



Archdiocese of
Liverpool



Pastoral Plan an explanation for families



To the families in the Archdiocese of Liverpool,

In June 2021, we celebrated a Synod. This was the fruit of four years of prayer, listening, discernment (focused listening and reflection) and planning for the future. In this time, all members of the archdiocese had the opportunity to contribute to opinions and ideas for the future of the Catholic Church in our area. We asked ourselves: What kind of Church is God calling us to be? What is the Holy Spirit saying to us at this critical point in history? The Pastoral Plan (explained in this leaflet) will serve as the charter for implementing the fruits of the Synod. It begins with Christ at the centre and points out signposts for our journey. We are aiming to *become the Church that God is calling us to be.*

With Christ at the centre of our approach, we will be guided by him and this will help us to reflect on what kind of Church God is calling us to be.





There are **6 developments areas** that the Pastoral Plan has identified.



Each area is being led by a coordinating team who are responsible for the development of their area. Some areas, as families, may affect you more than others but each is equally important in fulfilling our role of *becoming the Church that we are called to be*.

Becoming a Church...

1 ...that accompanies people through life

Using a process of accompaniment (listening to each other and guiding each other to become 'Champions of the Faith') we aim to walk alongside people in their joys, hopes, griefs and anxieties of their lives.

To do this we will:

- 1) Seek to change our archdiocesan approach to support by walking alongside the people of today using accompaniment.
- 2) Develop ways of accompanying each other as we deepen our relationship with Jesus.
- 3) Explore ways to resource parishes to accompany parents as they bring up their children and hand on the faith to them.
- 4) Explore people's concerns for the environment and have this as a core part of our mission in the world.

2 ...that honours the vocation of all the baptised

We shall be bold and creative in celebrating the call of Christ and supporting people to respond. Mindful of the changing needs of the local Church, we recognise the need to call on all of the baptised and engage directly with people to deal with the realities of life today. **To do this we will:**

- 1) Encourage the understanding that all baptised share in the priesthood of Christ.
- 2) Implement changes to the current Church structure to better suit the changing nature of realities in the archdiocese (e.g. chaplaincy, bereavement, funeral ministry, ministry with families, the sick and housebound, the ministry of charity etc).
- 3) Maximise the possibilities for collaboration between all layers of the Church – improving dialogue between all.

3 ...where synodality is embedded

We need to heed the call of Pope Francis towards a 'synodal' way of the Church into the third millennium. **To do this we will:**

- 1) Create an archdiocesan synodal council that will be given the responsibility of monitoring the implementation of the Pastoral Plan. It's membership will include laymen and women, as well as clergy.
- 2) Implement synodal ways of working at all levels of the archdiocesan support services.
- 3) Be alert to ways in which we can do some things better together ecumenically (in conjunction with other faiths/beliefs).



4 ...that renews its organisational structures and administers its property to serve its mission

In practical terms, we need to renew the way in which our archdiocese works by creating 'families of parishes'. Each parish in a parish family will retain its own unique identity in the same way that brothers and sisters in a family each have their own unique role and identity. Here, these new families of parishes will collaborate by sharing resources – including priests, deacons, and staff (across parish boundaries) therefore supporting and resourcing each other to make further progress towards the mission that Christ has entrusted to his Church.

To do this we will:

- 1) Implement the new parish family changes.
- 2) Create in each deanery a Deanery Synodal Council (DSC), chaired by a lay person, appointed by the archbishop, that plans for the future and changes within the parish family.
- 3) Carry out a comprehensive audit of archdiocesan property, land and consider its uses.
- 4) Use any information gathered to equip families of parishes to look creatively at their building needs, possible release of funds from sales of properties that are no longer required and use this to secure the future mission of the Church.
- 5) Explore ways that parish property becomes more environmentally sustainable.

5 ...where young people and young adults flourish

In order that we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with young people as they experience life and its challenges, we must recognise the importance of approaching them with authenticity, offering opportunities for community, sharing with the experiences of spiritual growth. **Therefore, we will:**

- 1) Appoint a full time youth advisor who will create a networked youth ministry and resource the development of an accompaniment model for those involved in working with young people and young adults.
- 2) Develop a Youth Council to bring concrete proposals to the agreed archdiocesan structures.
- 3) We will increase the support for the Catholic life of our schools by developing and promoting an 'accompaniment model' in the Education Department's work with schools.

6 ...that cares for its priests

The ordained priesthood exists to enable the gifts of the baptised to flourish (as we noted in development area 2). **We will support our priests in this role by:**

- 1) Establishing families of parishes to create a greater mutual support network for our priests.
- 2) Encouraging priests to work together, pray together and plan together for their parishes and for the good of the parish family.
- 3) Supporting priests to flourish in the human, spiritual, liturgical, theological, intellectual and pastoral aspects of life.





The Pastoral Plan has become the mission of the archdiocese. This is not something that can be done individually but it is a communal task, a work of the whole body of Christ to which we belong.

Archbishop Malcolm McMahon (pictured) by providing this Pastoral Plan is convinced that the fruits and treasures of Synod 2020 which the Holy Spirit has poured out upon us, prepares the way for the monumental task that lives ahead.

We are all called to help to create a Church that *God is calling us to be*.

We pray that you will be enthused by it, interact with it, support it and help it (and the Church in turn) to better place itself to where society needs it in today's world.

For further information and to read the full Pastoral Plan, **please do visit the dedicated Pastoral Plan website** where you can explore certain aspects in more depth and find contact details if you would like to make a comment or suggestion.



liverpoolpastoralplan.org.uk