

“Describing Our Destination”

A tool for parishes



How to use this tool:

Focusing on the three themes of Encounter, Discipleship and Mission will help us co-operate with the Lord in bringing new life to parishes and their surrounding communities. This tool is offered to help parishes prayerfully reflect on what they might wish to work towards by 2030.

The table sets out a “from/to” list describing some of the aspects of where a parish may find itself today and what the Lord is inviting it to become with the help of His grace. The list is not meant to be exhaustive! Each parish will vary in the details of how the three themes come to life in their unique context and there may be other items it is important to add. Parish priests may wish to consider gathering a group, or several groups, of people to prayerfully contribute to this conversation so that the “2030 picture” becomes a shared vision.

The following steps are a suggested way to get the most out of this tool

1. Prayerfully consider the list of From and To items.
2. Take a highlighter pen and mark any of the “From” items which particularly apply to your situation AND which of the “To” items especially resonate.
3. Discuss whether there are any other items it would be helpful to add in for your unique context – if so, then please do add them in!
4. Discuss what it would look like if the picture sketched out by the items in the “to” column came to life in your parish – What resonates? What are people excited about? Are there any ways in which God is already acting? Is there anything that prompts hesitation, why?
5. Consider booking a meeting with the Diocesan Adult Formation for Mission Department if you would like more support.

We are a parish community that...	We desire a parish community that...
has parishioners with faith who go to church	has parishioners who gather as church and look for opportunities to share their faith with others
runs some programmes and activities for parishioners	also runs programmes and activities specifically for people not proactive in the life of the parish
celebrates, baptisms, 1st Holy Communions, Confirmations, Weddings and Funerals	looks upon these occasions as opportunities to cherish, evangelise and encourage people to become involved in the parish
has a number of parishioners who serve in parish programmes and activities	has a growing number of parish leaders who enthusiastically serve in parish programmes and activities
has parishioners who have a positive regard for the Church	has parishioners who see themselves as part of the Church on mission in the world
is a place where people can learn about Jesus, the Father and the Holy Spirit	provides opportunities for people to know God the Father's love, to have a personal relationship with Jesus, and to experience the guidance and encouragement of Holy Spirit
experiences growth through births, immigration and new local housing development	makes new disciples through personal outreach and invitation, prayerful worship and community events
has a website to keep parishioners informed of parish events, times of Masses and other liturgies	more intentionally makes use of its digital presence as a way to explain things, reach out to, and engage with, those who may wish to learn about Catholicism
receives some financial support from the majority of parishioners	receives generous financial support from the majority of parishioners who wish to support the parish mission and participate actively in it
has a very efficient Parish Safeguarding Representative(PSR)	Is committed to supporting our PSR so that everyone who comes to our church feels both welcome and safe
provides opportunities for faith formation which some parishioners attend	experiences a high demand for faith formation opportunities
has parishioners who routinely receive the sacraments	has parishioners who celebrate the sacraments with personal faith and spiritual expectancy

We are a parish community that...	We desire a parish community that...
offers a place where couples can marry	accompanies and supports engaged and newly married couples and those who have been married for longer
prays for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life	Is committed to both praying for vocations and actively encouraging young people to consider these vocations
is pleased to have a good connection with the parish school	works closely to develop ever stronger links between the parish and school
relies predominantly on the school and catechists to teach the faith to children	empowers parents and families as the primary educators of their children in collaboration with parish catechists and the school
allocates resources according to the most immediate needs of the parish	has a plan to ensure parish resources best serve the evangelising purpose and priorities of the parish
believes that most Mass attenders have a personal relationship with Jesus and shapes homilies, programmes and events accordingly	understands that many Mass attenders may not yet feel they have a personal relationship with Jesus and so shapes homilies, programmes and events accordingly
has parishioners who fulfil their duty to worship God	has parishioners who enjoy gathering to pray, listen, worship and be sent on mission
communicates using language parishioners can understand	communicates using language that both the initiated and uninitiated can understand
has some parishioners who, from time to time, might speak about their relationship with Jesus	equips parishioners to share with others their relationship with Jesus as a normal aspect of the life and outreach of the parish
has some ministries where parishioners can choose to serve	encourages the God-given gifts of parishioners and provides many opportunities for service
offers assistance to those who ask for it	provides support and a sense of belonging to everyone, especially the housebound, lonely, vulnerable and the marginalised
has social functions which some parishioners attend	has a variety of opportunities for people to gather together to deepen their communion and fellowship, and to reach out to others (the lapsed and those who show interest in becoming Catholics)
cares for the needs of those within the parish community	is seen as a community of love and care with a capacity to identify the needs of the local people and to address them with love & faith