



Go Forth

IN JOY AND HOPE AS
MISSIONARY DISCIPLES:

A Pastoral Letter and Plan for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis



By The Most Reverend Charles C. Thompson
Archbishop of Indianapolis



Heavenly Father,

you bless us with joy and hope, and you call us to be
missionary disciples of your Son, Our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Make your Holy Spirit powerfully present, we pray,
as we discern your will for our archdiocese in the years ahead.

Eucharistic-centered in identity and mission, may we be
a Church that goes out to the margins, seeking the lost,
bringing your healing mercy to the people
of central and southern Indiana.

Through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
Star of the New Evangelization,
help us to advance the mission and ministry
of Jesus, by the unifying power of the Holy Spirit,

Amen.

Pastoral Letter

GO FORTH IN JOY AND HOPE AS MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

In his first Apostolic Exhortation, *Dilexi Te* (I Have Loved You), Pope Leo XIV reflects on the importance of love for the Church's mission:



*Christian love breaks down every barrier, brings close those who were distant, unites strangers, and reconciles enemies. It spans chasms that are humanly impossible to bridge, and it penetrates to the most hidden crevices of society. By its very nature, Christian love is prophetic: it works miracles and knows no limits. It makes what was apparently impossible happen. Love is above all a way of looking at life and a way of living it. A Church that sets no limits to love, that knows no enemies to fight but only men and women to love, is the Church that the world needs today. (*Dilexi Te*, #120.)*

As we conclude the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope and, simultaneously, inaugurate a new pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, we take these words to heart. We strive to be men and women who love God and our neighbor so much that, by the grace of God, what seems impossible actually happens. And we pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us, and accompany us, as we renew our commitment to serving as Missionary Disciples of Jesus Christ who “go forth in joy and hope” to proclaim the Good News of our salvation in Him.

A VISION BORN OF A SYNODAL SPIRIT

As Archbishop of Indianapolis, it is my responsibility to lead the archdiocese in assessing the needs of the Church in central and southern Indiana and planning for the future. In the spirit of synodality, successful planning requires broad consultation and teamwork. It requires a profound sense of openness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit—as this is manifested both through the rich history of the Church in this region and in the present circumstances. Ultimately, sound pastoral planning demands that we be willing to trust that although we cannot predict the future, Divine Providence will show us the way to carry out God's will for us in the years ahead.

For many years now, pastoral planning has been an important dimension of the life of our parishes, schools, and archdiocesan ministries. We are keenly aware that as baptized Catholics and children of God, we are co-responsible leaders called to holiness and to follow Jesus Christ as missionary disciples and pilgrims of hope. We accept this timeless invitation to proclaim the Gospel joyfully and to minister to all our sisters and brothers in Jesus's name as co-responsible witnesses.

As one Body of Christ, we prayerfully discern God's will for the Church in central and southern Indiana through attentive listening to the Word of God, prayerful celebration of the Sacraments, ministry to the spiritual and temporal needs of others, and respectful dialogue with one another and with all members of God's family.

We look forward in hope to a future that is rooted in the Gospel and Tradition that responds faithfully to the changing circumstances of our time.



A MISSION DIRECTIVE TO GO FORTH AS MISSIONARY DISCIPLES

We believe that the Lord will prosper our efforts to manifest His kingdom as we share the joy of Christ, living in the Spirit of authentic holiness. We are confident in the future, knowing that Jesus offers us—His faithful disciples—the grace-filled gift of unfailing hope!

This confidence is what compels us to “go forth” as missionary disciples out to the margins, journeying together with all who need God’s healing mercy and saving love. We are a Eucharistic community, a people gathered by Christ, formed in faith by the Word of God, united in communion with Christ and one another, and then sent out on mission to preach, to heal, to prophesy, and to console God’s people here in our diverse regions of central and southern Indiana and beyond.

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[M]issionary disciples are called, formed through personal encounter with Jesus Christ, and sent out to proclaim the Gospel and minister to the needs of all God's people...

— Most Rev. Charles C. Thompson

A PASTORAL CHARGE TO DEVELOP VIBRANT PARISHES

As a Local Church, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis engages in many ministries, and provides diverse programs and services that are designed to meet the spiritual, educational, social, and temporal needs of God's people. The most prominent and far-reaching of these ministries are provided by our 125 parishes located throughout 38 counties in central and southern Indiana. That's why the primary focus of our new pastoral plan is to develop *vibrant parishes* within which missionary disciples are called, formed through a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, and sent out to proclaim the Gospel and minister to the needs of all God's people through Word, Sacrament and service.

What is a vibrant parish? There are different ways that this question can be answered. Here is how the 2020 Vatican document titled “The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelizing mission of the Church” responds to this question using the words of three recent popes:

Saint John Paul II specified that: “Whilst the Parish is perfected and integrated in a variety of forms, it nevertheless remains an indispensable organism of primary importance in the visible structure of the Church whereby evangelization is the cornerstone of all pastoral action, the demands of which are primary, preeminent and preferential.” Subsequently, Benedict XVI taught, “the parish is a beacon that radiates the light of the faith and thus responds to the deepest and truest desires of the human heart, giving meaning and hope to the lives of individuals and families.” Lastly, Pope Francis recalled how “the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers.” (#12)

Evangelization—sharing our faith in the person of Jesus Christ—is the key to vibrant parishes and, indeed, to the vitality of the Church as it is lived concretely, day-in and day-out, in our 38 counties of southern and central Indiana. If we truly are “Spirit-filled Evangelizers,” the term favored by Pope Francis especially in his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), our parishes, schools, and archdiocesan ministries will be “Alive in Christ,” vibrant centers of worship, formation in faith, pastoral care, outreach to the poor and vulnerable, and responsible stewardship of all God's gifts.

The pastoral planning committee appointed to lead the synodal process of prayer, attentive listening, and co-responsible leadership that has taken place during the past two years paid careful attention to the importance of evangelization for the current vitality and future spiritual health of our archdiocese. The committee read and discussed significant Church documents, including *Evangelii Gaudium*. They listened carefully as Catholics in diverse regions of our archdiocese gathered to share their experiences and hopes for the future. And they allowed themselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit in giving shape and direction to our new pastoral plan.

The concrete answers that our planning process has given to questions about vibrancy and the importance of evangelization can be found in the five “domains” that guide our efforts to carry out the mission of this Local Church. We recognize the following as key elements in the make-up of parishes, schools, and archdiocesan ministries that are Alive in Christ:

DOMAIN 1
PARISH LIFE
& WORSHIP

Encounter the person of Jesus Christ.

We do this through prayer and meditation on God’s Word, in the celebration of the Sacraments (especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation), by serving the needs of all God’s people, and by giving witness to Jesus in all aspects of our daily lives.

DOMAIN 2
EVANGELIZING
CATECHESIS

Teach as Jesus did.

We do this by forming missionary disciples who will “go forth” in joy and hope to introduce Jesus to others. Ongoing faith formation usually begins in the home, but there is a need for an additional emphasis on adult instruction. We recognize that a personal encounter with Jesus helps deepen the experience and effectiveness of catechesis.

DOMAIN 3
STEWARDSHIP

Foster a culture of joyful and intentional stewardship.

Such a culture is rooted in gratitude, where every act of generosity reflects the joy of the Gospel and honors Christ in the poor, the vulnerable, and the forgotten – recognizing that in serving the least among us, we serve Jesus himself.

DOMAIN 4
VOCATIONS

Respond to the universal call to holiness.

Among these are the particular calls to ordained ministry, consecrated life, marriage and lay leadership. In Jesus’s name, we seek to provide for the spiritual and temporal needs of all who exercise pastoral leadership in our archdiocese, especially our clergy and parish leaders. We commit to providing pastoral support for married couples and families through our parish and archdiocesan ministries while not overlooking those who answer God’s call as single persons.

DOMAIN 5
OUTREACH
& MINISTRY

Implement Catholic social teaching.

We affirm Church teaching on the fundamental dignity of every person by caring for the needs of all our sisters and brothers as diverse but unified members of the Mystical Body of Christ. We affirm our Church’s teaching that the family is the fundamental social unit.



No two parishes will carry out the activities described in these five domain areas in exactly the same ways, but in order to be considered “vibrant” every parish – regardless of its size, geographic location, ethnic, economic, or cultural background – must reflect what the Vatican instruction referenced above calls “a spiritual dynamic of evangelization.” If not, regardless of its circumstances, the parish “runs the risk of becoming self-referential and fossilized, offering experiences that are devoid of evangelical flavor and missionary drive, of interest only to small groups.” (#17)

We drafted the new pastoral plan around these five Domain areas because, based on the broad consultation and prayerful discernment we have done, we believe that our archdiocese, and each of our parishes, must reflect these essential characteristics in significant ways in order to be considered “vibrant.” With this in mind, every parish in our archdiocese, and all of our archdiocesan ministries, will be expected to participate in the Implementation Phase of our planning process and to assess their strengths and weaknesses in each of the five Domain areas.

I am deeply grateful to the members of the planning committee, but also to the nearly 1,000 others who participated in subcommittee meetings, attended Listening Sessions, completed the online survey, and provided feedback and advice. Together, we prayed, reflected, and sought to discern God’s will for our archdiocese. The result is a plan that is designed to set direction for all the ministries of this Local Church for the next five years (2026–2031).

DOMAINS 1-5

A FRAMEWORK FOR PASTORAL PLANNING

The five Domain areas provide a framework for the action plans that are designed to help us carry out the Church’s mission here and now. Each of the Domain areas includes a series of Goals with corresponding Objectives. Detailed Action Steps and Accountability will be assigned to each of the plan’s Objectives during the Implementation Phase of this process, which will begin in January 2026.

Encounter the person of Jesus Christ.

DOMAIN 1 | PARISH LIFE AND WORSHIP

The Goals and Objectives in our first Domain area seek to strengthen the personal encounter with our Lord Jesus Christ that is at the heart of Christian prayer and worship. Our parish communities are places wherein the relationship between worship, Eucharistic Adoration, and the lived experience of faith through service should be fully alive in Christ. Strong parish communities facilitate healing, reconciliation, and charity in order to repair the divisions among us and strengthen our unity as Missionary Disciples of Jesus Christ.

Teach as Jesus did.

DOMAIN 2 | EVANGELIZING CATECHESIS

Our second Domain area calls attention to the fundamental role that evangelization and catechesis play in ecclesial ministry, especially at the parish level. We do not teach in a vacuum. Rather, we seek first to introduce our sisters and brothers to the person of Jesus Christ and to embrace our identity as His Missionary Disciples through a deeper understanding of His call, a more profound awareness of His presence among us, and a confident witness to our faith in Him. As a result of our encounters with Jesus in Word, Sacrament, and service, we seek to fulfill the Lord’s Great Commission to “go out to the whole world and baptize all nations” in the name of the Holy Trinity (cf. Mt 28:19).

Foster a culture of joyful and intentional stewardship.

DOMAIN 3 | STEWARDSHIP

Joyful and intentional stewardship rooted in gratitude and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, as the foundation for discipleship, is the dominant theme of our pastoral plan's third Domain area. Always with the intention of creating and renewing Missionary Disciples, we wish to grow in our understanding of the spiritual and material gifts that are present in our parishes and archdiocesan ministries. We want our administrative and pastoral services to reflect "best practices" for achieving unity and for developing the parish and archdiocesan resources required to serve the needs of others, especially the least among us. We believe that responsible stewardship of all our resources is not an optional, or secondary, dimension of Christian life, but is essential to our self-understanding as Missionary Disciples (cf. *Laudato Si'* On Care for our Common Home).

Respond to the universal call to holiness.

DOMAIN 4 | VOCATIONS

The universal call to holiness grounds our fourth Domain area in an understanding of the importance of Vocation, the unique call that every Baptized person receives to use her or his unique gifts, talents, and capabilities to serve the Lord and carry out His work in the world. Because today there are many distractions that prevent us from listening to God's voice and discerning His will for us, we want to create strategies and resources for formation in discernment to enable young people to learn how to listen and follow the movements of

the Holy Spirit that lead them to answer the universal call to holiness through marriage, the single life, ordained ministry, consecrated life, or professional lay ministry. Similarly, we want to make sure that clergy and other parish ministers receive the support and assistance they deserve to meet their ongoing spiritual and temporal needs.

Implement Catholic social teaching.

DOMAIN 5 | OUTREACH & MINISTRY

The Catholic Church is blessed with a rich understanding of Christian anthropology that affirms the fundamental dignity of every person. Catholic Social Teaching provides concrete direction for responding to the needs of all people, especially those who are poor, vulnerable, and oppressed in any way. The fifth and final Domain of our pastoral plan seeks to increase the number of Catholics in central and southern Indiana who can participate actively in the Church's social ministry. With this in mind, we want to develop a network of people and resources that will connect parishes and deaneries. We also seek to increase awareness and understanding of God's call to build His kingdom through the principles and practices outlined in Catholic Social Teaching. One of our most important Goals is to create a culture of invitation and belonging for all ages, backgrounds and abilities by establishing welcoming ministries within each parish and the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center that focus on creating welcoming, caring and connected communities. Finally, we plan to develop age-related activities to promote service with ties to Mass participation and companionship.





CONCLUSION

As we conclude this two-year process of prayer, attentive listening, and collaborative planning, we entrust the next phase of this initiative—Implementation—to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to our archdiocesan patrons, Saint Francis Xavier and Saint Mother Theodore Guérin. The Implementation of this new pastoral plan will take place in every parish, school, and archdiocesan ministry in our archdiocese. It will challenge all of us to make the Church in central and southern Indiana more fully Alive in Christ by strengthening our prayer and worship, by encountering the person of Christ, by being joyful stewards of God's gifts, by discerning the Lord's call in our lives, and by reaching out to others and welcoming strangers in Jesus's name.

Our Holy Father Pope Leo XIV reminds us that "to hope is to bear witness that the Earth can truly resemble heaven." May the Blessed Hope we await in a special way during this Advent season come to us now, as always, in the fullness of faith, hope and love. And may we welcome Him with great joy as we eagerly carry out His will for this Local Church.

+ Charles C. Thompson

Given in Indianapolis at the Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara Catholic Center on December 3rd in the year of Our Lord 2025, the memorial of St. Frances Xavier.

The Most Reverend Charles C. Thompson, D.D., J.C.L.
Archbishop of Indianapolis



Our Inspiration

MARY, THE FIRST MISSIONARY DISCIPLE

These reflections on the mission of the Church as it is lived here in central and southern Indiana naturally lead us to the Blessed Virgin Mary, who inspires and guides us as we seek to proclaim the Gospel of Joy and to live her Son's mission of mercy, hope and salvation. Mary was the first missionary disciple. Her entire life was dedicated to fulfilling the promise she made when the Archangel Gabriel shared with her the unique vocation she had been given by God the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit.



Mary's "yes," in her lifelong commitment to accompany her Son, is the model we strive to follow as an archdiocese. Her closeness to Jesus encourages us to draw nearer to him through her. Her fidelity to Jesus's teaching and example makes Mary the perfect image of the Church—truly the Mother of Mercy, Mother of Holy Hope and Mother of our Savior.

As Pope Francis reminded us in his Letter of Introduction for the 2025 Jubilee Year:

Hope finds its supreme witness in the Mother of God. In the Blessed Virgin, we see that hope is not naive optimism but a gift of grace amid the realities of life....

At the foot of the cross, she witnessed the passion and death of Jesus, her innocent son. Overwhelmed with grief, she nonetheless renewed her "fiat," never abandoning her hope and trust in God. In this way, Mary cooperated for our sake in the fulfillment of all that her Son had foretold in announcing that he would have to "undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again" (Mk 8:31).

In the travail of that sorrow, offered in love, Mary became our Mother, the Mother of Hope. (Spes non confundit, #24).

Mary is found at the heart of every vibrant parish and archdiocesan ministry. She is the one who leads us to her Divine Son through prayer and the Sacraments. She facilitates the encounter with Jesus that is the true purpose of "evangelizing catechesis." Mary shows us how to answer the Lord's call to use our unique gifts to love and serve Jesus in and through others. Our Mother Mary accompanies us in our efforts to reach out to others. She shows us how to welcome strangers and carry out the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.





By the Numbers

IN FAITH AND GRATITUDE

13,757.7 SQ MILES
current size of the
Archdiocese of Indianapolis



125
PARISHES



**17th LARGEST DIOCESAN
CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM**

69 SCHOOLS

OVER 23,000 STUDENTS
(PreK-12)

APPOINTED JUNE 13, 2017, BY POPE FRANCIS

ARCHBISHOP CHARLES C. THOMPSON is our 7th archbishop

Over **110,000**
people were served by
Catholic Charities
across the archdiocese



The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has
6 agencies and **2 charitable**
outreach ministries that provide
48 distinct services

EST.



United Catholic Appeal has raised
over **\$5.7M** from over 10,000
donors—funding teaching, serving and
shepherding across the archdiocese



OVER 25
SEMINARIANS are currently
studying for the priesthood

The Plan

GO FORTH IN JOY AND HOPE AS MISSIONARY DISCIPLES!

VISION

Rooted in the joy and hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we, the Church in central and southern Indiana, are resolute in prayer and purpose, outward-looking, and unified in mission. Together, we form missionary disciples who grow in faith, share Christ's love, and serve all people. Through vibrant worship, lifelong faith formation, compassionate outreach, strong pastoral leadership, and faithful stewardship, we continue to build a united, Spirit-led Church that responds to the needs of our time and proclaims the Good News to the world.

As baptized Catholics and children of God, we are called to follow Jesus Christ as missionary disciples and pilgrims of hope. We accept the invitation to proclaim the Gospel joyfully and to minister to all our sisters and brothers in Jesus's name as co-responsible witnesses. As one Body of Christ we prayerfully discern God's will for our Local Church through attentive listening to the Word of God, prayerful celebration of the Sacraments, ministry to the spiritual and temporal needs of others, and respectful dialogue with one another and with all members of God's family. We look forward in hope to a future that is rooted in the Gospel and Tradition that responds faithfully to the changing circumstances of our time.

PASTORAL CHARGE

Let us develop *vibrant parishes* within which missionary disciples are called, formed through a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, and sent out to proclaim the Gospel and minister to the needs of all God's people through word, sacrament and service.

MISSION DIRECTIVE

Let us go as missionary disciples out to the margins, journeying together with all who need God's healing mercy and saving love. In the words of Pope Leo XIV:

Christian love breaks down every barrier, brings close those who were distant, unites strangers, and reconciles enemies. It spans chasms that are humanly impossible to bridge, and it penetrates to the most hidden crevices of society. By its very nature, Christian love is prophetic: it works miracles and knows no limits. It makes what was apparently impossible happen. Love is above all a way of looking at life and a way of living it. A Church that sets no limits to love, that knows no enemies to fight but only men and women to love, is the Church that the world needs today. (Apostolic Exhortation Dilexi Te, #120.)

The Lord will prosper our efforts to manifest His kingdom as we share the joy of Christ, living in the Spirit of authentic holiness. We are confident in the future, knowing that Jesus offers His disciples in southern and central Indiana the grace-filled gift of unending hope!



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Hope is to bear witness that the Earth can truly resemble heaven.

— Pope Leo XIV

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

DOMAIN 1 | PARISH LIFE AND WORSHIP

Encounter the person of Jesus Christ.

GOAL 1: Enliven our encounter with Jesus Christ, the Word Made Flesh.

Objective 1.1: Explore the need for additional support for prayer and worship at the parish level.

Objective 1.2: Develop the relationship between worship, Eucharistic Adoration, and the lived experience of faith through service.

GOAL 2: Deepen our communion as the many members of the one Body of Christ bound to God and one another through public worship, especially the celebration of the Holy Eucharist (cf. 1. Cor 12:20).

Objective 2.1: Identify and assess best practices in building strong parish communities.

Objective 2.2: Facilitate healing, reconciliation and charity to repair division and strengthen communities.

DOMAIN 2 | EVANGELIZING CATECHESIS

Teach as Jesus did.

GOAL 3: Embrace our identity as missionary disciples of Jesus through understanding of His call and assurance of His presence.

Objective 3.1: Create a shared understanding of key phrases and concepts such as evangelizing, missionary discipleship and related terms.

Objective 3.2: Strengthen evangelization ministry by holding activities that foster confidence among the faithful to witness to their faith in Jesus.

GOAL 4: Go forth as missionary disciples of Jesus by facilitating personal encounters with Him and providing resources to help fulfill The Great Commission, a command from Jesus Christ for his followers to make disciples of all nations.

Objective 4.1: Provide opportunities to both share and receive the witness of fellow disciples, instilling a sense of belonging and increasing confidence.

Objective 4.2: Enable and empower witness through visible events and artifacts.

DOMAIN 3 | STEWARDSHIP

Foster a culture of joyful and intentional stewardship.

GOAL 5: Inspire joyful and intentional stewardship rooted in gratitude and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, as the foundation for discipleship.

Objective 5.1: Study the physical and spiritual gifts of our parishes, ministries, archdiocesan committees and archdiocesan offices through the lens of creating missionary disciples in our communities.

Objective 5.2: Review study findings and create appropriate recommendations, guidelines, support networks and best practices to facilitate administrative and pastoral care.

GOAL 6: Unite the faith community of central and southern Indiana in organized efforts to grow the resources required to strengthen parishes and the archdiocese serving the least among us.

Objective 6.1: Conduct or update a feasibility study in support of increasing resources so that, when paired with existing study findings, archdiocesan and parish stewardship goals may be realized.

GOAL 7: Serve as protectors (stewards) of God's handiwork recognized as "essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or secondary aspect of our Christian experience." (cf. Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'* On Care for Our Common Home and his Apostolic Exhortation *Laudate Deum* On the Climate Crisis)

Objective 7.1: Create programs that call everyone to prayer and action in the stewardship of the natural resources with which God has blessed us.

DOMAIN 4 | VOCATIONS

Respond to the universal call to holiness.

GOAL 8: Encourage the discernment of vocations (clergy, religious and lay) in Jesus's name.

Objective 8.1: Create strategies and resources for formation in discernment to enable young people to learn how to listen and follow the movements of the Holy Spirit that lead them to answer calls to marriage, ordained ministry, consecrated life or professional lay ministry.

GOAL 9: Provide for the spiritual, temporal and formational development of our clergy, religious, and parish ministers.

Objective 9.1: Assess current administrative structures and policies to identify areas for reconsideration and further action.

DOMAIN 5 | OUTREACH & MINISTRY

Implement Catholic social teaching.

GOAL 10: Increase participation in serving the most needy and vulnerable of our world.

Objective 10.1: Develop a network of people and resources by connecting parishes and deaneries in support of the Church's social ministries.

Objective 10.2: Increase awareness and understanding of God's call to build His kingdom through service and education of Catholic Social Teaching.

GOAL 11: Create a culture of invitation and belonging for all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

Objective 11.1: Establish welcoming ministries within each parish and the Catholic Center that focus on creating welcoming, caring and connected communities.

Objective 11.2: Develop age-related activities to promote service with ties to Mass participation and companionship.



Suggested Action Steps

The following Action Steps are suggested as guidelines for parish and archdiocesan leaders as they seek to implement the Goals and Objectives contained in this pastoral plan. It is understood that the diversity that exists in our parishes and archdiocesan ministries will require different approaches. Specific strategies for implementation will be discussed during the Implementation Phase of the pastoral planning process.

DOMAIN 1 | PARISH LIFE AND WORSHIP

Encounter the person of Jesus Christ.

GOAL 1/OBJECTIVE 1.1

Action Step 1: Using practical resources, provide formation opportunities on prayer and worship. Include the celebration of Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours, popular piety, devotion, etc. Empower parents, grandparents, godparents, priests, deacons, altar servers, acolytes, school teachers, coaches and other role models. Help them form and inspire others to discover the treasures of our personal and communal prayer through their personal witness.

Action Step 2: Strengthen and cultivate liturgical music throughout the archdiocese. Focus on elevating participation in liturgical music while recruiting and training new ministers/musicians through formation in liturgical theology and through an offering that is accessible and attractive.

GOAL 1/OBJECTIVE 1.2

Action Step: Cultivate opportunities for parishioners to animate their faith through activities designed to encounter and serve those who are on the margins “so that we may all become an image of Christ and his mercy toward the weakest.” (Cf. Apostolic Exhortation *Dilexi Te* “On Love for the Poor.” by Pope Leo XIV and Lk 14:12-14.)

GOAL 2/OBJECTIVE 2.1

Action Step: Generate a practical guide or menu of best practices for building/sustaining community and connectedness in parishes. Focus on the importance of hospitality (for example, the function of sharing food/meals together.)

GOAL 2/OBJECTIVE 2.2

Action Step: Cultivate skills, develop resources and promote encounters that will enable parish and archdiocesan leaders to prioritize relationships and foster empathy, depolarization and solidarity among the faithful to emphasize the idea of becoming a listening Church as a path toward unity.

DOMAIN 2 | EVANGELIZING CATECHESIS

Teach as Jesus did.

GOAL 3/OBJECTIVE 3.1

Action Step: Help the faithful understand and appreciate “evangelization,” “missionary discipleship” and related terms. Develop new communications resources for parish use.

GOAL 3/OBJECTIVE 3.2

Action Step 1: Encourage each parish to develop an Evangelization Plan with small group ministry. Parish plans should be flexible given the diversity that exists among parishes.

Action Step 2: Publish a comprehensive list of all parish adult faith formation ministries—making sure to acknowledge various groups, movements and apostolates focusing on adult evangelization and catechesis, including support of the Domestic Church.

GOAL 4/OBJECTIVE 4.1

Action Step: Encourage all parishes and schools to start or continue small group ministry, with guidance from appropriate offices; this includes providing and/or recommending specific resources.

GOAL 4/OBJECTIVE 4.2

Action Step 1: Establish endowment funds for equipment to be used in processions as well as for electronic message boards, high-profile statues and additional works of art.

Action Step 2: Provide training and information to help the faithful engage in faith-related conversations when observers of public witness express curiosity, ask questions or otherwise make inquiries about our Catholic faith.

DOMAIN 3 | STEWARDSHIP

Foster a culture of joyful and intentional stewardship.

GOAL 5/OBJECTIVE 5.1

Action Step 1: Appoint a Steering Committee comprised of clergy, staff and laity to identify key performance indicators and charism guidelines for Thriving Parishes.

Action Step 2: Conduct a study of archdiocesan parishes to identify opportunities for growth, and challenges to overcome, in improving the vitality of parish communities.

Action Step 3: Review results of the study of parishes and define actions needed to assist parishes in overcoming challenges while presenting opportunities to build Thriving Parishes.

GOAL 5/OBJECTIVE 5.2

Action Step 1: Identify best practices for Thriving Parishes, centering on creating a welcoming encounter, joyful witness, service, evangelization and ongoing dialogue.

Action Step 2: Attract talent to serve in parishes, schools and ministries through archdiocesan benchmarks on tuition increases, staff salary scales, organization structure, mentorship, HR policies and appropriate staff training, development best practices and finance best practices.

Action Step 3: Consider new business models to serve parishes and archdiocesan ministries in recruiting and attracting talent and shared services. Enhance and coordinate communication plans to existing Catholic audiences and new audiences using websites and other media sources.

GOAL 6/OBJECTIVE 6.1

Action Step 1: Conduct a study of the overall funding needs of parishes and archdiocesan ministries.

Action Step 2: Involve parish and archdiocesan leaders in identifying financial needs and developing strategies for addressing them.

Action Step 3: Develop a case statement that outlines the priority funding needs of parishes and the archdiocese. Develop and implement strategies for meeting these needs.

GOAL 7/OBJECTIVE 7.1

Action Step 1: Provide resources to facilitate prayer and action for the stewardship of Creation.

Action Step 2: Encourage parishes to discuss how to be responsible stewards of all God's creation using Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si'* and his Apostolic Exhortation *Laudate Deum* as platforms for action.

DOMAIN 4 | VOCATIONS

Respond to the universal call to holiness.

GOAL 8/OBJECTIVE 8.1

Action Step 1: Develop a tool to assess parish efforts in the area of marriage, consecrated life, priesthood and laity vocational discernment.

Action Step 2: Review the archdiocesan marriage preparation process in light of the Marriage Catechumenate, with special attention to discernment of marriage as a vocation at the dating stage, and accompaniment of newly married couples into family ministry.

Action Step 3: Support the emergence and growth of apostolic movements directed toward the renewal of laity, family life and ministerial priesthood.

GOAL 9/OBJECTIVE 9.1

Action Step 1: Develop and implement ongoing formation programs for clergy, lay leadership, and families in parishes and schools to assist them in their mission to inspire priestly, religious and lay ministry vocations.

Action Step 2: Partner with institutions of Catholic higher education to provide programmatic support of ongoing formation of pastoral leaders.

Action Step 3: Assess the current deanery structure in light of clergy personnel and the need for further lay leadership.

Action Step 4: Identify opportunities and create guidelines for lay and clergy sabbaticals.

Action Step 5: Examine the temporal needs of lay leadership throughout the archdiocese and implement just compensation to fill these needs.

DOMAIN 5 | OUTREACH & MINISTRY ***Implement Catholic social teaching.***

GOAL 10/OBJECTIVE 10.

Action Step 1: Create a parish engagement matrix as a resource for both parishes and the archdiocese to track data on all parishes regarding social services and outreach.

Action Step 2: Recruit 3-5 parishes/deaneries and train pilot advocates for parish engagement.

Action Step 3: Increase the infrastructure/support system for parish social ministries as the need and parishioner involvement increases. Offer feedback opportunities, share best practices, provide a toolkit with a how-to guide for beginning parishes, and increase the connection between parishes via regular communication, identification of ways to serve, and coordination of events/activities/service projects.

Action Step 4: Hold annual “Catholic Social Teaching (CST) in Action” service events in different deaneries.

GOAL 10/OBJECTIVE 10.2

Action Step 1: Expand presentations and workshops relating to Catholic Social Teaching (CST), particularly around the three theological virtues, the four principles of CST, and the seven themes of CST.

Action Step 2: Create a digital marketing campaign to increase public awareness around Catholic Social Teaching and highlight the ways local Catholic agencies are meeting the need through stories and testimonials.

Action Step 3: Create experiential events utilizing the network and deanery service events to enable people to connect CST principles and themes to actual service.

GOAL 11/OBJECTIVE 11.1

Action Step 1: Research and draft a welcoming ministry set of directives. Pilot the directives in 3-5 parishes.

Action Step 2: Roll out the welcoming ministry across the archdiocese, providing feedback opportunities, sharing best practices, and creating a toolkit with a how-to guide for beginning parishes.

GOAL 11/OBJECTIVE 11.2

Action Step 1: Engage youth/young adults to create a service passport (a special document to record works of service, as you would travel). Pilot the passport among a small number of youth groups.

Action Step 2: Expand passport program across the archdiocese through communications and materials support.

Action Step 3: Hold an annual service passport Mass with the archbishop, who will offer his final stamp of approval on the completed passports.



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MAP

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