of the Gospel through digital evangelization efforts, equipping parish staff and leaders with the skills and tools needed to use technology effectively."**

### **Recommended actions:**

- Develop a diocesan-wide communication strategy.
- Use newsletters, websites and social media for regular updates to acknowledge & celebrate the many good things happening in the Diocese.
- Create virtual spaces for prayer, discussion, and faith-sharing to include those unable to attend in person.
- Use technology to facilitate collaborative projects between schools and parishes.
- Leverage digital platforms to connect with parishioners and share updates effectively.
- Use social media to engage younger generations and promote parish events.
- Develop online tools for streamlined communication between parishes and schools.
- Develop an online presence that reflects the values and mission of the church.

- Use digital media for catechesis, faith formation, and outreach to lapsed Catholics.
- Provide training on digital communication and social media management.
- Invest in modern tools and platforms to enhance parish operations.
- Build platforms that foster stronger connections between parishes, schools, and the wider community.
- Use technology to support outreach initiatives and connect with marginalized groups.

## 11. Faith and Justice Integration & Collaborative Outreach to Marginalized Groups

*"The Gospel joy which enlivens the community of disciples is a missionary joy. The seventy-two disciples felt it as they returned from their mission (cf. Lk 10:17). Jesus felt it when he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and praised the Father for revealing himself to the poor and the little ones (cf. Lk 10:21). It was felt by the first converts who marvelled to hear the apostles preaching "in the native language of each" (Acts 2:6) on the day of Pentecost. This joy is a sign that the Gospel has been proclaimed and is bearing fruit. Yet the drive to go forth and give, to go out from ourselves, to keep pressing forward in our sowing of the good seed, remains ever present. The Lord says: "Let us go on to the next towns that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out" (Mk 1:38). Once the seed has been sown in one place, Jesus does not stay behind to explain things or to perform more signs; the Spirit moves him to go forth to other towns."*

*Evangelii Gaudium (The Joy of the Gospel). n. 21*

### Focus:

**"To link social justice initiatives to the Church's mission and faith teachings, fostering outreach to individuals and communities facing social or economic challenges or feeling marginalized."**

**"To encourage parishioners to engage in acts of service and charity, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to advocate for justice and partnering with external organizations to expand the Church's outreach impact."**

### Recommended actions:

- Provide workshops to help parishioners understand the connection between faith and social justice.
- Highlight the Gospel's call to care for the least and advocate for systemic change.
- Encourage the establishment of food banks or community kitchens in parishes.
- Offer training programs on social justice issues, including Catholic social teachings.
- Engage schools in discussions about justice, equality, and service as integral to faith.

- Develop specific initiatives to engage with and support marginalized groups in society.
- Establish outreach programs for refugees or those experiencing homelessness.
- Conduct outreach programs for groups who feel alienated, including youth and culturally diverse communities.
- Strengthen support systems for marginalized groups, including the homeless and refugees.
- Promote initiatives that address equity and justice for underserved populations.
- Develop parish-wide service projects that address local needs.
- Partner with schools to foster a culture of charity and service among young people.
- Build collaborations with local charities, non-profits, and community organizations.
- Engage in ecumenical efforts to promote shared justice initiatives.

## 12. Caring for Creation & Developing Ecological Stewardship

*"I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. The worldwide ecological movement has already made considerable progress and led to the establishment of numerous organizations committed to raising awareness of these challenges. Regrettably, many efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved ineffective, not only because of powerful opposition but also because of a more general lack of interest. Obstructionist attitudes, even on the part of believers, can range from denial of the problem to indifference, nonchalant resignation or blind confidence in technical solutions. We require a new and universal solidarity. As the bishops of Southern Africa have stated: "Everyone's talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God's creation". All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents."*

*Laudato Si, n. 14.*

### **Focus:**

**"To raise awareness about ecological issues and integrate sustainability into education and formation programs, emphasizing the theological foundation of ecological stewardship as care for God's creation."**

**"To encourage parishes and communities to adopt sustainable practices in their operations and outreach, empowering leaders to advocate for and implement ecological stewardship within their communities."**



**Recommended actions:**

- Leverage the strengths of schools and parishes to promote environmental awareness among students and parishioners.
- Develop educational initiatives that emphasize the importance of ecological stewardship as a faith-driven responsibility.
- Use faith-sharing groups to reflect on the spiritual significance of ecological stewardship.
- Encourage discussions that connect ecological actions to the broader mission of faith and care for creation.
- Support eco-friendly initiatives as part of the church's social responsibility.
- Introduce environmentally sustainable practices, such as energy-efficient facilities, in parishes & schools.
- Pilot programs addressing environmental stewardship.
- Build and foster connections between parishes and local ecological efforts to implement sustainable practices.
- Integrate ecological values into community projects and parish initiatives.
- Provide resources and training for clergy and lay leaders to lead sustainability initiatives.
- Encourage parishes to model ecological stewardship as part of their mission and outreach.



**Diocese of Sale**  
2025