Filling the Jars to the Brim

A Pastoral Plan for the Archdiocese of Toronto 2026 to 2033



Quis ut deus

Filling the Jars to the Brim

A Pastoral Plan for the Archdiocese of Toronto
2026 to 2033

Archdiocese *of* Toronto

www.archtoronto.org/pastoralplan

Letter of Introduction by His Eminence Frank Cardinal Leo – Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto



"Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him."

(John 2:11)

My dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,
May Jesus and Mary be in your souls.

With gratitude and great hope, I present to you our new Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan, *Filling the Jars to the Brim*. This plan invites each one of us to deepen our loving relationship with our Saviour Jesus Christ and to renew our commitment to the faith, life and mission of the Church throughout the Archdiocese of Toronto. The overarching purpose of it is to identify several key priorities which will inspire us and focus the energies, the attention, heart and evangelizing efforts of the whole archdiocese. It is our response to the call of the Resurrected Jesus: "Go out and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28: 19–20) so that the Good News will take root in the life of the Church and by consequence in society at large in a fuller, more authentic, engaged and attritive way.

I believe that you will find that the Pastoral Plan affirms much of what is already being accomplished in our parishes and various communities: families, schools, universities, seminaries, religious houses, ecclesial movements, associations and new communities, healthcare and social agencies.

The theme of our plan draws inspiration from the **Wedding Feast at Cana** as reported in the Gospel of John (2:1-11). When the wine ran out, Mother Mary brought the need to her Son and instructed the servants: "Do whatever he tells you." At Jesus' direction, they filled six stone jars with water, filling them to the brim. What they offered, Christ transformed. This encounter underscores a profound mystery and truth into which we are to enter and live: all our efforts and human cooperation with grace, offered generously and faithfully, with trust and humility, are transformed and become fruitful through the incredible power of Christ's life-giving grace.

As we look forward and embark along this seven-year journey, through the six priorities or jars we are establishing a clear emphasis for a profound renewal of the faith and a proclamation of the Gospel with great zeal, vigour, enthusiasm and generosity. By committing ourselves to these six priorities, together as an archdiocesan family, a family of families, a community of communities, we pledge to do our part with the help of the Lord who is our light, guide, inspiration and the fulfillment of every desire of the human heart.

Our pastoral plan has grown out of prayer, listening and discernment. Thousands of Catholics across the archdiocese participated in the initial consultation, sharing their hopes, concerns and experiences. I am grateful to everyone who contributed in one way or another: clergy, laity and consecrated persons. Your voices have helped shape this seven-year journey, from 2026 to 2033, and the six pastoral priorities that will guide our pastoral witnessing together.

We are being called to strengthen family life as the foundation for a living faith and apostolic mission; to allow that faith to move us outward in service to those who are poor, sick, and vulnerable; to draw renewed strength from prayer and the sacraments; to deepen our personal knowledge and understanding of Christ and his teaching; to discern the vocations and gifts through which each person is called to holiness and to service; and to accompany youth and young adults as they grow in discipleship, transmitting and carrying the faith forward so that the life and mission of the Church may be renewed from generation to generation.

These six pastoral priorities – symbolized by the six Cana jars - are closely inter-connected. Together, they express our desire that individuals and families, parishes, schools, social agencies and other Catholic communities will experience a life-changing

encounter with the risen and living Christ, and be blessed with a true sense of belonging to him and to his Church so to respond resolutely to his call to journey in holiness of life and serve others as he did and out of love for him.

The first year will be devoted especially to listening, discernment and assessment through pastoral councils at the archdiocesan and parish levels, in a spirit of authentic synodality. This will help us recognize the gifts and graces already present among us, alongside the needs that call for renewed attention. In each of the subsequent six years, we will give particular attention to one pastoral priority – one jar - while continuing to nurture them all.

I invite you to read this pastoral plan prayerfully, perhaps even with others or in community and consider how you can do your part for its implementation. Clergy, consecrated persons and lay faithful each have a vital role to play for we are a family. Through our prayer, participation and service, we can work collectively to bring these shared commitments to life in our different communities. We desire this pastoral plan to be our human effort so that the fruits of the Spirit (charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity) may be produced in abundance and made manifest by the Holy Spirit. It involves a wide-spread transformation, it is about building the Kingdom of God, it is aimed at discipleship and evangelization.

Above all, I ask you to pray for the fruitfulness of this journey. It is imperative that we continue to listen attentively to the voice of the Holy Spirit and to one another, respond generously to the Lord's call and inspirations, trusting that he will accomplish more than we could achieve through our efforts alone. We are indeed God's Beloved: known and loved, chosen and called, equipped and sent into the world, into our world, here and now, as missionary disciples bearing and sharing the greatest message ever known to humankind. We are all invited to proclaim Jesus, each in our own way and depending on our vocation, charisms and circumstances. The Holy Spirit is our constant inspiration and companion who touches hearts and opens the doors for authentic witnessing and evangelization. We have a unique grace and opportunity with this pastoral plan to reach out to our contemporaries, to our culture, to each person and institution, and witness to them the saving truths of the Gospel of Jesus. And in this way and through this gift, afford each person in our entourage and others, the grace to encounter anew – or perhaps for the first time – the One who is our way, our truth and our life (Jn 14:6).

Our Lady's presence and action at Cana is a paradigm for our lives, our journey of faith and the unfolding of our pastoral plan. We should never forget or minimize the gift she is to the Church. At Cana, the Lord Jesus worked the transformation that was needed largely thanks to Mother Mary's loving **presence** (we need to invite her into our lives, communities and pastoral plan), her unwavering **faith/trust** in her Son, her intuitive **gaze** of her surroundings, her **attentiveness** to the needs of others with the heart of a mother, and her bold yet humble **intervention** and powerful **intercession**. She is our helper, the one who brings us to Christ and the one who facilitates, mediates and accompanies the transformation of our hearts, lives and communities.

May Our Lady of Cana's words "Do whatever he tells you" keep on resounding in the depths of our souls. Together, let us fill the jars to the brim and entrust this transformative journey to her Son our Lord Jesus.

Sincerely yours in Jesus with Mary,



Frank Cardinal Leo
Metropolitan Archbishop of Toronto

Table of Contents

Letter of Introduction by His Eminence, Frank Cardinal Leo 4

Introduction 9

Year 1 — Pastoral Councils and Assesment 13

Year 2 — Jar One: Family Life at All Stages 25

Year 3 — Jar Two: Social Outreach to the Poor, Sick, and Vulnerable 37

Year 4 — Jar Three: Prayer, Spirituality, and Sacramental Life 47

Year 5 — Jar Four: Catechesis and Formation 57

Year 6 — Jar Five: Vocations and Charisms: Discernment and Promotion 67

Year 7 — Jar Six: Youth and Young Adults 79

Conclusion 89



ILLUSTRATION BY GISELE BAUCHE

Introduction

In the Gospel of John's account of the wedding feast at Cana, a quiet need arises: "They have no wine"[1]. What appears at first to be a practical concern becomes the occasion for our Lord's first public miracle. At the request of Mary, his Mother, and through the cooperation of ordinary servants, water is transformed into wine, his glory is revealed, and his disciples believed in him[2].

The Lord's instruction is striking in its simplicity: "Fill the jars with water"[3]. The servants respond generously, filling them "to the brim"[4]. Only then does Jesus accomplish what they could never achieve on their own, or even imagen.

This Gospel scene offers more than the account of a miracle. It provides a pattern for the life and mission of the Church and our archdiocese.

In every generation, the Lord continues to call his people to cooperate with his grace. We are invited to recognize the needs of the present moment, to listen attentively to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and to offer generously what we have received.

The transformation belongs to Christ; the faithful task of filling the jars belongs to us. This pastoral plan emerges from that conviction.

A pastoral plan is not primarily a strategic document, a collection of programs, or a list of administrative objectives. At its deepest level, it is an act of ecclesial discernment. It seeks to identify where the Lord is calling us at this moment in history and to provide a common framework through which clergy, consecrated persons, lay faithful, families, parishes, schools, ministries, ecclesial movements, and apostolates, can move forward together in mission[5].

Such discernment must ultimately lead to pastoral conversion. The Church's renewal is not undertaken for the sake of change itself, nor can it be measured simply by the preservation of existing structures and activities. As the Instruction *The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community in the Service of the Evangelizing Mission of the Church* reminds us, authentic pastoral renewal is fundamentally missionary: it seeks to ensure that the Church's structures, habits, priorities, resources, and ways of working remain at the service of encounter with Christ and the proclamation of the Gospel[6].

This requires both fidelity and courage. We honour the faith, sacrifices, traditions, and pastoral achievements that have shaped our communities, while remaining willing to discern what the Holy Spirit is asking of the Church today. Structures and pastoral practices serve their purpose when they are animated by genuine evangelical life and help people encounter Christ, grow in communion, and participate in his mission. Pastoral conversion therefore means allowing every dimension of ecclesial life to be continually renewed and directed toward the mission Christ has entrusted to his Church.

A Journey of Consultation and Discernment

It was in this spirit of ecclesial discernment that the journey toward this pastoral plan began. Building upon the longstanding pastoral mission of the Archdiocese of Toronto and attentive to the movement of the Holy Spirit and the changing realities of the communities the archdiocese serves, Archbishop Frank Leo initiated a process in October 2023 to invite the faithful of the archdiocese to reflect upon the priorities and concerns that should shape the life and mission of the local Church in the years ahead.

This consultation was foreshadowed in his installation homily of 25 March 2023:

I will listen to you. From you, I would like to learn about our community of faith — about its history, its rich diversity, the changing trends, the new challenges before us and together we shall discern the signs of the times[7].

The consultation asked participants not only to identify the most pressing pastoral priorities, but also to consider how these priorities might be addressed at the parish, archdiocesan, and institutional levels.

The response was significant. Some 3,450 people participated in the initial consultation, representing the breadth of the archdiocesan community. The great majority were lay faithful, while priests, permanent deacons, seminarians, and women and men in consecrated life also contributed their perspectives. The consultation provided an important opportunity to listen to those who live, serve, worship, and exercise ministry throughout the Archdiocese of Toronto, as well as those who encounter the Church through its many pastoral, educational, charitable, and social ministries. An attempt was also made to reach out to those who, for various reasons, have become distant from the life of the Church.

From this extensive consultation, thirteen pastoral priorities emerged. Among them were: Catholic identity, parishioner involvement, prayer and sacramental life, liturgy, hospitality, evangelization, priestly support, social outreach to the community, youth, catechesis and formation, engagement with the culture, family, and vocations. A subsequent consultation involving 216 priests from across the archdiocese provided a further opportunity to test and deepen these emerging priorities from the perspective of parish pastoral leadership.

The task, however, was not simply to produce an itemized list. The thirteen priorities reflected a wide range of hopes, needs, and pastoral realities expressed through the consultation. The next step was to consider prayerfully how these recurring themes related to one another and what they revealed about the pastoral needs and opportunities before the archdiocese. Through this process, the many concerns that had been heard were brought together within a coherent pastoral vision, and the thirteen priorities were distilled into six principal areas of pastoral focus.

As these priorities were being considered together, the account of the Wedding Feast at Cana emerged as the biblical vision capable of expressing both their unity and the pastoral journey to which the archdiocese was being called. Cana offered more than a theme for the plan; it provided a lens through which to discern how the Lord continues to work in our midst. The six stone jars became an image of six interconnected dimensions of ecclesial life that the archdiocese is called to fill faithfully, trusting that Christ alone brings about the transformation.

With the six priorities identified and the pastoral vision of Cana established, Cardinal Leo formed an advisory committee in 2025 composed of lay faithful, consecrated persons, priests, and deacons. The committee was entrusted with considering how this emerging vision and its priorities might be expressed, integrated, and implemented into a pastoral plan capable of guiding the archdiocese in the years ahead.

A smaller committee was subsequently entrusted with reviewing the recommendations of the advisory committee and developing them into a more integrated pastoral framework. As the work progressed, consultation continued with archdiocesan pastoral offices and a select number of pastors so that the emerging plan could be informed by the experience of those directly engaged in pastoral ministry.

Through this process, the six priorities were ultimately articulated as:

1. Family Life at All Stages;
2. Social Outreach to the Poor, Sick and Vulnerable;
3. Prayer, Spirituality, and Sacramental Life;
4. Catechesis and Formation;
5. Vocations and Charisms: Discernment and Promotion; and
6. Youth and Young Adults.

The six priorities are not ends in themselves. Each serves the larger mission entrusted by Christ to his Church: the proclamation and building up of the Kingdom of God.

In his pastoral letter *Seeking the Kingdom of God Above and Beyond All Other Things*, Cardinal Leo reminded us that the many pastoral, spiritual, sacramental, educational, social, and administrative dimensions of ecclesial life, find their unity in the common purpose of building the Kingdom[8]. This pastoral plan therefore seeks not simply to strengthen particular areas of ministry, but to help the entire local Church become more intentionally missionary, allowing the life of Christ and the values of the Lord's Kingdom to take deeper root in our families, parishes, communities, and society.

Moreover, the six priorities are not intended to stand apart from one another. They form an interconnected cycle of pastoral renewal. Strong families become schools of faith and missionary discipleship. Hearts formed in the family learn to recognize and respond to the needs of others through social outreach. Encounter with human need draws us more deeply into prayer and the sacramental life where Christ renews and strengthens his people. Prayer creates a desire to know the Lord more deeply through catechesis and formation. Mature discipleship awakens the question of vocation and the discernment of the gifts and charisms entrusted by the Holy Spirit. All of these dimensions converge in the accompaniment and formation of youth and young adults, who are already part of the Church's present life and who will, in time, form new families, exercise new vocations, and carry the mission forward into another generation.

Taken together, these six priorities give expression to a shared vision for the archdiocese as we seek to respond faithfully and with hope to the changing realities of the present moment.

Responding with Hope

Such pastoral discernment is particularly necessary in our own time. We find ourselves living and serving in a rapidly changing society marked by both significant challenges and great opportunities. Families face increasing pressures. Many people experience loneliness and fragmentation. Religious literacy has declined. Young people search disparately for meaning and belonging. Mental illness is on the rise. Technological change continues to reshape relationships, communication, and culture.

At the same time, there remain countless signs of hope: vibrant parishes, generous volunteers, committed clergy, prophetic consecrated persons, flourishing ministries, dedicated school communities, growing movements and associations, faithful families, and a deep desire among many to encounter Jesus Christ anew.

For this reason, the archdiocese undertakes this pastoral plan not from anxiety about the future, but from confidence in the Lord who continues to guide his Church[9].

The pastoral plan that follows is not the product of a single office, committee, or moment of planning. It has emerged from a broader process of listening to the People of God, discerning the pastoral realities of the archdiocese, consulting those entrusted with pastoral leadership, and seeking to recognize within these experiences the invitation of the Holy Spirit. The six jars of Cana give visible form to that discernment. They identify areas in which we are being called to labour together, while reminding us that pastoral renewal is ultimately not our achievement, but that of Jesus Christ.

From Discernment to Pastoral Action

The consultation that gave rise to this plan does not bring the work of listening and discernment to an end. Rather, it establishes the foundation for a continuing process of pastoral discernment throughout the archdiocese.

The plan must not merely repeat existing activity under new headings. Each jar (priority) must invite genuine pastoral conversion and renewed missionary response[10].

With this in mind, the first year of this pastoral journey is dedicated to listening, discernment, and assessment through an archdiocesan pastoral council and parish pastoral councils. Before proposing solutions, we must first enter into the mystery and learn to listen to the Holy Spirit, to one another, and to the realities of the communities we are called to serve. Through prayerful reflection and honest assessment, pastoral councils will help the archdiocese recognize both the gifts already present and the needs that require renewed attention[11].

Building upon this foundation, the subsequent six years will focus particularly upon the six pastoral priorities symbolized by the six stone jars at Cana. While each year will focus particularly on one priority (jar), the six priorities remain deeply interconnected. Together they form a comprehensive vision of pastoral renewal rooted in communion, participation, evangelization, and missionary discipleship[12].

Throughout this journey, Mother Mary remains our guide and companion. At Cana she notices what others overlook, brings human need to Jesus, and invites the servants to trust him completely: “Do whatever he tells you”[13]. Her words remain the program and inspiration of every authentic pastoral renewal.

As we begin this journey together, we entrust this pastoral plan to Our Lady’s maternal care and mediation.

Echoing the prayer of the Church in the Mass of Our Lady of Cana[14], may we learn to heed the words of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and, with her same faith and trust, do whatever her Son asks of us. In this spirit, may we offer ourselves generously to the work before us, confident that the Lord continues to guide his Church and transform what we place before him through the abundance of his grace.

The task before us is simple, though demanding: to fill the jars to the brim.











YEAR 1

Pastoral Councils and Assessment





Introduction

The mission given to us by Christ at Cana remains unchanged, yet the circumstances in which that mission is lived continually evolves.

In every age, the Lord entrusts his people with a share in his very own mission. He calls us not only to receive his grace, but to cooperate with it. He invites us, lay faithful, consecrated persons, and clergy alike, into a deeper communion, a shared responsibility, and a common discernment of how the Gospel is to be lived in the concrete circumstances of our time[15].

It is within this lifegiving call that pastoral councils find their place. They are not optional additions to ecclesial life, nor are they simply administrative tools. Rather, they are privileged instruments through which the Church lives her identity as communion and carries forward her mission[16].

What follows is presented as a first step in the broader archdiocesan pastoral plan. Its purpose is to assist us in understanding:

- the theological and historical foundations of pastoral councils;
- their enduring value for the life of the Church in Toronto;
- practical ways to establish and sustain them faithfully; and
- their application in assessing the current pastoral situation.

A Gift Received: the Ecclesial Foundations of Pastoral Councils

The Second Vatican Council renewed for us a profound truth: the Church is a communion of the baptized, called together by the Father, united in Christ, and enlivened by the Holy Spirit. Each of the faithful, according to his or her vocation, shares in the mission of the Church[17].

This vision did not emerge in isolation. It represents a deepening of the Church's self-understanding rooted in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, and given renewed clarity in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council.

In *Lumen Gentium,* the Church is described as the People of God, journeying together through history, called to holiness and mission. In this vision, the faithful are not passive recipients, but active participants in the life and mission of the Church[18].

Within this renewed understanding, pastoral councils emerged as a concrete expression of communion, participation, and shared responsibility for the Church's mission.

Furthermore, the Council Fathers, in *Christus Dominus*, expressed a strong desire that in every diocese there be established a pastoral council, presided over by the bishop, in which clergy, consecrated persons, and lay faithful would participate in investigating pastoral realities and proposing practical conclusions for the good of their dioceses[19]. This marked a significant ecclesial moment: a formal recognition that the discernment of pastoral needs is enriched when all the faithful are truly heard.

Other conciliar documents echoed and expanded this vision. *Ad gentes*, for instance, encouraged the establishment of pastoral councils to assist in coordinating missionary activity[20], while *Apostolicam actuositatem* spoke of structures through which the apostolic work of the Church in the fields of evangelization, sanctification, charity and social life, could be carried out more effectively through collaboration among the faithful, each according to their distinct vocation[21]. These magisterial teachings reflected a growing awareness that the mission of the Church is not the task of a few, but the responsibility of all.

In the years following the Second Vatican Council, the Church's Magisterium continued to develop

and deepen this insight. Pope St. Paul VI, in his motu proprio *Ecclesiae sanctae*, provided further guidance on pastoral councils, clarifying their consultative nature and their flexibility according to pastoral circumstances[22]. He emphasized that their effectiveness depends on serious study, prayerful reflection, and the cooperation of those engaged in pastoral work.

Subsequent documents deepened this understanding. The Synod of Bishops in 1971 highlighted the role of the pastoral council in helping the Church to organize and carry out her pastoral mission more effectively[23]. The instruction *Omnes Christifideles* (1973) emphasized that a pastoral council should reflect the whole People of God and that its recommendations, though consultative, are of great value to the bishop or pastor in exercising their responsibility[24].

The *Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops*, *Ecclesiae imago*, further clarified that pastoral councils assist in shaping the life of the Church so that it may be more fully conformed to the Gospel[25]. It also suggested a relationship between diocesan and parish pastoral councils, highlighting the importance of unity between the broader vision of the diocese and the lived reality of the parish.

Pope St. John Paul II, in *Christifideles laici*, offered a particularly important reflection, describing pastoral councils as a principal form of collaboration, dialogue, and discernment in the Church[26]. He emphasized that the participation of the lay faithful in such bodies broadens the Church's capacity for consultation and strengthens the shared responsibility for mission.

At the same time, the Church has consistently reaffirmed the proper nature of these councils. The 1983 Code of Canon Law codified the teachings of the Second Vatican Council by providing for diocesan pastoral councils (canons 511–514) and encouraging the establishment of parish pastoral councils (canon 536)[27]. In both cases, the consultative nature of these bodies is clearly stated. They do not exercise authority, but assist those who do, through the offering of prudent and well-discerned counsel.

In our own time, the Church's reflection on synodality has brought renewed depth to this tradition. Synodality is not simply a new initiative, but a



The Church is not the task of a few, but the responsibility of all.

recovery and deepening of the Church's perennial life[28]. It reminds us that the Church is called to walk together, pastors, consecrated and lay faithful, in listening to the Word of God and to one another, discerning the signs of the times attentive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, and responding in mission.

To say that the Church is synodal is to affirm that the whole People of God is called to participate in the mission of Christ. The Holy Spirit is at work in all the baptized, granting a *sensus fidei* (a spiritual instinct for the truth of the Gospel) through which the lay faithful, together with their shepherds, discern what the Lord is asking of his Church today[29].

In this light, pastoral councils are understood not merely as recommended structures, but as expressions of a synodal Church. They are places where communion is lived, participation is exercised, and mission is discerned[30].

Through them, the Church learns anew how to walk together.

Why Pastoral Councils Matter Today



The need for pastoral councils today is both local and missionary.

By and large in the Western world, and lately in our own context, the Church is no longer situated in a cultural milieu where faith can be presumed. Many people are searching, questioning, or drifting from the life of the Church and no longer see in her a spiritual home. At the same time, new opportunities for evangelization are emerging, amongst families, youth, newcomers, and those on the margins[31].

In such a complex context, the Church cannot rely solely on inherited structures or individual initiative. She must discern, attentively, prayerfully and communally, how best to proclaim the Gospel in each local reality[32].

Pastoral councils serve precisely this purpose. They help the Church listen to the lived experience of the faithful, recognize the "signs of the times" in a given community, discern priorities for evangelization and pastoral care, and propose concrete paths forward[33].

Without adequate spaces for prayerful reflection and shared discernment, dioceses and parishes can easily become absorbed in addressing immediate needs, recurring tasks, and short-sighted concerns. While necessary in their own context, these can lead to a form of maintenance rather than mission[34].

The Church's Instruction on the pastoral conversion of the parish[35] emphasizes that authentic renewal must remain rooted in the lived experience, history, relationships, memories, and needs of the community. It requires consultation, participation, gradual implementation, and ongoing evaluation. This gives particular importance to the parish pastoral council. Properly understood, the council is not simply an administrative body or a forum for exchanging opinions; it is an important expression of ecclesial communion and co-responsibility, assisting the pastor in listening to the community, discerning its pastoral realities, and identifying how the parish can respond more faithfully to the evangelizing mission of the Church.

A pastoral council helps the faithful step back and ask deeper questions:

- where is the Lord calling us to at this moment?
- what are the real pastoral needs of our people?
- where do we see signs of life and growth?
- where do we see wounds and unmet needs?
- how are families living the faith?
- how are individuals being accompanied?
- how are the needy being served?
- how are the sacraments celebrated and received?
- how is the Gospel being proclaimed and Christ encountered?

Pastoral councils, therefore, are especially important in fostering a synodal culture, one that values listening over debate, discernment over strategy alone, and communion over fragmentation[36].

When functioning well, a pastoral council becomes a place where faith and life meet, where pastoral complexities are honestly discerned, and where the Holy Spirit is actively sought.

In this way, pastoral councils help move us from maintenance to mission, from isolation to co-responsibility, and from uncertainty to clarity.

For this reason, the archdiocese commits to establishing an archdiocesan pastoral council, and mandates every parish to ensure it has a functioning parish pastoral council in line with what follows.

The Nature of a Pastoral Council

Clarity about the nature of a pastoral council is essential for its effectiveness.

A pastoral council is a consultative body, rooted in prayer and discernment, serving the bishop or pastor, and focused on the pastoral mission of the Church[37].

It does not exercise governance or juridical authority, make binding decisions, or manage day-to-day operations. Its purpose is not to run the diocese or parish, but to assist in discerning the pastoral mission more clearly and pursuing it more faithfully[38].

Its proper focus includes: pastoral care of families; outreach and social care; evangelization and catechesis; liturgical and sacramental life; youth and vulnerable persons; and the broader culture and social realities affecting the Church.

In this sense, the pastoral council is not one committee among many. It is the primary body dedicated to pastoral vision and discernment within a diocese or parish[39].

Its work must remain distinct from that of the finance council, staff meetings or operational teams[40].

Establishing a Pastoral Council: Foundations and Steps

The establishment of a pastoral council is not a simple matter of assembling a group of people. It requires intentionality, transparency and spiritual preparation[41].

1. Clarifying Purpose and Identity
Before anything else, the diocese or parish must itself clearly understand why the council exists, what it is called to do, and what it is not[42].

Additionally, parishioners need to understand its purpose, receive appropriate communication about its work and the priorities emerging from it.

The work of a pastoral council needs to be communicated clearly so that unrealistic expectations do not take root. The faithful served by a pastoral council should know that it is not a governing board, not a place for pressure or lobby groups, and not a forum for resolving every practical concern. Rather, it is a body meant to help the diocese or parish listen together for how our Lord is calling it to live the Gospel more fully in its particular context[43].

This clarity should be expressed in statutes outlining the consultative nature of the council, its relationship to the bishop or pastor (as applicable), its areas of competence, and its method of working, including but not limited to: the qualifications for membership, the length of term appointments, the process for renewal or replacement of members, meeting frequency, requirements for confidentiality, synodal conversation in the Spirit[44] [45], formation for members, communication, evaluation, and amendment[46].

Such juridical clarity protects the pastoral council's identity and helps prevent confusion with other diocesan or parish bodies.

2. Discernment in Membership
Membership should not be determined based on popularity or representation in a political sense. Members should be chosen because they are in full communion with the Catholic Church, are outstanding in faith, morals and prudence, participate regularly in the sacramental life, are capable of listening and dialogue, and are committed to the good of the whole diocese or parish[47]. The pastoral council should reflect the breath of the diocese or parish community in age, culture, background, experience, and vocation, but its members are not delegates sent to advocate for the constituencies they characterize. The pastoral council should be representative of the community without becoming a body of representatives[48]. For this reason, a discernment based process, possibly including nomination, consultation and appointment by the bishop

(for diocesan pastoral councils) or the pastor (for parish councils) is required. This helps avoid a political or representative mentality and fosters a spirit of service[49].

3. Formation
Formation is not optional; it is essential. Members of a pastoral council need to understand the Church's teaching on communion, the role of the laity, the consultative nature of the council, the difference between pastoral discernment and administration, and methods of synodal conversation[50]. They should be introduced to Scripture, relevant canons in the Code of Canon Law, the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, and the spiritual discipline of listening. Ongoing formation should continue after the pastoral council begins its work. Retreats, days of reflection, and study sessions can help pastoral council members remain rooted in prayer and mission.

4. A Prayerful Method of Working
The effectiveness of a pastoral council depends not only on what it does, but how it works. It should be recognizably synodal and spiritual. It should begin with prayer and Scripture. Silence should have a real place in its meetings. Members should be encouraged to listen deeply, to foster humility and speak with respect, to seek convergence, and be guided by "conversation in the Spirit"[51]. A pastoral council should sound and feel like the Church at prayer, listening together for the Lord's will. It should not be dominated by one voice, nor by reports, quick opinions or adversarial discussion. It must be firmly rooted in a prayerful climate. This is not merely a style, but an expression of faith that the Holy Spirit is truly at work in the Church[52].

Focusing on how to structure the pastoral council's meeting agenda helps ensure this prayerful method of working.

5. Evaluation
A pastoral council should periodically examine itself. Is it faithful to its purpose? Is it spiritually grounded? Is it helping the bishop or pastor discern pastoral priorities? Are its recommendations realistic, mission-oriented, and received seriously? This is part of the Church's responsibility to remain attentive and humble before the Lord[53].

A Combined Model for Diocesan and Parish Pastoral Councils

In practice, no single model fully captures the richness of a pastoral council's mission. For this reason, a diocese or parish is called to adopt a balanced comprehensive approach, drawing from the following three complementary models.

1. The Consultative (or canonical) Identity Model
Every pastoral council must be grounded in its canonical identity. That is, a body that studies, reflects and proposes, always under the authority of the bishop or pastor[54]. This ensures fidelity to the Church's teachings and safeguards the pastoral council's ecclesial nature.

This model protects the objective that the pastoral council does not exercise governance, but assists pastoral governance through discernment[55].

2. The Planning and Development Model
Building on its canonical foundation, a pastoral council should engage in pastoral planning, in identifying needs within the diocese or parish (as applicable), setting priorities, and developing a coherent path forward. This allows discernment to bear fruit in concrete action ensuring that the diocese or parish responds effectively to its mission[56].

This model encourages a pastoral council to assess pastoral realities carefully, to listen to the needs of parishioners, to attend to demographic and cultural changes, and to think in terms of multi-year priorities rather than solely immediate concerns. It invites the diocese or parish to distinguish what on the horizon is most urgent. It also encourages evaluation in asking whether the diocese or parish is truly bearing fruit in evangelization, catechesis, divine worship, outreach, and accompaniment[57]. This gives concrete form to pastoral discernment. It allows prayer and reflection to lead toward a realistic and mission-oriented plan for the present and future.

3. The Coordinating or Liaison Model
Finally, the pastoral council should serve as a point of unity and integration, fostering communion among ministries, ensuring alignment with parish and diocesan priorities, and helping the diocese or

parish act as one body rather than many disconnected parts[58].

In many parish communities, liturgy, catechesis, youth ministry, social care outreach, sacramental preparation and other activities are all taking place, but often in isolation. A pastoral council can help these efforts to speak with one another, support one another and avoid unnecessary duplication or fragmentation. In this sense, the pastoral council can serve as a place of integration. It can notice where gaps exist, where collaboration is needed and where diocesan or parish priorities should shape the work of several ministries together. Yet, even here, caution is needed. The pastoral council should not become a staff meeting or a ministry reporting session. Coordination must remain at the service of the mission, and not reduce the pastoral council to administration[59].

Together, the above three dimensions form one coherent model, rooted in discernment, directed towards mission and expressed in unity[60].

The renewal of pastoral councils is not simply a structural initiative; it is a spiritual response to the Lord's invitation to deeper communion, participation, and mission[61]. In this light, pastoral councils become places where discernment can truly occur, where the local Church listens, prays, and seeks together the will of God.

Assessment of the Current Pastoral Situation

Before the servants at Cana could fill the jars, they had to see them as they were: empty, waiting, and ready to receive. In the same way, we are called to look attentively at our own lives. Where are we strong? Where are we lacking? Where has the Gospel taken deep root, and where does it still await a fuller response?

The first year of our archdiocesan pastoral plan is to be dedicated not only to ensuring the effective presence of pastoral councils, but to use those councils to assess our local pastoral situation[62].

The six "jars" entrusted to us (family life at all stages; social outreach to the poor, sick and vulnerable; prayer, spirituality and sacramental life; catechesis and formation; vocations and charisms: discernment and promotion; and youth and young adults) are not abstract ideals, but concrete dimensions of ecclesial life that must be examined in their lived reality. A pastoral council, working in a spirit of prayer and synodal discernment, provides the setting in which such an examination can take place with depth and integrity[63]. Through its work, the jars are not only identified, but measured, entrusted, and prepared to be filled "to the brim"[64].

The assessment must itself reflect the spirit of Cana: prayerful, attentive, honest, and communal. The goal is not simply to gather data, but to discern, and see reality as it truly is before the Lord[65].

What follows is a practical way such an assessment unfolds through the pastoral council. It applies equally to the work of the archdiocesan pastoral council, as well as a parish pastoral council.

1. Begin in Prayer and Orientation
The assessment of the current situation must begin with proper disposition. Before asking what is happening, the pastoral council must first ask how we are to listen. For this reason, its work begins in prayer[66].

The members of the pastoral council, together with any collaborators, should gather in a spirit of recollection. This may include the proclamation of Scripture, a period of silence, and an explicit invocation of the Holy Spirit (e.g. *Ad sumus*, *Come Holy Spirit*). The Gospel account of the Wedding at Cana (John 2:1–11) is particularly fitting, as it situates the entire process within the dynamic of attentive listening, humble service, and trust in the Lord's action.

In this moment of prayer, the pastoral council places itself consciously before the Lord. It acknowledges that the task ahead is not merely organizational or strategic,

but deeply ecclesial. The goal is not simply to evaluate activity, but to discern the presence and action of God within the life of the archdiocese or parish[67].

In our present context, this initial orientation serves to form the heart and mind of the council in three essential ways.

First, the pastoral council revisits the six jars / priorities as a unified pastoral vision. Each jar is related to the others, and together they express the fullness of our mission.

Second, the pastoral council must clearly affirm that the purpose of the assessment is to see reality truthfully, not protectively. This requires humility and freedom. There may be areas of strength that call for gratitude and celebration, and areas of weakness that call for honest acknowledgment. Neither should be avoided.

Third, a spirit of listening must be intentionally established. The work of the pastoral council is not to judge, but to listen to the Word of God, to one another, and to the lived experience of the faithful. This listening is not passive, but attentive and discerning. It seeks to recognize where the Lord is already at work, where He is inviting deeper conversion, and how he is calling the community forward.

Such a beginning is not a formality. It is foundational. Without this shared spiritual disposition, the assessment risks becoming purely technical. With it, the process becomes what it is meant to be: an act of the Church listening together for the voice of the Good Shepherd[68].

2. Define the Scope and Method

Once the pastoral council has been properly oriented in prayer and disposition, it must turn with clarity and care to the question of how the assessment will be undertaken. This step is essential, for without a well-defined scope and a coherent method, the process can become either incomplete or overly burdensome.

To define the scope is to answer a fundamental question:

What precisely are we seeking to understand about our archdiocesan or parish life in light of the six jars?



The pastoral council must determine how the assessment will proceed, for example, it may be done by an individual pastoral segment, such as lay ministries, parish groups, sacramental preparation, or other means. Clarity at this stage ensures that the work remains focused and manageable.

Equally important is the identification of those who will be engaged in the process. The assessment should strive to hear from a broad cross-section of the faithful: clergy, consecrated men and women, lay leaders, families, youth, and those who may be less visibly connected to parish life. Particular care should be taken to include voices that are often underrepresented such as the elderly, the sick, newcomers, and those on the margins. In this way, the assessment reflects the whole People of God, rather than a limited perspective[69].

Having defined the scope, the pastoral council must then establish a method that is both rigorous and pastoral. A balanced approach integrates three complementary dimensions.

First, *quantitative data* provides a measurable picture of ecclesial life. This includes, for example, Mass attendance, sacramental participation (baptisms, marriages, confirmations), school enrollment, participation in ministries, and demographic trends. Such data offers important indicators of engagement and growth, but it must be interpreted carefully, recognizing that numbers alone do not fully capture the depth of faith or the quality of discipleship.



Second, *qualitative insight* allows the lived experience of the faithful to emerge. This includes perceptions, hopes, struggles, and experiences of parish or diocesan life. It helps answer questions that numbers cannot: Do people feel welcomed? Are they nourished spiritually? Do they experience a sense of belonging? Are they being formed as missionary disciples? This dimension gives voice to the human and pastoral reality behind the data.

Third, and most importantly, *spiritual discernment* seeks to recognize what the Holy Spirit may be revealing through both the data and the lived experience. This is what distinguishes an ecclesial assessment from a purely sociological one. The pastoral council must continually ask: What is the Lord saying to us through these realities? Where is he inviting us to conversion, renewal, or deeper fidelity?[70]

To gather these dimensions effectively, a variety of complementary tools can be employed.

Surveys, for instance, can provide a broad and accessible means of gathering input from parishioners, ministry leaders, clergy, consecrated, and others. These should be thoughtfully designed, clearly pointing to the six jars, and not overly complex, so as to encourage participation. Where possible, they should be made available in multiple languages and formats to ensure inclusivity.

Listening sessions or small group consultations offer a more personal and dialogical setting. Conducted in a spirit of prayer and respect, these gatherings allow participants to share more deeply their experiences and insights. They are particularly valuable for fostering trust and for hearing perspectives that may not emerge through surveys alone.

A review of existing data is also essential. Many parishes already possess valuable information regarding sacramental trends, attendance patterns, school engagement, and demographic shifts. This material should be gathered and examined carefully, as it provides an objective foundation upon which further reflection can be built.

Finally, interviews with key leaders (pastors, school principals, ministry coordinators, and others) can offer informed and experienced perspectives on the strengths and challenges within each of the six jars. These conversations should be conducted in a spirit of openness and collaboration, recognizing that those engaged in ministry often carry valuable insights shaped by daily pastoral experience.

Throughout this entire process, simplicity and clarity should be maintained. The method should be structured enough to yield meaningful results, yet flexible enough to adapt to local circumstances. Care should also be taken to avoid overburdening participants or creating an overly complex system that discourages engagement.

In this way, the assessment becomes both thorough and accessible, grounded in real data, enriched by lived experience, and open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It prepares the pastoral council not merely to collect information, but to enter more deeply into the reality of the Church's life, its mystery and mission.

3. Structure the Assessment Around the Six Jars

With the scope and method clearly defined, the pastoral council is now ready to enter into the heart of the assessment: examining the life of the archdiocese or parish through the lens of the six jars. This step ensures that the process remains anchored in the overarching pastoral vision.

To structure the assessment around the six jars is to allow each priority to become a path of attentive listening and discernment. The goal is not simply to



"evaluate programs," but to understand how each dimension of the Church's life is being lived, received, and experienced.

A. Establishing a Clear Framework

The pastoral council should first determine how it will engage each jar in a systematic and coherent way. This may be done by (i) assigning working groups to each jar, composed of pastoral council members and, where appropriate, additional collaborators with relevant wisdom and experience, or (ii) proceeding sequentially with the entire pastoral council, dedicating a defined period of time to each jar.

Whichever approach is chosen, consistency is essential. Each jar should be examined using a common framework so that the final synthesis is balanced and comparable.

A helpful structure for each jar includes four dimensions:

- the current reality: what is happening? what already exists?
- the lived experience: how is this reality perceived and received?
- fruits and gaps: where do we see life? where do we see need?, and
- emerging questions: what requires deeper attention or response?

B. Engaging Each Jar in Depth

Each of the six jars should be approached with both breadth and depth, allowing the pastoral council to see not only activities, but also underlying dynamics.

• Family Life at all Stages

The assessment should explore how families are accompanied across the whole of life's span: preparation for marriage, marriage enrichment, early family life, raising children, times of crisis, and the later years. The reflection should include the elderly, illness, disabilities, the addicted, caregiving, family prayer, conflict and witnessing. Attention should be given not only to programs, but to whether families feel supported, integrated, and strengthened in their vocation.

• Social Outreach to the Poor, Sick and Vulnerable

Here the focus on the family shifts outward. The pastoral council should examine how the parish or archdiocese recognizes and responds to those in need, whether they are families burdened by economic hardship, youth searching for direction, the elderly isolated in silence, migrants and refugees longing for welcome, and so on. This includes both organized charitable efforts and the broader culture of attentiveness within the parish community. We reflect on social justice, the wider community, neighbors, community groups, as well as networking with charities and non-charities.

• Prayer, Spirituality, and Sacramental Life

From the first two jars we learn who the various persons and groups are that we are called to serve. The third jar calls for an assessment of how the parish provides an experience for these faithful to encounter Christ, through the sacramental, devotional, pastoral and spiritual life of the community.

• Catechesis and Formation

In the fourth jar, the pastoral council examines how faith is taught, deepened, and lived. This includes children's catechesis, youth formation, adult education, and the training of leaders. Particular attention should be given to whether formation leads to mature discipleship, or if it remains at the level of information.

• Vocations and Charisms: Discernment and Promotion

The fifth jar invites the pastoral council to consider whether a culture of vocations is present in the parish. Are individuals encouraged to discern their

personal calling? Are gifts, talents, and charisms recognized and nurtured? Are leaders being identified and formed? The assessment should include ordained, consecrated, and lay vocations (such as marriage, single life, etc.), as well as the broader recognition of charisms within the community.

- **Youth and Young Adults**
  In the sixth jar, the pastoral council must listen carefully to the presence, or absence, of young people. Are they known personally? Are they given meaningful responsibility? Do they find a place of belonging within the Church? Are there opportunities for listening to them and accompaniment? Do they encounter Christ in ways that speak to their lives? Are they prepared for future leadership roles in the Church and in society?

4. Gather and Synthesize the Data
Once information is collected, the pastoral council gathers to reflect on it.

This stage is crucial and must remain prayerful in asking: what patterns are emerging?; where do we see life, growth, and hope?; where are the gaps, wounds, or absences?; which jars appear more "full"?; which are noticeably "empty"?

Similarly, what interrelations are emerging?: is weakness in family life affecting youth engagement?; is limited youth and adult formation hindering vocational discernment?; is a lack of prayer weakening social commitment and outreach?

It is helpful here to summarize the findings under each jar, identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities, and avoid rushing to quick solutions.

5. Discern Together ("Conversation in the Spirit")
The council should then engage in structured discernment.

This involves listening to the Holy Spirit and then to one another without interruption, naming where there is convergence, attending to movements of consolation and concern, and asking: *what is the Lord saying to us through this reality?* This step ensures that the assessment is not merely descriptive, but truly an ecclesial one driven by the Holy Spirit.

6. Identify Key Pastoral Priorities
While all six jars remain essential and interconnected, the general assessment may reveal that certain areas require more urgent attention.

The pastoral council should identify 2 or 3 immediate priorities for focused action, situate these within the broader vision of all six jars, and ensure that the priorities are realistic and mission-driven.

7. Communicate the Findings
Transparency builds trust and participation. The results of the assessment should be shared with the wider community. A written summary (accessible and pastoral in tone) should be prepared. Presentations could be considered at parish gatherings or diocesan meetings (as applicable), and invitations for continued feedback should be welcomed.

This step helps the faithful recognize that they have been heard and that the Church as People of God is moving forward together.

8. Move Toward Action (filling the jars)
Only after this assessment is completed, does planning begin.

The pastoral council then transitions from: "Where are we?", to "Where is the Lord calling us?", to "What must we do?"

Concrete pastoral initiatives can now be developed, rooted in reality rather than assumption.

Concluding Perspective
In this first-year process, the pastoral council begins to fulfill its deepest purpose. It becomes the place where each community pauses, listens, and looks honestly at the jars entrusted to it.

After the first year, the subsequent six years of the pastoral plan will be dedicated to a focused examination of the six jars, one jar each year. As pastoral councils reflect upon and strengthen each pastoral priority, the work of each year will build upon the progress and insights of those that have come before it.


A Day With Mary









YEAR 2

Jar One: Family Life at All Stages





Introduction

Having devoted the first year of our archdiocesan pastoral journey to listening, discernment, and assessment through the work of the archdiocesan pastoral council, and parish pastoral councils, we now begin the next stage of renewal as we turn our attention to the first of the six jars: Family Life at All Stages.

The Gospel account of the Wedding at Cana again provides the foundation for this reflection. It is significant that our Lord's first public sign takes place not in the Temple, nor in a place of power or prominence, but within the ordinary setting of family and community life. There, amidst the joys and challenges of a wedding celebration, Jesus reveals his glory by transforming ordinary water into extraordinary wine.

This sign is about far more than abundance. It reveals the manner in which God chooses to act within human history. He enters into the ordinary realities of life and transforms them through grace. He works through relationships, accompaniment, trust, cooperation, and faithful presence. What appears common becomes extraordinary when placed in his hands[71].

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that the Church attaches particular importance to Christ's presence at Cana, seeing in it both a confirmation of the goodness of marriage and the proclamation that marriage will become an efficacious sign of his presence[72]. Cana, therefore, reveals something fundamental about the essential place of marriage and family life in the mission of the Church.

As we begin this next phase of our pastoral journey, we recognize that authentic renewal must begin where Christ himself chose to begin. The family is the first community of life and love, the first school of faith, the first place where vocations are nurtured, and the first setting in which the Gospel is lived and transmitted[73]. If we are to be renewed, families must be strengthened. If faith is to flourish in future generations, family life must be supported, accompanied, and enriched[74].

For this reason, the first jar invites the entire archdiocese to renew its commitment to families at every stage of life, recognizing that when Christ is welcomed into our homes, he continues to transform ordinary human life into a living sign of his presence and grace.

A Pastoral Vision for Family Life at all Stages

The Church has long recognized that the renewal of society and the renewal of the Church are deeply connected to the vitality of family life. Marriage and family are not merely social realities; they are places where God forms disciples, nurtures vocations, and reveals his love through ordinary human relationships[75].

The Second Vatican Council reaffirmed this vision with particular clarity. *Lumen Gentium* teaches that spouses are called to help one another grow in holiness through their married life and that the family, born from their covenant of love, becomes a true domestic Church. Within this community of faith, parents are the first heralds of the Gospel to their children, witnessing by word and example to the life of Christ and helping them discern the vocation to which God calls them[76].

This vision has been echoed repeatedly throughout the life of the Church. Pope Benedict XVI frequently described the family as the first school of prayer, charity, forgiveness, sacrifice, and communion[77]. It is within family life that individuals first learn trust, responsibility, self-giving love, reconciliation, and concern for others. It is within the family that many first encounter faith, discover belonging, and learn to hope[78].

At the same time, families today face significant challenges. Many marriages occur later in life. Spouses often carry the simultaneous responsibilities of raising children while caring for aging parents, and also pursuing a career. Geographic mobility has weakened traditional support networks, while economic pressures, housing concerns,



The Church is called first to accompany, heal, listen, encourage, and strengthen.

and changing patterns of work, place additional burdens upon family life. Contemporary culture increasingly normalizes relationships detached from sacramental marriage and often presents conflicting understandings of commitment, identity, sexuality, and human flourishing[79].

As a result, many families experience loneliness, grief, separation, financial strain, mental health challenges, uncertainty, and isolation. Society also continues to wrestle with profound questions concerning the dignity of human life, including abortion, euthanasia and assisted suicide, reproductive technologies, and the ethical implications of emerging technologies[80].

Yet these realities are not obstacles to our mission. They are precisely the places where the Gospel must be proclaimed and where Christ continues to reveal his presence. The Lord who transformed water into wine at Cana remains at work within the joys, struggles, wounds, and hopes of family life today.

For this reason, the Church does not stand apart from families as a distant institution. She walks with them. The Church is called first to accompany, heal, listen, encourage, and strengthen. Families must encounter within the Christian community the closeness, compassion, and tenderness that Pope Francis described as "the style of God"[81].

This pastoral vision calls for more than programs alone. It requires parishes to be vibrant, loving communities where families are welcomed, known, listened to, accompanied, and supported through every stage of life. The parish must increasingly be experienced not merely as a place people attend, but as a spiritual home where relationships are formed and faith is sustained[82].

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* reinforces this vision by emphasizing listening, dialogue, participation, communion, and shared responsibility within the life of the Church[83]. Families occupy a special place within this renewal. As the Synod observes, the family is the pre-eminent setting in which we learn the richness of human relationships and the habits necessary for life together[84].

The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic brought this reality into sharper focus. During periods when parish life was restricted, many families rediscovered the importance of prayer in the home and assumed a renewed responsibility for the transmission of faith. Parents became catechists in new ways, and the significance of the domestic Church became more visible throughout the archdiocese. This rediscovery remains one of the enduring graces of that difficult period and offers an important lesson for the future. What was learned and recovered within the home must now be strengthened, supported, and carried forward.

In this light, the archdiocese commits itself not simply to offering services for families, but to forming missionary families capable of witnessing to Christ in the world. It will support parishes to:

1. accompany engaged couples with care and depth;
2. strengthen marriages through ongoing support;
3. encourage and equip parents as the first educators of the faith;
4. walk with families in difficulty, separation, illness, grief and loneliness; and
5. honour and integrate the elderly, whose wisdom sustains the community.

1. Accompanying Engaged Couples with Care and Depth

The pastoral care of marriage begins long before a couple stands before the altar. It begins in the gradual formation of hearts through faith, friendship, discernment, prayer, and accompaniment. By the time a couple presents themselves for marriage, we are called not simply to prepare them for a wedding day, but to accompany them toward a lifelong sacramental vocation[85].

> *We are called not simply to prepare the couple for a wedding day, but to accompany them toward a lifelong sacramental vocation.*

The archdiocese is blessed by a wide range of marriage preparation initiatives offered through parishes, lay ecclesial movements, and retreat centres. Programs such as Joy-Filled Marriage, Witness to Love, Beloved, Living Our Faith in Love, and various approved parish-based initiatives reflect the generosity and commitment of many individuals who support engaged couples in their journey toward marriage. These programs are offered through in-person, virtual, and hybrid formats, allowing parishes to respond flexibly to the needs of contemporary couples.

The growth and diversity of these initiatives reflect an important pastoral conviction: marriage preparation must be more than a brief requirement or administrative process. It must become a genuine ministry of evangelization and accompaniment.

Christian marriage is not simply a legal contract or an expression of personal commitment. It is a sacramental vocation through which a man and a woman are called to reflect Christ's faithful love for his Church and to grow together in holiness[86]. Engaged couples must therefore be helped to encounter Christ personally and to understand marriage as a covenant rooted in self-giving love, permanence, fidelity, fruitfulness, and mission[87].

As Pope Saint Paul VI reminded us in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, evangelization must touch the whole of life[88]. Marriage preparation must therefore attend not only to doctrinal formation, but also to the human, spiritual, relational, and pastoral dimensions of married life. Couples should be formed in prayer, communication, conflict resolution, forgiveness, openness to life, responsible stewardship, and participation in the life and mission of the Church[89].

For this reason, the archdiocese will continue to support parishes in developing approaches to marriage preparation that are relational, missionary, and rooted in ongoing accompaniment. Particular attention will be given to:

- fostering longer-term models of accompaniment that extend beyond a single preparation course;
- pairing engaged couples with experienced married mentor couples who can witness to the realities and joys of sacramental marriage;
- integrating participation in the Eucharist, the sacramental life, and personal prayer into the preparation process;
- creating opportunities for engaged couples to build supportive relationships with other couples and parish communities;
- providing formation in the theology of the body, sacramental grace, vocation, and family life;
- addressing contemporary realities with honesty, compassion, and fidelity to the Gospel, including cohabitation, digital culture, pornography, social isolation, and fears surrounding commitment; and
- presenting marriage not only as a personal commitment, but as a vocation of service, witness, evangelization, joy and mission.

Pope Francis frequently warned against a "throwaway culture" that treats relationships as temporary and disposable[90]. In contrast, Christian marriage bears witness to a love that is faithful, enduring, and life-giving. In a society often marked by instability and fragmentation, the witness of sacramental marriage becomes a prophetic sign of hope[91].

Pope Leo XIV has similarly encouraged Christian families to become authentic homes of hope[92]. Marriage preparation should therefore equip couples not merely to sustain a relationship, but to build a Christian home capable of radiating faith,



Marriage is a living vocation that develops over time.

stability, hospitality, and aspiration. Strengthened by sacramental grace, married couples become witnesses to the Gospel and active participants in the Church's mission of evangelization[93].

At Cana, Christ transformed water into wine within the context of a wedding celebration. In every generation, he continues to transform ordinary human love through the grace of the sacrament[94]. Our task is to accompany engaged couples faithfully, helping them entrust their future to Christ so that their marriage may become a living sign of his presence, his fidelity, and his love in the world[95].

2. Strengthening Marriages Through Ongoing Support

The celebration of a wedding marks the beginning of a vocation, not the completion of a journey. Just as we accompany individuals throughout their lives of faith, we must also accompany married couples throughout the various stages of married and family life[96].

Marriage is a living vocation that develops over time. The joys and challenges experienced by newlyweds differ from those faced by young families, parents of children with disabilities, parents of adolescents, couples caring for aging parents, empty nesters, or those navigating retirement, illness, or bereavement. Each season brings new opportunities for growth in love, fidelity, sacrifice, and holiness. We are therefore called to walk alongside couples throughout the whole of their marital journey[97].

The archdiocese is already blessed by many initiatives that support married life, including marriage enrichment programs, parish-based family ministries, retreats, formation opportunities, and lay movements and associations. These initiatives provide important opportunities for prayer, formation, friendship, and mutual support.

At the same time, as noted previously, many couples continue to experience significant pressures arising from work, financial responsibilities, caregiving demands, emotional fatigue, social isolation, mental health concerns, and the increasing pace and complexity of modern life[98]. In this context, pastoral care for marriage cannot be limited to occasional events or isolated programs. It must become a sustained ministry of accompaniment rooted in relationships, community, and ongoing support[99].

For this reason, the archdiocese will support parishes in fostering a culture of accompaniment for married couples through:

- regular opportunities for prayer, fellowship, and formation;
- annual celebrations that honour marriage anniversaries and reaffirm the vocation of married life;

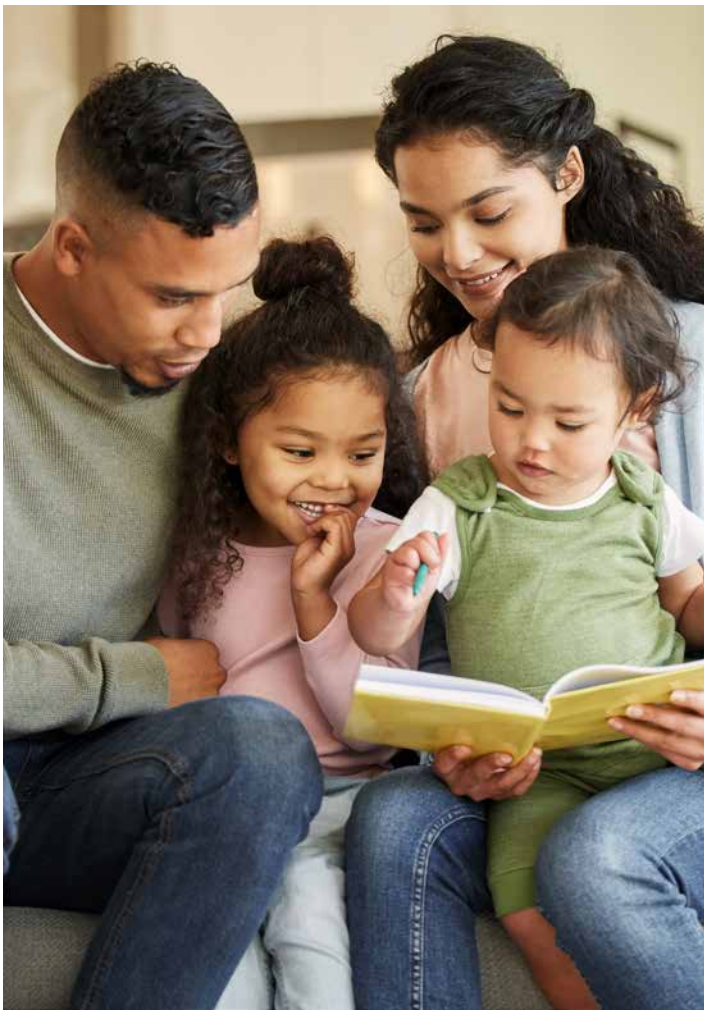
- support networks for young families and parents;
- retreats, missions, and enrichment opportunities for couples at various stages of life;
- mentoring relationships between older and younger couples;
- pastoral outreach during moments of transition, crisis, illness, grief, or family difficulty; and
- parish structures and schedules that recognize and support the realities of family life.

In *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Pope Saint John Paul II called the Church to become "the home and school of communion"[100]. Married couples should experience the parish in precisely that way: not as consumers of religious services, but as members of a spiritual family united in faith, friendship, and mutual support.

This vision resonates deeply with Pope Francis' call for a culture of encounter[101]. Marriages flourish when couples experience authentic Christian community and know that they are not alone. Families are strengthened when they are connected to other families, supported by friendships, nourished by the sacraments, and integrated into the life of the parish. Isolation weakens relationships; communion sustains them[102].

The archdiocese therefore encourages parishes to build upon initiatives that foster belonging, friendship, and intergenerational support, including family gatherings, parish festivals, cultural celebrations, neighbourhood faith communities, mothers' and fathers' groups, grandparent-grandchild initiatives, prayer partnerships, and other opportunities that strengthen the bonds of Christian family life.

Strong marriages are nurtured within communities of faith where couples pray together, learn together, support one another, and grow together in Christ. When parish communities accompany married couples with patience, friendship, and care, families become more resilient, more missionary, and more capable of witnessing to the faithful love of God[103].



Parents help their children discover who they are before God.

At Cana, the miracle occurred within the context of a wedding feast surrounded by family, friends, and community. This remains a profound reminder that marriage flourishes within relationships of support and belonging. As the Church accompanies couples throughout their lives, Christ continues to transform ordinary family life into a living witness of his covenant love for the world[104].

3. Parents as the First Educators in Faith

One of the enduring lessons of the COVID-19 pandemic was the renewed awareness of the sanctity and importance of the domestic Church. As noted previously, during a time when access to parish life was limited, many families rediscovered the central role of the home in the transmission of faith. Parents assumed renewed responsibility for prayer, catechesis, and spiritual leadership within family life. This rediscovery must become a foundation upon which future pastoral initiatives are built.

The Church has consistently taught that parents are the first and most important educators of their children in the faith. Their role is not secondary to that of the parish, the school, or catechetical programs. Rather, these ministries exist to support and strengthen the vocation that parents already possess by virtue of marriage and family life[105], and to help them fulfil the promises they made at the baptism of their children to bring them up in the faith[106].

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that family catechesis "precedes, accompanies, and enriches" every other form of catechesis[107]. Within the home, children first learn prayer, trust in God, forgiveness, generosity, service, and love. It is often through the witness of their parents that they first encounter the Gospel and begin to understand what it means to live as disciples of Jesus Christ[108].

This vision calls for a genuine pastoral conversion. Sacramental preparation can no longer focus exclusively on children while treating parents as passive observers. Rather, it must become an opportunity for the evangelization, formation, and accompaniment of the entire family. Every encounter with parents should be seen as an opportunity to deepen faith, strengthen family prayer, and renew participation in the life of the Church[109].

For this reason, the archdiocese will support parishes in developing approaches that place families at the centre of faith formation. This includes:

- designing sacramental preparation as family catechesis;
- providing formation opportunities for parents alongside their children;
- equipping families with practical resources for prayer in the home;
- encouraging regular participation in Sunday Eucharist;
- supporting mothers and fathers in their distinct vocations;
- helping parents engage questions of faith with confidence; and
- fostering healthy habits of digital discipleship and responsible technology use.

Parents do more than teach religious practices. They help their children discover who they are before God. Through their witness, children learn that they are loved by God, called to holiness, and entrusted with a unique mission in the world[110].

In this regard, the Holy See's declaration *Dignitas Infinita* offers an important reminder that the family is often the first place where the inherent dignity of every human person is recognized, protected, and nurtured[111].

The archdiocese will support parishes to assist parents to teach their children that:

- human life is sacred from conception to natural death;
- every person deserves respect regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, or social status;
- freedom is ordered toward truth and goodness; and
- personal worth comes from being a child of God rather than from achievement, appearance, or utility.

Pope Leo XIV's call to draw "new maps of hope" is particularly relevant for Christian parents today. Amid rapid cultural and technological change, parents are called to become guides who help their children navigate life with wisdom, faith, and confidence[112].

The archdiocese, then, will support parishes to assist parents to:

- help their children interpret the world through the light of faith;
- teach them how to discern truth amid confusion;
- model prayer, trust in God, and perseverance;
- cultivate habits of solidarity, service, and communion; and
- accompany their children in discovering their vocation and purpose.

The task of Church ministers and volunteers is not to replace parents in this mission, but to accompany and strengthen them. When families are supported in living their vocation as domestic churches, the faith is transmitted more naturally, discipleship takes deeper root, and future generations are formed in hope, charity, and communion[113].

At Cana, our Lord transformed the ordinary realities of family life into a revelation of divine grace. He

continues to do the same today. By strengthening parents in their vocation as the first educators of their children, the Church helps ensure that the home remains the first place where faith is lived, shared, and handed on from one generation to the next[114].

4. Walking with Families in Difficulty, Separation, Illness, Grief, and Loneliness

One of the most striking moments in the account of Cana occurs before the miracle itself. Mother Mary notices the need. Before anyone else speaks, she sees what is lacking and brings it to her Son[115].

This attentiveness lies at the heart of our mission to families.

Building upon the vision of a missionary Church that goes forth to accompany people in the realities of their lives, following Our Lady's example, our parishes are called to cultivate a pastoral sensitivity that recognizes both the joys and the wounds present within family life[116].

Many individuals and families carry burdens that are often hidden from view. Some struggle with separation or divorce. Others grieve the loss of a spouse, parent, child, or friend. Many experience illness, caregiving responsibilities, loneliness, economic hardship, infertility, addiction, mental health challenges, family estrangement, or uncertainty about the future. These experiences frequently remain unseen, even within parish communities[117].

We are called to respond to these realities not first with programs, but with presence. Before offering solutions, we must learn to notice. Before speaking, we must listen. Before organizing, we must accompany.

The archdiocese is already blessed by many ministries that embody this mission, including initiatives dedicated to healing, reconciliation and pastoral care, bereavement ministries, memorial liturgies, and so on. These ministries remind us that healing often begins when people discover that they are not alone and that their suffering matters to the Christian community.

Pope Francis repeatedly challenged the Church to reject every form of indifference and to become a place of pastoral closeness[118]. Families experiencing difficulty should encounter within our parishes a culture of care, fraternity, solidarity, and hope. They should know that they remain valued members of the People of God and that their struggles do not place them beyond the reach of Christ's love or our concern[119].

> *Before offering solutions, we must learn to notice. Before speaking, we must listen. Before organizing, we must accompany.*

For this reason, the archdiocese will support parishes in being attentive to those who may be carrying burdens in silence. This requires parish communities willing to ask difficult but necessary questions:

- Who feels unseen within our community?
- Which families no longer feel connected to parish life?
- Who grieves without support?
- Which elderly persons experience isolation?
- Which parents are overwhelmed by responsibilities and expectations?
- Which couples are struggling without encouragement or accompaniment?
- Who is carrying a burden that no one else has noticed?

Such questions move parish communities beyond maintenance and toward missionary charity. They foster a pastoral culture that seeks out those who are suffering and accompanies them with patience and compassion.

We can never abandon families, especially wounded ones. Rather, we are called to stand beside them as Christ stood beside those who suffered, offering encouragement, healing, hope, and the assurance that they do not walk alone[120]. In this way, our parishes ensure that they are places where the mercy of God is not merely proclaimed, but experienced[121].



5. Honouring and Integrating the Elderly
The later years of life possess a unique vocation within the Church. Older adults are not simply recipients of pastoral care; they are indispensable contributors to the life, memory, and mission of the Christian community[122].

In a culture that often prizes productivity, efficiency, and youthfulness, the Church offers a different vision. She recognizes in older adults a profound gift: the witness of lives shaped by faith, perseverance, sacrifice, love, and hope[123]. Through decades of discipleship, many have become living testimonies to God's fidelity[124].

> *Elderly wisdom, prayer, resilience, and perspective enrich the entire People of God.*

The elderly carry the memory of families, parishes, communities, and traditions. They are often the guardians of stories, values, and experiences that help younger generations understand who they are and where they come from. Their wisdom, prayer, resilience, and perspective enrich the entire People of God[125].

At the same time, many older adults experience significant challenges. Loneliness, illness, reduced mobility, grief, regret, caregiving challenges, and social isolation can create profound burdens. Some struggle with a sense of invisibility or feel disconnected from the life of the community they helped to build. We must remain attentive to these realities and ensure that older adults continue to experience belonging, purpose, and accompaniment.

The Church's accompaniment of older adults also embracTheir wisdom, prayer, resilience, and perspective enrich the entire People of Godnd. Christian accompaniment must therefore help older adults recognize that no season of life falls outside the loving presence of Christ and that the final years of earthly life remain a time of grace, vocation, prayer, witness, and preparation for the fullness of life with God.

Here too, Mary our Mother remains close to us as a companion in faith. Hans Urs von Balthasar reflects upon her presence at the decisive hour of death, reminding us that the Mother who stood faithfully beneath the Cross continues to point the disciple toward hope in her Son[126]. Her presence offers a particularly tender image for the Church's ministry to those approaching the final stages of earthly life: no one should face suffering, frailty, or the approach of death in isolation, but should be surrounded by prayer, the sacraments, the communion of the Church, and the confident hope of resurrection.

In this way, honouring the elderly means more than responding to their immediate needs. It means recognizing their enduring place within the Body



of Christ, receiving the wisdom and witness they continue to offer, and accompanying them with gratitude and love through every stage of life toward the fulfilment of the Christian promise.

The archdiocese is already blessed by numerous ministries that support maturing adults, including retreats, scripture studies, widows' groups, outreach initiatives, parish fellowship programs, and gatherings for older adults. These ministries provide opportunities for prayer, friendship, formation, and mutual support while affirming the ongoing contribution of seniors to the life of our parishes.

Building upon these foundations, the archdiocese will support parishes to:

- integrate older adults into leadership, mentoring, and ministry roles;
- foster meaningful relationships between generations;
- create opportunities for grandparents and young people to share faith, stories, and life experience;
- strengthen pastoral visitation and accompaniment for those who are homebound or isolated;
- ensure accessibility, inclusion, and full participation in parish life;
- promote a positive understanding of aging as a season of continued discipleship; and
- recognize older adults as active participants in evangelization, prayer, and service.

During his 2022 penitential pilgrimage to Canada, Pope Francis emphasized the importance of memory, reconciliation, and fraternity for the future of society and the Church[127]. Older adults play a vital role in this mission. They help communities remember, heal, and remain rooted in their identity. Without memory, communities lose continuity; without elders, future generations lose an important source of wisdom and guidance[128].

Pope Saint John Paul II's Apostolic Exortation *Ecclesia in America* similarly highlighted the importance of communion and solidarity across generations[129]. The Church flourishes when young and old walk together, sharing their gifts and learning from one another. The faith of older adults offers encouragement to younger generations, while the energy and hope of youth brings renewed vitality to the whole community[130].

A parish that honours its elderly honours its own history. A parish that listens to its elders strengthens its future. By valuing the gifts of older adults and integrating them fully into the life of the parish, we affirm that every stage of life possesses dignity, meaning, and a continuing role in the mission of Christ.

Toward a Culture of Encounter and Hope

The first jar calls the entire archdiocese to foster a renewed culture of family life rooted in faith, communion, accompaniment, and hope.

In every parish, families should encounter a community that supports them through every stage of life: engagement and marriage, parenthood and family life, times of joy and celebration, as well as moments of struggle, loss, transition, and aging. Parishes must be places where families are strengthened, encouraged, and accompanied as they seek to live their vocation faithfully.

Our parishes are therefore called to be:

- spiritual homes where families are welcomed and supported;
- communities where faith is lived, shared, and handed on from generation to generation;
- schools of prayer and discipleship;
- places of belonging, friendship, and mutual care;
- sanctuaries of healing and hope for those who carry wounds or burdens;
- witnesses to the dignity of every human person; and
- communities where young and old walk together in faith.

> *Where the world often sees fragility, the Gospel sees grace at work. Where families experience uncertainty, Christ offers stability.*

This renewal cannot be entrusted to a single office, ministry, or program. It belongs to the entire People of God. Clergy, consecrated persons, lay parish leaders, educators, volunteers, single persons, married couples, parents, grandparents, young adults, and children all share responsibility for creating communities where family life can flourish.

The servants at Cana filled the jars with ordinary water. Christ transformed what they offered into something extraordinary. The same pattern remains before us today. We are called to fill the ordinary realities of family life with faith, prayer, accompaniment, generosity, and love, trusting that our Lord will bring about the transformation[131].

Where the world often sees fragility, the Gospel sees grace at work. Where families experience uncertainty, Christ offers stability. Where there is loneliness, he creates communion. Where there is suffering, he offers hope. Where there is emptiness, he continues to provide the new wine of his Kingdom[132].

The first jar therefore places before every parish a fundamental question: *Will we become communities where families are able to grow in faith, hope, and love?*

Indeed, when families are strengthened, the archdiocese is strengthened. When family homes become domestic churches, parishes become communities of communion. When families learn to live the Gospel in closeness, compassion, and tenderness, the grace they have received cannot remain within the walls of the home. It naturally turns outward, becoming attentive to the needs, wounds, and hopes of others.

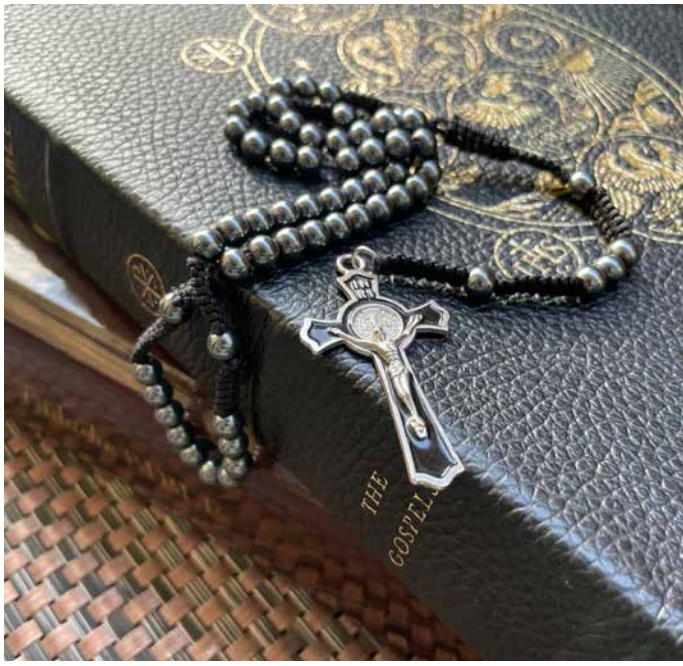
Once again, Cana provides the pattern. Our Mother Mary's attention moves beyond herself: she notices what is lacking and brings that need to Jesus. Families formed in this same spirit become schools not only of communion, but also of mission, places where we learn to notice the lonely, welcome the stranger, accompany the suffering, care for the vulnerable, and serve those who have been forgotten or pushed to the margins.

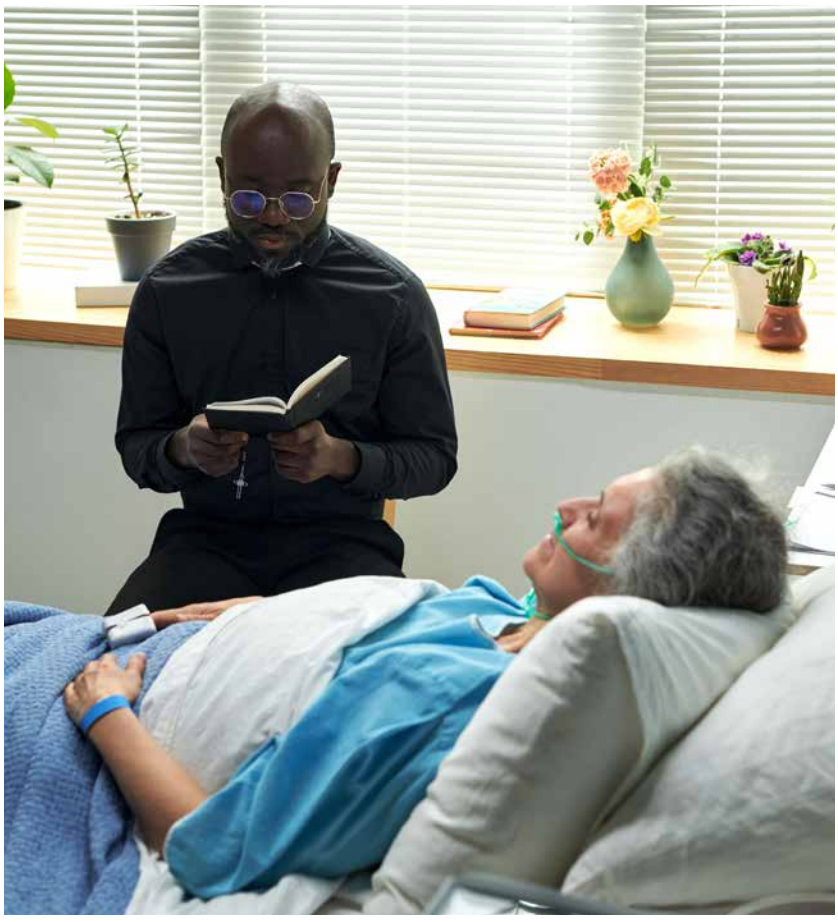
The first jar, therefore, leads naturally to the second. Having strengthened the home as a place where Christ is encountered, we are called to carry his presence beyond the home and into the lives of those who are most in need. From communion flows mission; from belonging flows service; and from encountering Christ comes the desire to encounter him in our neighbour.

And so, we turn to the second jar: Outreach.















YEAR 3

Jar Two: Social Outreach to the Poor, Sick, and Vulnerable





Introduction

Among the guests invited at Cana, it is Mary who first notices what others have overlooked. Before anyone voices the need, her attentive and maternal heart perceives what is lacking. She sees beyond the celebration, to the hidden difficulty, and brings it to her Son[133].

This attentiveness reveals something essential about Christian discipleship.

As families grow in faith, prayer, and communion, they gradually learn to see with the eyes of Christ and the heart of Mary. The grace received within the home is never meant to remain enclosed within the family itself. It naturally overflows into concern for others, fostering compassion, generosity, solidarity, and service. The domestic church becomes missionary when it learns to recognize the needs of neighbours, communities, and the wider human family[134].

In this way, the renewal of family life gives rise to the renewal of social outreach. Hearts formed through prayer, sacrifice, forgiveness, and love become more attentive to those who suffer, struggle, or feel forgotten. Families that encounter Christ become capable of bringing others to him[135].

> *As families grow in faith, prayer, and communion, they gradually learn to see with the eyes of Christ and the heart of Mary.*

Like Mary, parishes must learn to notice before being asked, to listen before speaking, to accompany before directing, and to bring the needs of the world before the Lord with the same trusting faith with which Mary approached her Son at Cana[136]. Outreach therefore begins not with programs or structures, but with a way of seeing: an inner disposition of attentiveness shaped by charity and animated by grace.

For this reason, the second jar flows naturally from the first.



The Virgin Mother's words, "They have no wine"[137], continue to echo throughout our communities of faith today. They are heard in the voices of:

- youth searching for direction, purpose, and belonging;
- communities seeking justice, healing, and reconciliation;
- migrants and refugees longing for welcome and support;
- persons burdened by addiction, grief, loneliness, or mental illness;
- the unborn, the sick, and the dying whose dignity is threatened; and
- the poor and vulnerable whose struggles often remain unseen.

The second jar therefore invites every parish to cultivate a Marian heart: a heart marked by attentiveness, compassion, tenderness, and care. For when we learn to see others through the attentiveness of Mary, we are led naturally to bring them to Jesus, who alone can transform human need into the new wine of hope[138].

Pope Francis described this disposition as the "Marian style" of the Church's work of evangelization. In Mary, we discover that humility and tenderness are not signs of weakness, but qualities of those who are truly strong. Her example holds together what Christian social outreach must never separate: justice and tenderness, contemplation and concern for others[139].

The Church as a Sacrament of Mercy and Communion

Evangelii Gaudium reminds us that "an authentic faith [...] always involves a deep desire to change the world"[140]. Faith that encounters Christ cannot remain private or self-contained. It naturally bears fruit in love of neighbour and in a commitment to the transformation of society according to the values of the Gospel[141].

For this reason, Christian outreach must move beyond good intentions or occasional acts of generosity. It finds concrete expression through accompaniment, service, justice, advocacy, solidarity, and the corporal and spiritual works of mercy[142]. Outreach is not simply one ministry among many; it is an essential expression of Christian discipleship and a vital dimension of the Church's mission of evangelization[143].

This understanding arises from the Church's deepest identity. As *Lumen Gentium* teaches, the Church is "a sacrament or sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of all humanity"[144]. Communion with Christ necessarily opens the believer to communion with others. The more deeply the Church shares in the life of Christ, the more she is drawn outward in love toward those who are suffering, excluded, forgotten, or in need. Outreach is therefore not an optional activity added to parish life; it is a visible manifestation of who we are.

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* further develops this vision by calling us to become increasingly relational, participatory, and missionary[145]. It invites us to walk alongside those who experience poverty, loneliness, marginalization, exclusion, or suffering, cultivating communities marked by listening, accompaniment, healing, and communion. We are called not only to serve others, but to journey with them, recognizing the dignity and gifts present in every person[146].

Pope Francis' image of the Church as a "field hospital" offers a powerful expression of this missionary identity[147]. We do not wait for wounds to heal before extending welcome. Rather, we go forth to meet people where they are, bringing the healing mercy, compassion, and hope of Christ into the concrete realities of human life[148].

Social outreach is therefore one of the distinctive places where the Gospel becomes visible. It is where faith takes flesh in charity, where communion becomes solidarity, and where the compassionate face of Christ is revealed through the life and witness of his people. When we accompany those who suffer, welcome those who feel excluded, and stand beside those who are burdened, we fulfill our mission as a sign of God's love for the world.



Our commitment to social outreach must ultimately be understood within the horizon of the Kingdom of God. In his pastoral letter *Seeking the Kingdom of God Above and Beyond All Other Things*, Cardinal Leo reminds us that the Kingdom takes tangible form wherever the love of Christ shapes human relationships and inspires concrete acts of charity, justice, and mercy. Drawing upon a contemporary reflection on the Kingdom, he points to homes where love is lived, communities that care for the weak and vulnerable, parishes that reach out to those in need, as well as moments when the hungry are fed, the homeless are sheltered, the neglected are cared for, injustice is confronted, poverty is overcome, and the faith is handed on[149]. In such actions, the values of the Kingdom — love, justice, and peace — become increasingly visible in our midst.

This missionary vision must take concrete form in the life of every parish. The Church describes the parish



as a place of encounter, belonging, accompaniment, fraternity, and missionary outreach, where relationships are formed and those who experience poverty, loneliness, exclusion, or other forms of vulnerability can encounter the closeness of Christ[150]. A parish shaped by the Gospel therefore does more than provide services; it becomes a community that draws near, builds relationships, accompanies people through the realities of life, and allows the witness of charity to become an authentic expression of evangelization.

In this way, outreach is not something added to parish life; it is one of the ways in which the parish reveals what it means to be a community gathered and sent by Christ.

In response, the archdiocese commits to supporting parishes to foster:

1. a culture of life;
2. a culture of encounter;
3. a culture of dialogue;
4. a culture of fraternity and togetherness; and
5. a culture of care.

This vision of the Kingdom provides an important foundation for the vision of social outreach we seek to foster throughout the archdiocese. Cardinal Leo calls us to embody in our daily lives what, once again, Pope Francis described as the "style of God"[151]: to love and actively care for those whom Jesus loved in a particular way, the vulnerable, the poor and abandoned, the sick and elderly, the young and the ostracized, and to engage concretely in works of mercy, charity, justice, and peace. Cardinal Leo further encourages us to seek opportunities to strengthen the Kingdom by working intentionally for "truth and life, holiness and grace"[152].

These qualities help give concrete expression to the kind of ecclesial culture that social outreach requires. A culture of life recognizes and defends the dignity of every human person. A culture of encounter draws near rather than remaining distant. A culture of dialogue listens with respect and seeks understanding across differences. A culture of fraternity and togetherness recognizes others not as strangers, but as brothers and sisters with whom we share responsibility. A culture of care responds with compassion and tenderness to those who are vulnerable, suffering, or in need. Together, these attitudes challenge the isolation, exclusion, and indifference that so often leave people unseen and unattended.

Outreach is one of the ways in which the parish reveals what it means to be a community gathered and sent by Christ.

In this way, the five cultures are not separate pastoral strategies, but interconnected expressions of a Church seeking to live more fully according to the values of the Kingdom. They describe the disposition with which we are called to approach others and the character our parish communities are called increasingly to embody. Through closeness, compassion, dialogue, fraternity, care, and the defense of human dignity, outreach becomes more than a collection of charitable activities: it becomes a visible witness to the presence and reign of Christ in our midst.

1. A Culture of Life

Our outreach begins with a fundamental conviction: every human person possesses an inviolable dignity because each is created in the image and likeness of God and loved into existence by him.

Human dignity is neither earned nor conferred by society. It does not depend upon age, health,

productivity, ability, social status, or usefulness. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches, the dignity of the human person is intrinsic and inalienable because it is rooted in God's creative and redeeming love[153].

For this reason, our commitment to life extends far beyond opposition to those practices that threaten it. To foster a culture of life is to help create the conditions in which every person can live with dignity, belonging, hope, and accompaniment from conception to natural death. It is to recognize, protect, and uphold the value of every human life, especially when that dignity is overlooked, diminished, or threatened.

The archdiocese therefore seeks to foster a culture in which every person is welcomed, supported, and accompanied through the various stages and circumstances of life. This commitment finds expression through ministries that serve families, support the vulnerable, accompany those who suffer, care for the sick and dying, welcome newcomers, and provide practical assistance to those experiencing hardship[154].

Throughout the archdiocese, this witness is already visible in pro-life initiatives, palliative care education, bereavement ministries, pastoral care of the sick, refugee sponsorship, charitable outreach, family support services, and countless acts of compassion offered quietly within parish communities. Together, these ministries proclaim a simple but profound truth: every human life is worthy of love, protection, and care.

To strengthen this culture of life, the archdiocese will support parishes to:

- provide age-appropriate formation on the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of life;
- accompany women, couples, and families facing difficult pregnancies or crisis situations;
- expand pastoral care related to miscarriage, infertility, abortion healing, disability, chronic illness, aging, and end-of-life concerns;
- promote palliative care, compassionate accompaniment, and respect for human dignity at the end of life;
- strengthen collaboration with ministries, agencies, lay ecclesial movements and associations, and communities of consecrated life, that promote the culture of life; and
- form clergy, pastoral workers, and lay leaders to address contemporary bioethical questions with clarity, compassion, and fidelity to Catholic teaching.

Our witness to life must always be pastoral as well as prophetic. It cannot be reduced to statements or principles alone. Rather, it becomes credible when it is expressed through concrete acts of love, service, accompaniment, and care[155].

2. A Culture of Encounter

Christian outreach begins not with programs, but with relationships. The Gospel spreads through encounter.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus consistently meets people where they are. He encounters Zacchaeus in his isolation, the Samaritan woman in her woundedness, Bartimaeus in his exclusion, and the disciples on the road to Emmaus in their disappointment and confusion. Again and again, our Lord reveals that God's love is communicated through presence, community attentiveness, listening, and accompaniment.

This same dynamic is evident at Cana. Before any action is taken, Mary notices a need. Her attentiveness becomes the beginning of the miracle[156]. In a similar way, authentic outreach begins when we learn to see others with compassion, to recognize what is lacking, and to draw near with care.

Pope Francis frequently called the Church to foster a "culture of encounter", resisting every temptation toward indifference, isolation, or self-referentiality[157]. A culture of encounter invites us to move beyond anonymity and toward genuine relationships. It requires presence before programs, listening before solutions, and accompaniment before judgment.

This call is especially urgent in a society where many experience not only material hardship but also profound relational poverty. Loneliness, disconnection, invisibility, and the loss of meaningful community affect people of every age and circumstance[158].



Many long not only for assistance, but for belonging; not only for services, but for relationships.

In many parish communities, this culture of encounter is already present in quiet but powerful ways: through coffee gatherings, prayer groups, home visits, outreach ministries, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Catholic Women's League, the Knights of Columbus, neighbourhood initiatives, and countless hidden acts of charity. Though often simple and unobtrusive, these ministries restore human connection and remind people that they are not alone.

For this reason, the archdiocese will support parishes to:

- foster parish environments where every person feels seen, welcomed, and valued;
- create opportunities for meaningful relationships across generations, cultures, and life experiences;
- form clergy, staff, and lay leaders in the ministry of listening, accompaniment, and pastoral presence;
- reach out intentionally to those who feel distant from the Church, including newcomers, young adults, seniors, people with disabilities, wounded families, and persons living in isolation or irregular unions; and
- strengthen parish initiatives that promote friendship, community-building, and mutual support.

The goal of outreach is not merely to provide assistance, but to foster communion. Every parish should be more than a place people attend, but a community where people are known, welcomed, accompanied, and loved.

When we learn to encounter others as Christ encountered them, and when we see with the attentiveness of Mary at Cana, the Gospel becomes visible in everyday life. Relationships are renewed, communities are strengthened, and the love of Christ is made present in the world[159].

3. A Culture of Dialogue

The ministry of outreach requires dialogue.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus engages people with patience, respect, and attentiveness. He listens before he teaches, asks questions before he offers answers, and enters into conversation with people from a wide variety of backgrounds, experiences, and circumstances. His encounters reveal that dialogue is not a strategy, but an expression of love and a pathway toward truth.

We are called to continue this same approach. In an increasingly diverse, secularized, and pluralistic society, many people have little familiarity with the life of the Church. Others carry questions,

misunderstandings, or wounds that shape their relationship with faith and religious institutions. These realities invite us not to withdraw, but to become ever more capable of listening, accompanying, and engaging others with humility and confidence[160].

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* emphasizes that a synodal Church must become a listening Church, one capable of discernment, participation, communion, and shared mission[161]. Dialogue is therefore not peripheral to the Church's life; it is an essential expression of how the People of God walk together and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit[162].

For this reason, the archdiocese will support parishes to:

- create opportunities for listening, consultation, and communal discernment;
- encourage respectful and charitable conversations across differences within parish communities;
- strengthen collaboration among clergy, laity, consecrated persons, families, schools, and archdiocesan ministries;
- form parish leaders in synodal practices rooted in prayer, listening, discernment, and accompaniment; and
- promote ecumenical, interreligious, and community partnerships that contribute to the common good.

A culture of dialogue also extends beyond the parish itself. We are called to engage the wider society with wisdom, charity, and conviction. Catholics are invited to bring the light of the Gospel into education, healthcare, social services, business, communications, politics, culture, and every sphere of public life. Outreach therefore includes helping the faithful enter these conversations with both confidence and humility[163].

Authentic dialogue does not require the abandonment of truth. Rather, it creates the conditions in which truth can be proposed credibly, received respectfully, and lived more fully. Dialogue and proclamation belong together. Listening opens hearts, and hearts opened through trust become more receptive to the transforming power of the Gospel[164].

When parishes cultivate a culture of dialogue, they become places where people feel heard, respected, and welcomed. Such communities strengthen communion within the Church, build bridges across differences, and create new opportunities for evangelization, reconciliation, and shared mission[165].

4. A Culture of Fraternity and Togetherness

One of the great pastoral challenges of our time is the growing experience of isolation. Individuals often find themselves separated from neighbours, disconnected from communities, and increasingly confined within social, cultural, or ideological divisions. This is the result not necessarily of opposition to Gospel values, but of the quiet growth of indifference[166].

We are called to offer a different witness.

Christian fraternity is more than friendliness or social interaction. It flows from our communion with Christ and from the recognition that, through Baptism, we become members of one Body and children of one Father. As *Lumen Gentium* teaches, the Church is a people gathered into unity by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit[167]. The communion we share in Christ is therefore not merely a spiritual reality; it is meant to be visible in the way we live, pray, serve, and care for one another[168].

For this reason, parish life must foster genuine relationships and a deep sense of belonging. People should encounter in the Church not anonymity, but community; not isolation, but companionship; not division, but fraternity[169].

The archdiocese will support parishes to:

- identify individuals and families who are disconnected from parish life;
- form parish visitation and accompaniment ministries;
- ensure accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities;
- support immigrant and culturally diverse communities;
- strengthen ministries for persons who feel forgotten or marginalized;
- encourage parish meals, celebrations, pilgrimages, retreats, and service opportunities that bring people together in faith and friendship;

- foster small faith-sharing communities and family-based faith formation initiatives;
- create opportunities for spiritual friendship, mentorship, and mutual support; and
- promote parish environments where newcomers and long-time parishioners alike experience welcome, belonging, and participation.

Particular attention must be given to addressing loneliness and social fragmentation, which increasingly affect people of every age. While we cannot eliminate every burden, we can ensure that no one carries those burdens alone.

Pope Francis had frequently reminded the Church that fraternity is essential to both evangelization and social renewal[170]. Parishes marked by friendship, solidarity, and mutual care become powerful signs of the Kingdom of God. They reveal that another way of living is possible: a way rooted not in individualism, competition, or division, but in communion.

In this sense, fraternity is a witness to the Gospel itself. When people experience authentic belonging within the Christian community, they encounter something of the communion for which every human heart longs. We become a living sign that no one is forgotten, no one is abandoned, and no one stands outside the reach of God's love[171].

5. A Culture of Care
Christian outreach reaches its fullest expression in care for others.

Care is more than the provision of services or the meeting of practical needs. It is the willingness to walk with another person, to share their burdens, and to accompany them with patience, compassion, and fidelity. In this way, care reflects the very heart of Christ, who consistently cared for those who were suffering, forgotten, wounded, or alone.

Throughout the Gospels, Jesus reveals a love that is attentive and personal. He touches the sick, consoles the grieving, welcomes the excluded, and restores those who have lost hope. Christian outreach is called to embody this same compassion. Our ministries of service must therefore be rooted not only in generosity, but also in genuine accompaniment and human solidarity[172].



People should encounter in the Church not anonymity, but community.

For this reason, the archdiocese seeks to foster a culture of care throughout parish life, ensuring that those who experience suffering encounter the closeness and mercy of Christ through the life of the Christian community.

This commitment is already visible throughout the archdiocese in the work of parishes, Catholic Charities agencies, healthcare institutions, refugee sponsorship programs, educational institutions, lay movements and associations, and countless volunteers who quietly serve others each day. These ministries reveal the generosity and compassion that are already present within our local Church.

Yet the Gospel continually invites us to go further.

The archdiocese will therefore support parishes to:

- strengthen ministries of accompaniment for individuals and families experiencing grief, separation, addiction, mental health challenges, economic hardship, or other forms of suffering;
- expand bereavement ministries, support groups, and healing initiatives;
- support caregivers, including those caring simultaneously for children, aging parents, and family members with complex needs;
- encourage outreach to the sick, homebound, elderly, marginalized, and those who may be experiencing isolation; and

- promote responsible stewardship of creation as an expression of care for our common home and solidarity with future generations.

In *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Pope Saint John Paul II called the Church to cultivate a spirituality of communion; the capacity to recognize the gifts of others, to make room for them within our lives, and to bear one another's burdens in charity[173]. Such a spirituality transforms care from a task into a way of life. It moves us beyond occasional acts of assistance toward a deeper commitment to solidarity and mutual responsibility.

A culture of care therefore requires a conversion of heart. It calls each member of the parish to become more attentive to the needs of others, more willing to accompany those who suffer, and more capable of seeing every person as a brother or sister entrusted to our care[174].

When parishes cultivate this spirit of compassion, we become a living sign of Christ's presence in the world. Care is no longer experienced merely as assistance received, but as the tangible expression of God's love. In this way, a culture of care reveals the compassionate face of Christ and becomes a powerful witness to the Gospel.

Toward a Missionary Church of Presence

Outreach is a way of fulfilling the mission of the Church. Our parishes are called to be places where:

- no one suffers alone;
- no one is invisible;
- no one is beyond accompaniment;
- no one is reduced to a category or problem; and
- every person encounters the closeness of Christ through his Church.

The second jar calls us to be visibly missionary in the midst of society, and deeply present within it.

The outreach already present throughout the archdiocese through parish ministries, schools, healthcare, refugee sponsorship, charitable outreach, community-building initiatives, lay movements and associations, media, and public witness, provides a strong foundation for this mission.

Parishes and families become primary builders of this culture whenever they practice forgiveness, hospitality, sacrifice, listening, generosity, tenderness, and fidelity within ordinary life. In this way, the Christian family becomes not only the recipient of pastoral care, but one of the principal agents of evangelization and renewal within both the Church and society.

Yet Cana reminds us that noticing the need is only the beginning. Having seen that "they have no wine"[175] our Mother Mary turns to Jesus and places the need before him. So too, as we go forth to encounter those who suffer, accompany those who are isolated, welcome those who are excluded, and defend the dignity of every human life, we recognize that we cannot sustain this mission by human generosity alone. The love we are called to bring into the world must first be received from Christ.

Outreach therefore leads us not away from the spiritual life, but more deeply into it. If we are to recognize Christ in those we serve, we must remain close to him ourselves. Prayer teaches us to see with his eyes and to listen with his heart; the Word of God forms us in his way; and the sacraments heal, strengthen, and nourish us with his grace. Above all, in the Eucharist, Christ gathers us into communion with himself and with one another, only to send us forth again to become his presence in the world. Communion and mission therefore belong together: communion with Christ gives life to our mission, while mission continually draws us back to the one who is its source.

Having heard the needs of those around us, we now turn with Mary toward Christ. We bring before him not only the needs of the world, but the empty jars of our own lives, trusting that he can transform what we place before him. This brings us naturally to prayer, spirituality, and sacramental life, the third jar, where we encounter anew the one who nourishes our communion, renews our strength, and sends us forth again in mission.













YEAR 4

Jar Three: Prayer, Spirituality, and Sacramental Life



Introduction

At Cana, the Blessed Mother does not attempt to solve the crisis herself. She notices the need, brings it to Christ, and entrusts the situation entirely to him[176]. In this simple yet profound gesture, she reveals the heart of all authentic pastoral renewal,[177] the indispensability of prayer.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* sees in Mary's action at Cana a particular expression of her intercessory prayer[178]. She presents the needs of others to her Son, and in faith, entrusts those needs to him. The Catechism also situates this intercession within the deeper mystery signified by Cana: the wedding feast that points ultimately toward the wedding feast of the Lamb[179]. Our Mother Mary thus teaches us how to pray, not by placing ourselves at the centre, but by bringing the needs of others to Jesus and trusting in the abundance of his grace.

From Mary's example at Cana, we are led to the heart of all authentic pastoral renewal: before the Church acts, plans, or organizes, she must first bring her needs and the needs of the world before the Lord in prayer.

Therefore, the third jar flows naturally from the first two.

Once we have identified the various needs of those whom we are called to serve (families at all stages of life, and those present in our social outreach), we must lead ourselves, and them, deeper to the source from which all Christian life flows: prayer, sacramental grace, and ultimately communion with God.

Pastoral labour must always flow from divine grace.

A Church Rooted in Prayer and Drawn into the Saving Hour of Christ

The Eucharist is our Cana. At every Mass, our Lord continues his work of transformation, taking what we bring before him (bread and wine, our joys and sorrows, our family life, our wounds and hopes) and draws us into communion with his divine life[180]. We gather not merely to remember our Lord, but to encounter him truly present, alive and active among his people. From the Eucharist flows the Church's unity, mission, healing, and hope[181].

For this reason, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that the Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life"[182]. Every aspect of the Church's pastoral mission finds its origin in the Eucharist and returns to it. The vitality of parish life, the fruitfulness of evangelization, the strength of families, the effectiveness of outreach, and the discernment of vocations all depend upon a living sacramental communion with Christ[183].

Prayer, therefore, is not a retreat from the realities of the world. Rather, it enables us to enter more deeply into those realities with the mind and heart of Jesus. Through prayer we learn to see as he sees, to love as he loves, and to serve as he serves.

Pope St. John Paul II, in *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, called the Church to become above all a "school of prayer"[184]. Pope Francis echoed this conviction, warning that pastoral activity detached from prayer risks becoming merely administrative, exhausted, and spiritually barren[185]. Only a Church that remains close to Christ in prayer can remain truly close to humanity in its needs and sufferings[186].

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* further reminds us that authentic discernment, participation, communion, and mission arise from attentive listening to the Holy Spirit. A synodal Church is necessarily a praying Church, for it is through prayer that the People of God learn to walk together and recognize the voice of the Lord who guides them[187].

Likewise, Pope Leo XIV, in *Drawing New Maps of Hope*, teaches that Christian hope cannot be founded merely within efficiency, technology, or human achievement[188]. Hope is born from an encounter with the living Christ. It is nurtured through prayer, strengthened by the sacraments, and sustained within the communion of the Church. As pilgrims of hope,

we discovered that every genuine renewal begins not with our plans, but with God's grace at work within us.

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to be:

1. Eucharistic communities;
2. centres of sacramental encounter;
3. communities of contemplation and mission;
4. schools of prayer;
5. sanctuaries of spiritual accompaniment, healing and of hope amid a fragmented culture.

This commitment must embrace every person the archdiocese is called to serve:

- children learning to pray within the domestic church and schools;
- engaged and married couples seeking sacramental strength;
- parents carrying the responsibility of faith formation;
- youth and young adults searching for meaning and belonging;
- the elderly longing for companionship and spiritual consolation;
- grieving persons carrying hidden sorrow;
- newcomers and culturally diverse communities seeking a spiritual home;
- persons wounded by addiction, loneliness, mental illness, or isolation; and
- those who feel distant from the Church yet continue to hunger for God.

We are called to become increasingly capable of leading every person toward an authentic encounter with Jesus.

1. The Eucharist: The Heart of Parish Community Life

At Cana, our Lord transforms ordinary water into abundant wine. At the altar, he transforms bread and wine into his very Body and Blood.

The Church's liturgy deepens this connection between Cana and the Eucharist. In the *Mass of Our Lady of Cana*, the Prayer over the Offerings[189] recalls Christ's transformation of water into wine and directs our attention toward the greater sacramental mystery celebrated at the altar: the gifts offered by the Church

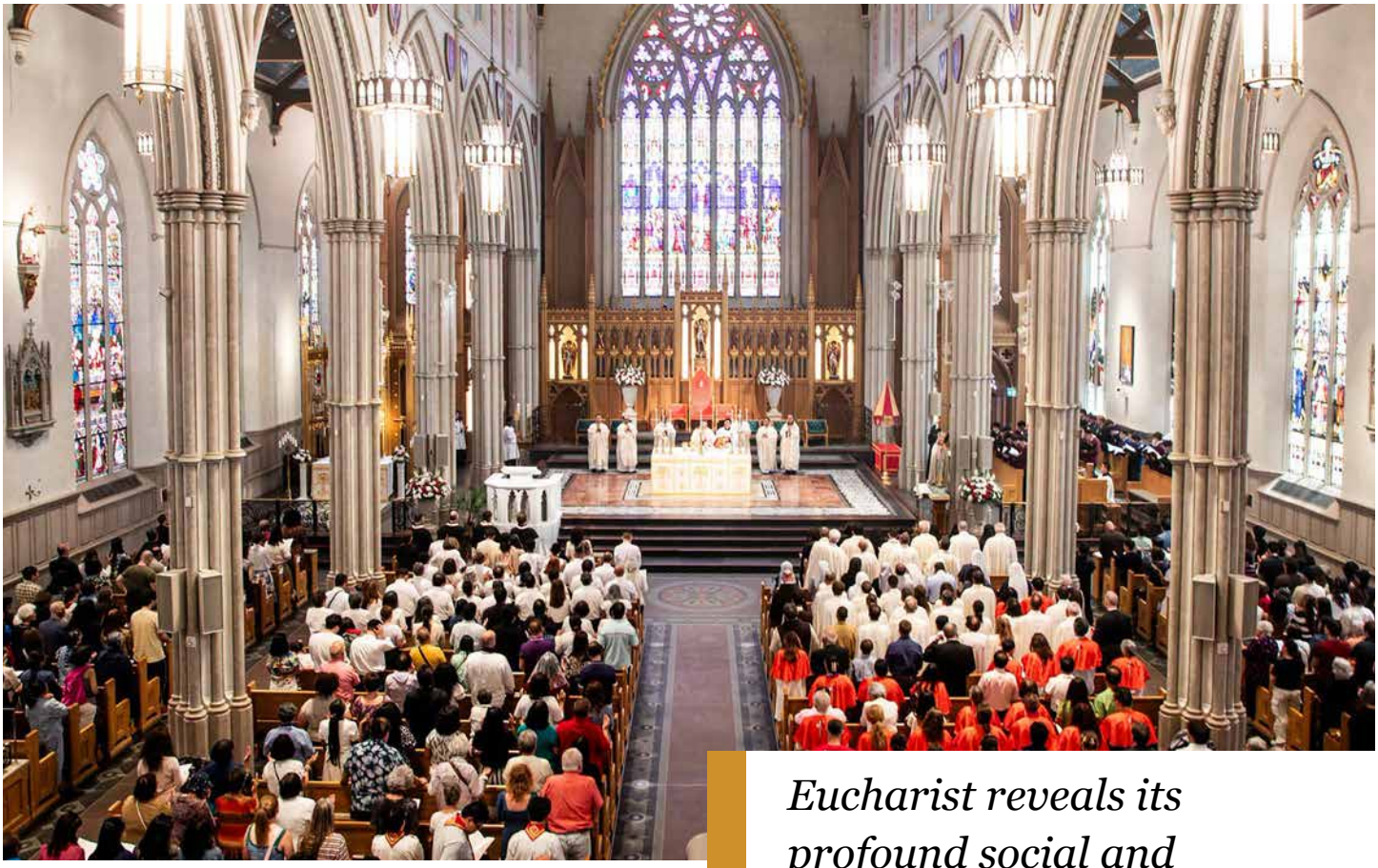


It is the mystery from which the Church continually receives her life and mission.

become for us the Body and Blood of Christ, drawing us into the saving mystery of his Passion, Death, and Resurrection. Cana, therefore, points beyond itself toward the Paschal Mystery. The abundance of wine at the wedding feast anticipates the greater abundance of Christ's self-giving love, offered for the life of the world and made sacramentally present in the Eucharist.

Seen in this light, the Eucharist is not simply one dimension of parish life among many; it is the mystery from which the Church continually receives her life and mission. It remains the centre from which all parish life flows and towards which it returns[190].

This vision is further developed in Cardinal Leo's pastoral letter *That Blessed Upper Room*, where he presents the Cenacle as a foundational image of Christian life. The Upper Room was not only the place of the Last Supper, but also a place of prayer, communion, the presence of Mary our Mother, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the sending forth of the disciples in mission[191]. As such, it offers a



Eucharist reveals its profound social and spiritual significance.

compelling image for parish renewal: a community centred on Christ, nourished by his Body and Blood, strengthened through relationship, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, sent forth to proclaim and embody the Gospel.

This vision of the parish gathered around the Lord, calls us to consider honestly the extent to which the faithful continue to participate fully in the Church's Eucharistic life. In this regard, the archdiocese recognizes the regrettable pastoral reality that participation in Sunday Mass has declined in recent decades, particularly among younger generations.

This challenge cannot be met through programs or administrative measures alone. It invites a deeper renewal of faith: a renewed proclamation of the Gospel, renewed catechesis, renewed beauty and reverence in worship, renewed hospitality, renewed outreach to parents, and a renewed Eucharistic witness capable of helping people encounter the living Christ[192].

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to cultivate liturgical life that is:

- reverent and prayerful;
- beautiful and welcoming;
- rooted in active participation;
- culturally attentive while remaining faithful to the liturgical tradition of the Church;
- accessible to individuals of every age and ability;
- centered on encounter with Christ rather than performance or efficiency; and
- speaks to the spiritual needs of life experience.

This will be accomplished by providing:

- liturgical formation resources;
- seasonal liturgical catechesis;
- training for lay liturgical ministers;
- support for sacred music and liturgical art;
- livestream and digital accessibility initiatives;
- multilingual liturgical support;
- initiatives that foster participation among children, youth, families, and newcomers; and
- revisiting homiletics and ongoing training.

Particular attention must be given to the Sunday Eucharist, the privileged gathering of the Christian

community and the foundation of parish life. In a culture increasingly marked by individualism, fragmentation, and isolation, the Sunday assembly stands as a living sign that communion with God and communion with one another remain not only possible, but essential to human flourishing.

> *Around his altar, strangers become neighbours, neighbours become brothers and sisters …*

Pope Francis frequently warned against those elements in society that weaken relationships, foster indifference, and leave many feeling isolated and forgotten[193]. The Eucharist stands in direct contrast to this reality. Gathered around the Lord's table, believers are formed into one Body in Christ, learning anew that faith is never lived in isolation but always in communion.

Pope Leo XIV has likewise emphasized the risks present in contemporary society that work against communion, neglecting the deeper union for which the human person is created[194]. In this context, the Eucharist reveals its profound social and spiritual significance. It is not only the source of divine grace but also the restoration of authentic relationship, reconciling us with God, drawing us into communion with one another, and renewing our capacity to live as a people bound together in faith, hope, and love[195].

Each Sunday, therefore, the Church offers a witness that the divisions of our world need not have the final word[196]. In Christ, communion is possible. Around his altar, strangers become neighbours, neighbours become brothers and sisters, and the People of God are renewed for mission[197].

Every parish should therefore ask themselves:

- Do people encounter prayerful reverence and feel welcomed at Mass?
- Are families helped to participate meaningfully?
- Are young people invited into genuine liturgical belonging?
- Do the elderly and homebound remain connected to Eucharistic life?
- Are those returning to the Church received with patience and tenderness?
- The Eucharist is not merely attended. It is lived.

2. The Sacramental Life: Encounter with Christ in his Paschal Mystery

The sacramental life of the Church reveals Christ continually present and active throughout the journey of human life. Through the sacraments, the Lord accompanies his people from birth to death, sanctifying every stage of life and every vocation[198].

In Baptism, he incorporates us into his Body and gives us new life in him. In Reconciliation, he heals the wounds of sin and restores communion. In Confirmation, he strengthens his disciples with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and sends them forth in mission. In Matrimony, he consecrates covenant love as a living sign of his faithful love for the Church. In the Anointing of the Sick, he draws near to those who suffer with his healing presence and compassion. In Holy Orders, he continues his pastoral care of the Church through the ministry of ordained ministers.

The sacraments are therefore not merely religious ceremonies or milestones to be celebrated and then left behind. They are esteemed encounters with the living Christ, who continues to act within the concrete realities of human life, offering grace, healing, strength, and hope[199].

The decline in sacramental participation witnessed in many places is not simply a matter of changing habits or reduced religious practice. It often reflects deeper challenges: weakened faith formation, difficulties in passing on the faith between generations, diminished ecclesial belonging, loss of trust, and uncertainty about Christian identity and purpose.

For this reason, parishes must move beyond a model of sacramental maintenance, toward a culture of sacramental evangelization[200]. Preparation for the sacraments must become an opportunity for encounter, accompaniment, catechesis, and missionary discipleship, helping individuals and families discover that the sacraments are not merely obligations to be fulfilled, but gifts through which Christ continues to transform lives[201].



The archdiocese commits to support parishes to:

- present sacramental preparation as missionary discipleship rather than an administrative requirement;
- integrate parents and families more deeply into sacramental catechesis;
- connect sacramental preparation to parish belonging and ongoing formation;
- cultivate hospitality toward those approaching the sacraments after a long absence;
- strengthen mystagogical formation following sacramental celebrations;
- promote regular celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation; and
- ensure pastoral accompaniment for mixed marriages, blended families, and persons living complex life situations.

Among the sacraments, the Sacrament of Reconciliation merits particular attention and renewal in our time. It is one of the most transformative ways by which Christ continues his ministry of healing, forgiving, and restoring wounded hearts to communion with God, the Church, and one another[202].

Many people today carry wounds that are often hidden from view: guilt, grief, disappointment, fractured relationships, anxiety, and spiritual weariness[203]. At the same time, contemporary culture frequently struggles to hold together two essential truths: personal responsibility and authentic mercy. As a result, many find themselves either burdened by shame or deprived of the hope that genuine forgiveness can bring[204].

The Sacrament of Reconciliation proclaims a different message. Here, sinners encounter not condemnation, but the healing mercy of Christ[205]. Here, wounds are named, forgiveness is received, and new beginnings become possible. As Pope Francis often reminded the Church, God "never tires of forgiving"; it is we who sometimes tire of seeking his mercy[206]. The renewal of this sacrament therefore requires not only greater availability for sacramental confession, but also renewed catechesis, personal invitation, and pastoral accompaniment that helps people rediscover the joy of reconciliation[207].

Pope Leo XIV has likewise emphasized that the sacrament becomes a powerful reminder that no one is defined by failure, reduced to a mistake, or forgotten by God[208]. Each person is known, loved, called by name, and invited into renewed communion. Through the ministry of reconciliation, Christ restores not only what sin has damaged, but also the deeper truth of who we are as beloved sons and daughters of the Father[209].

Every parish should therefore ask:

- Do the faithful know where and when God's mercy may be found?
- Do they encounter invitation rather than hesitation, welcome rather than fear, hope rather than discouragement?

For whenever a penitent enters the confessional, the Church witnesses once again the miracle of grace: what was wounded is healed, what was lost is found, and what was broken is restored.

The archdiocese will support parishes to continue to promote and offer:

- archdiocesan-wide Days of Confession;
- parish reconciliation initiatives during Advent and Lent;
- catechesis on mercy and conscience formation;
- pastoral accompaniment for persons returning to the sacraments after long absence; and
- homilies and workshops on the benefit of regular Confession.

Parishes must become increasingly recognizable as a sanctuary of reconciliation and spiritual renewal.

3. Developing the Contemplative Heart of the Church

Eucharistic adoration cultivates a listening heart.

In silence before the Blessed Sacrament, we learn once again that mission begins in contemplation[210]. Eucharistic adoration forms disciples capable of recognizing Christ not only in the tabernacle, but also in the suffering, the forgotten, and the poor[211].

The archdiocese already witnesses widespread devotion through: Eucharistic adoration; parish holy hours; perpetual adoration chapels; rosary groups; novenas; devotion to the Divine Mercy; as well as Marian processions and cultural devotions.

These devotional expressions remain important pathways of evangelization and spiritual belonging, particularly within culturally diverse communities[212].

Popular piety must never be dismissed as secondary spirituality. As *Evangelii Gaudium* teaches, authentic popular devotion often expresses the deep faith of the People of God[213].

In an age increasingly shaped by overstimulation, constant distraction, and emotional fatigue, Eucharistic adoration becomes a prophetic witness to silence, attentiveness, and presence. Prayer becomes a means not only of devotion, but necessarily, the recovery of authentic encounter with God, with others, and with one's own interior life[214].

The archdiocese will support parishes to continue to:

- promote parish devotional life;
- encourage Eucharistic adoration among youth and young adults;
- foster Marian devotion rooted in Christ;
- support large-scale diocesan devotional gatherings such as "A Day With Mary", "Corpus Christi Processions";
- provide catechetical formation connected to devotional practices; and
- highlight Parish Masses especially in Advent and Lent.

Devotion must always deepen sacramental life, missionary discipleship, and communion with the Lord.

4. Prayer in the Home: The Domestic Church

Just as our Lord chose to reveal his glory within the home of a newly married couple at Cana, so too he continues to sanctify family life today[215]. The renewal of prayer within our parishes must therefore extend into the home, where faith is first encountered and most regularly lived[216].

Families are not simply recipients of the Church's ministry; they are living communities of faith where prayer, love, forgiveness, and discipleship take root. The home is often the first place where children learn the name of Jesus, where life's joys and sorrows are entrusted to God, and where the Gospel is witnessed in daily life[217].

Many families rediscovered this truth during the COVID-19 pandemic when prayer in the home became a spiritual lifeline[218]. That experience revealed something enduring: the domestic Church is not a substitute for parish life, but one of its essential foundations. A renewed Church requires renewed homes in which prayer becomes as natural as conversation and as faithful as daily bread[219].

The archdiocese will support parishes to encourage:

- family prayer resources;
- blessings within the home;
- Scripture reflection among families;
- family rosaries and Advent/Lenten practices;
- prayer before meals;
- intergenerational faith-sharing; and
- guidance for parents as spiritual leaders within the home.

Children learn prayer not primarily through instruction, but through witnessing adults who pray.

The archdiocese will support parishes to continue to develop:

- digital family prayer resources;
- home liturgical guides;
- family sacramental preparation supports; and
- pastoral resources attentive to family realities.

Pope Leo XIV's call to draw "new maps of hope" finds a particular resonance within family life and the ordinary experiences of daily living[220]. Christian

homes are called to become places where prayer nurtures trust, strengthens relationships, heals wounds, preserves memory, and sustains hope amid life's challenges. In this way, families become living signs that God's presence continues to accompany his people through every season of life[221].

Prayer must therefore be more than an occasional practice; it must become woven into the rhythm of daily living[222]. The Christian life is not divided between moments that belong to God and moments that do not. Rather, all of life is called to be lived in his presence.

The Liturgy of the Hours offers a particular way of recovering this vision. By sanctifying the hours of the day through prayer, the Church proclaims that time itself belongs to God[223]. Morning Prayer consecrates the beginning of the day, Evening Prayer gathers its labours and blessings into thanksgiving, and together they unite parish communities and families with the universal prayer of the Church throughout the world.

For this reason, the archdiocese will support parishes in fostering a richer culture of liturgical and communal prayer through:

- parish celebration of Morning and Evening Prayer;
- incorporation of the Liturgy of the Hours into retreats, workshops and ministries;
- formation for lay leadership in communal prayer; and
- opportunities for sacred silence, sacred music, and contemplative prayer.

At the same time, authentic spirituality must embrace the realities of everyday life. Work and rest, family life and friendship, caregiving and service, suffering and joy, aging and illness, all become places where God is present and active[224].

In a culture often marked by haste, distraction, and fragmentation, prayer restores the capacity to dwell attentively within the present moment. It teaches us to recognize God's presence in ordinary circumstances and to discover that even the most familiar moments of life can become places of encounter with his grace. Through prayer, ordinary time is transformed into sacred time, and ordinary life becomes a path to holiness[225].



Through prayer, ordinary time is transformed into sacred time, and ordinary life becomes a path to holiness.

5. Spiritual Accompaniment and a Church of Sanctuary

Our contemporary culture is marked by remarkable achievements, yet many people continue to experience profound spiritual weariness. Beneath the surface of daily life, countless individuals try to cope with hidden afflictions and loss of meaning. Constant connectivity often coexists with deep isolation, while relentless activity can leave little room for silence, reflection, or genuine encounter[226].

In such a context, Pope Francis' image of the Church as a "field hospital" once again takes on particular significance[227]. We must foster parishes where wounded hearts encounter healing, where burdens are shared, where people are listened to with patience and compassion, and where the weary discover rest in the presence of God. Parishes are called to be sanctuaries of hope, offering genuine accompaniment rooted in prayer and human relationship[228].

For this reason, the archdiocese will support parishes to renew prayer and spirituality by including opportunities for:

- spiritual direction;
- pastoral accompaniment;
- listening ministries;

- retreats and days of reflection;
- prayer-centered support groups;
- vocational discernment; and
- spaces dedicated to silence, contemplation, and encounter with the Lord.

These ministries help create an environment where individuals can bring their struggles before God and discover anew his healing presence.

Pope Leo XIV's reflections on the preservation of authentic human relationships further deepens this pastoral vision[229]. We are not merely consumers, users, profiles, or isolated individuals. We are beloved children of God, created for relationship, called into communion, and invited to share in the life of Christ. Prayer and spiritual accompaniment help restore this truth, enabling people to rediscover both their dignity and their vocation within the family of God.

Toward a Eucharistic and Missionary Church

The third jar, therefore, calls the archdiocese toward a renewed Eucharistic, sacramental, and contemplative identity.

Prayer sends us outward renewed.

From the Eucharist flows compassion for the poor; strength for families; healing for the wounded; courage for evangelization; communion amid division; and hope amid discouragement.

As Cardinal Leo reminds us in his pastoral letter *That Blessed Upper Room*, the Church gathered in prayer is always a Church preparing to be sent: nourished by the Eucharist, united in communion, animated by the Holy Spirit, and entrusted with the Gospel for the life of the world[230].

Parishes in the Archdiocese of Toronto are therefore called to be:

- a praying community;
- a Eucharistic community;
- a missionary community;
- a contemplative community;
- a community of sanctuary and healing; and
- a community where every person may encounter the living Christ.

Every authentic encounter with our Lord awakens a desire to know him more fully, to understand his teachings more deeply, and to follow him more faithfully. Prayer opens the heart to his presence; the Word of God allows us to hear his voice; and the sacraments draw us into the mystery of his life and strengthen us by his grace. Yet the encounter with Christ is never meant to remain only an experience of the moment. It calls us into an ever-deepening relationship with him and into a lifelong journey of discipleship.

Here again, Cana provides the pattern. Having directed attention to Jesus, Mary tells the servants, "Do whatever he tells you"[231]. Her words express something essential about Christian discipleship: encountering Christ leads to listening to him, learning from him, and allowing his Word to shape the way we understand God, ourselves, one another, and the world. Faith therefore seeks understanding, and the spiritual life naturally gives rise to formation.

Catechesis and formation serve this deeper journey. They help us to know the person of Jesus Christ, understand the faith of the Church, recognize the voice of the Lord amid the many competing voices of our culture, discern his will, and respond to him with greater freedom and maturity. Formation is therefore not simply the transmission of religious knowledge; it is the formation of disciples — men and women whose minds and hearts are increasingly shaped by Christ and who are equipped to live and witness to the Gospel in everyday life.

Having encountered our Lord in prayer and the sacramental life, we therefore hear anew Mary's invitation at Cana.

To listen, understand, discern, and respond to this invitation, requires that we become lifelong learners in the school of Christ. This brings us naturally to catechesis and formation — the fourth jar.















YEAR 5

Jar Four: Catechesis and Formation





Introduction: Formation in the School of Discipleship

At Cana, the Blessed Virgin Mary speaks the last words attributed to her in Sacred Scripture: "Do whatever he tells you"[232]. Though simple, these words contain the essence of Christian discipleship. They are an invitation to trust, to listen, and to follow Christ wherever he leads[233].

Mary's words also echo the covenantal response of the people of Israel at Sinai: "Everything that the Lord has spoken we will do"[234]. Mary thus stands within the great biblical tradition of a people who hear the Word of God, receive it in faith, and respond with obedience. At Cana, however, she does more than embody this response herself, she directs others toward it, forming the servants in the fundamental disposition of discipleship, to listen to Christ, trust his word, and act upon it.

The servants obey before they fully understand. They fill the jars to the brim without knowing what the Lord intends to do. Their obedience precedes comprehension; their trust creates the space in which grace can act[235]. In this way, the miracle at Cana reveals a persistent truth: faith grows not only through understanding, but through a willingness to entrust ourselves to Christ.

This is the heart of catechesis and formation.

Catechesis is far more than the transmission of religious information or the completion of sacramental preparation. It is the lifelong process by which persons encounter Jesus, deepen their relationship with him, and learn to see all of life through the lens of the Gospel. It is formation in discipleship[236].

As *Catechesi Tradendae* teaches, "the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch, but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ"[237]. The *Directory for Catechesis* further reminds us that catechesis belongs within the Church's broader mission of evangelization and must always lead to ongoing conversion, deeper communion, and missionary discipleship[238]. The goal of formation is therefore not simply informed Catholics, but transformed disciples whose lives increasingly reflect the life of Christ[239].

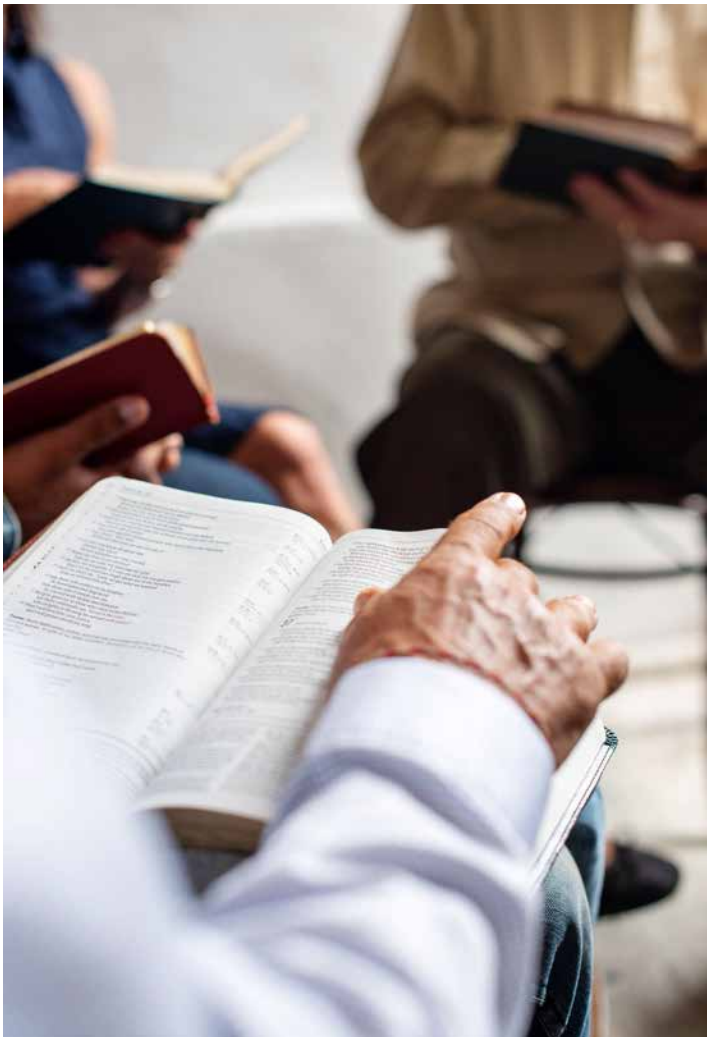
This fourth jar flows naturally from those that precede it. Families become the first schools of faith, where the Gospel is first heard and lived. Social outreach opens hearts through encounter, compassion, and accompaniment. Prayer and the sacramental life deepen communion with Christ and sustain the life of grace. From these foundations emerges the need for ongoing faith formation, so that the faithful may grow in wisdom, discernment, and spiritual maturity, learning not only what the Church teaches, but how to live the Gospel with conviction and joy.

> *Every parish is called to become a place of lifelong faith formation.*

Without catechesis, faith can easily become fragile, disconnected from daily life, or reduced to cultural memory[240]. Without ongoing formation, discipleship struggles to mature and bear fruit[241]. Without evangelization, the sacraments risk being received without a living awareness of the relationship to which they lead[242]. For this reason, every parish is called to become a place of lifelong faith formation, where believers of every age and ability are continually invited to hear the Lord's voice and, like the servants at Cana, respond with trust to the words: "Do whatever he tells you"[243].

The archdiocese recognizes many contemporary realities that make this jar particularly urgent: declining religious literacy; increasing secularism; confusion regarding moral truth and human identity; digital fragmentation and misinformation; weakened intergenerational transmission of faith; loneliness and loss of belonging; growing distrust of institutions; the rapid emergence of technologies that shape culture and human relationships; and uneven catechetical depth across parishes and communities.

At the same time, the archdiocese also recognizes many signs of hope already present: dedicated catechists and pastoral leaders; the Archdiocesan Catechist Formation Program; OCIA and adult



initiation; Catechesis of the Good Shepherd; family-based faith formation initiatives; lay ecclesial movements and associations; schools committed to Catholic education; parish missions, retreats, Scripture studies, and faith-sharing groups; and expanding formation infrastructure and leadership formation.

The challenge before us is not primarily the absence of resources or programs. The challenge is depth, consistency, accompaniment, and missionary renewal.

For this reason, the archdiocese commits to support parishes to:

1. strengthen catechetical programs;
2. form catechists and leaders with theological depth;
3. encourage lifelong adult faith formation;
4. equip families to hand on the faith at home; and
5. integrate evangelization, prayer, outreach, and catechesis.

1. Strengthening Parish Catechetical Programs

At the centre of all catechesis stands not an idea, but a Person. This Christ-centred understanding of formation has particular significance.

The purpose of catechesis is ultimately the same as the purpose of evangelization itself, to lead people into an ever-deepening encounter with the Lord who calls them, saves them, and accompanies them throughout their lives[244].

As *Evangelii Nuntiandi* reminds us, the Church evangelizes so that people may encounter Jesus Christ and receive the new life he offers. Likewise, *Evangelii Gaudium* calls every believer to a "renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ", recognizing that faith remains alive only when it is rooted in a living relationship with him[245].

For this reason, the *Directory for Catechesis* insists that all authentic catechesis must remain firmly grounded in the kerygma: the joyful proclamation that Jesus Christ loves us, gave his life for our salvation, and now lives among us, offering light, strength, mercy, and freedom. Everything else the Church teaches, her doctrine, moral life, sacramental practice, spirituality, and mission, flows from and returns to this foundational encounter with Christ[246].

Catechesis must therefore lead people into friendship with Jesus and form them as missionary disciples[247]. Authentic catechesis is rooted in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, nourished by the sacramental life of the Church, faithful to Catholic doctrine, sustained by prayer, attentive to the realities of human experience, and oriented toward mission and witness[248].

Cardinal Leo develops this vision further in his pastoral letter *Seeking the Kingdom of God Above and Beyond All Other Things*[249], by placing Christian formation within the wider horizon of the Kingdom of God. His emphasis reminds us that faith cannot remain one concern among many, but must shape the priorities, choices, relationships, and aspirations of the whole person. To seek the Kingdom "above and beyond all other things" is to learn to see one's life and the world through the eyes of Jesus, allowing the Gospel to become the measure by which we discern what is true, good, and worthy of our lives. Catechesis therefore has an important formative task: not only

to communicate the content of faith, but to cultivate a Christian way of seeing, judging, and living, so that we are increasingly able to seek God's Kingdom within the concrete circumstances of everyday life.

Catechesis serves the work of evangelization most fully when it continually leads people back to the person of Jesus Christ and forms them to seek his Kingdom in every dimension of life. Doctrine, moral formation, sacramental preparation, Scripture, prayer, and the Church's intellectual tradition, all find their proper unity in him. Formation succeeds not merely when people know more about the faith, but when what they have learned deepens their communion with Christ, shapes the way they understand and live their lives, and equips them to witness to the Gospel within the realities of daily life.

To this end, formation must also equip the faithful, particularly within families, schools, universities, and the digital world, to discern truth amid competing voices and to articulate the Catholic faith with clarity, reason, charity, and conviction[250]. In a culture in which people are constantly formed by competing messages and influences, catechesis must help them not only to recognize what is true, but also to bear witness to that truth in ways that invite dialogue and encounter.

Within the archdiocese, sacramental preparation remains the most widespread and consistent experience of catechesis. Each year, thousands of children, youth, adults, couples, and families participate in preparation for Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, Matrimony, and the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. These moments provide special opportunities not only for instruction, but also for evangelization, accompaniment, and renewed encounter with Jesus.

Sacramental preparation, then, cannot conclude with the reception of a sacrament. Rather, it should open the door to a lifelong journey of conversion, participation in the Eucharist, prayer, formation, and active engagement in the life and mission of the Church.

For this reason, the archdiocese commits itself to supporting parishes to strengthen catechetical life through:

- renewed sacramental catechesis rooted in encounters with Jesus;
- stronger Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) and adult initiation pathways;
- expanded parish Scripture studies, missions, retreats, and faith-sharing groups;
- greater consistency of catechetical formation across parishes, zones and regions;
- inclusive catechesis for persons with disabilities and diverse needs;
- catechesis that supports a culture of life;
- digital and multimedia catechetical resources; and
- continued support for programs that are doctrinally faithful, pastorally sensitive, and properly vetted.

Particular attention will continue to be given to children, youth, and young adults who are growing up within a rapidly changing cultural environment. They require not only knowledge of the faith, but communities of belonging, credible witnesses, opportunities for service, and the confidence to live and proclaim the Gospel in contemporary society. The task of catechesis is not simply to prepare them for a sacrament, but to accompany them toward a mature and enduring discipleship in Jesus Christ.

The archdiocese already supports many important initiatives in this area: parish youth ministry; First Holy Communion and Confirmation preparation; youth discipleship initiatives; Liturgy of the Word with Children; parish catechetical programs; and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd model is especially significant because it recognizes the contemplative capacity of the child and fosters encounter with Christ through Scripture, liturgy, silence, beauty, and wonder.

The *Directory for Catechesis* reminds us that beauty itself becomes a path toward God. Sacred art, music, architecture, silence, liturgy, and the witness of holiness, open the human heart to transcendence and wonder. Catechesis therefore must not only explain the faith, but reveal its beauty[251].

Parishes must not respond to young people merely with programs. They must respond with accompaniment, witness, truth, friendship, and encounter[252]. Catechesis must therefore avoid both



cold intellectualism and superficial emotionalism. It must accompany individuals patiently toward mature discipleship helping them grow toward a faith that engages the mind, touches the heart, and transforms daily life[253].

2. Forming Catechists and Leaders with Theological Depth

The fruitfulness of catechesis depends in large measure upon those who are entrusted with the ministry of formation and accompaniment[254]. Throughout the archdiocese, countless catechists, clergy, consecrated religious, lay pastoral ministers, educators, volunteers, and parish leaders dedicate themselves generously to helping others encounter Christ and grow in faith.

Their service is a vital participation in the Church's mission of evangelization. Through their witness, teaching, encouragement, and accompaniment, the Gospel is passed from one generation to the next and new disciples are formed within the life of the Church[255].

At the same time, the rapidly changing cultural, social, and spiritual realities of our age present new opportunities and challenges for catechetical ministry. Those who teach the faith must themselves be continually formed in knowledge, prayer, pastoral practice, and missionary discipleship[256]. For this reason, the archdiocese recognizes the importance of providing ongoing formation, support, and encouragement for all who serve in catechetical leadership, so that they may continue to proclaim the Gospel with confidence, fidelity, and joy.

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to:

- strengthen theological and pastoral formation for catechists;
- expand the Archdiocesan Catechist Formation Program;
- form catechists in pedagogy, accompaniment, and evangelization;
- support clergy in their responsibility as primary catechetical leaders within parish life;
- foster collaboration among clergy, laity, religious communities, schools, and lay ecclesial movements and associations; and
- ensure doctrinal fidelity together with pastoral sensitivity.

The Archdiocesan Catechist Formation Program already provides significant doctrinal and pedagogical formation rooted in Sacred Scripture, fundamental theology, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the *Directory for Catechesis*, and virtuous leadership.

> *Those who teach the faith must themselves be continually formed.*

The *Directory for Catechesis* tells us that the catechist's first vocation is not simply to teach, but to witness[257]. The credibility of catechesis depends not only upon the accuracy of what is taught, but also upon the authenticity of the one who teaches[258]. Catechists proclaim the Gospel through their lives as much as through their words, bearing witness through prayer, holiness, charity, humility, attentive listening, faithful accompaniment, and joyful commitment to Christ and his Church[259].

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* further emphasizes that formation must cultivate a spirit of co-responsibility within the People of God[260]. The Church's mission belongs to the whole Church. Clergy, consecrated persons, and laity each contribute according to their vocation, gifts and

charisms, working together in a shared mission of evangelization and discipleship[261].

Likewise, Pope Leo XIV has emphasized the urgent need to form Christians capable not only of receiving the faith, but of transmitting it confidently to future generations[262]. Catechists, then, become essential witnesses of hope, helping others encounter Jesus, understand the faith, and discover their place within the life and mission of the Church[263].

3. Encouraging Lifelong Adult Faith Formation

One of the most significant opportunities facing us today is the renewal of adult faith formation. While many Catholics received catechesis during childhood and sacramental preparation, the demands and complexities of adult life continually raise new questions that call for ongoing formation in faith. As individuals navigate family life, work, relationships, social change, ethical challenges, and personal suffering, they require opportunities to deepen their understanding of the Gospel and grow in their relationship with Christ[264].

For this reason, adult faith formation is not an optional addition to parish life, but an essential dimension of missionary discipleship. The Church's call to lifelong conversion requires lifelong formation[265]. Mature discipleship develops through continual engagement with Sacred Scripture, the teachings of the Church, prayer, reflection, and participation in the life of the Christian community[266].

The archdiocese is blessed with many existing opportunities that support this ongoing growth, including parish Scripture studies, book studies, faith-sharing groups, parish missions, Formation Week, Liturgical Ministries Week, retreats, workshops, and continuing education initiatives. These programs have enriched the faith of many individuals and strengthened parish communities throughout the archdiocese.

At the same time, the availability and accessibility of these opportunities vary considerably from one parish to another. As the archdiocese seeks to foster a culture of lifelong discipleship, particular attention must be given to ensuring that adult faith formation becomes increasingly accessible, welcoming, and integrated



Believers are formed through shared prayer, worship, discernment, service.

into the ordinary life of every parish community. Formation must not be viewed as something reserved for a few committed individuals, but as a normal and expected part of Christian growth throughout every stage of life[267].

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to:

- strengthen adult faith formation opportunities;
- promote theological literacy among the laity;
- foster a culture of life, especially regarding end of life issues;
- encourage study of Sacred Scripture, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and Catholic social teaching;
- develop accessible digital formation resources;
- foster formation for parents, grandparents, caregivers, and seniors; and
- support formation that integrates faith with daily life, work, culture, and public witness.

Formation must help Catholics engage contemporary society with wisdom, charity, confidence, and fidelity.

This includes formation concerning: human dignity, bioethics, technology and artificial intelligence, mental health, ecology and care for creation, social care, the dignity of life, sexuality and relationships, vocation and discernment, and the moral responsibilities of Christian discipleship.

Dignitas Infinita helps catechists recognize that their role is to help individuals recover an authentic Christian anthropology rooted in the dignity of the human person created in the image of God[268].

The *Directory for Catechesis* further observes that digital culture increasingly shapes how people understand themselves, form relationships, communicate, learn, and make moral decisions[269]. The Church is therefore called not merely to employ digital technologies as instruments of communication, but to engage the digital environment as a genuine field of evangelization and formation. Parishes must help form disciples who can navigate within this culture[270].

Such formation must reach beyond information and develop habits of Christian living. It must teach people how to pray amidst distraction, discern truth amid competing voices, cultivate authentic relationships in a culture of increasing isolation, practice forgiveness in a climate of polarization, serve others with generosity, and build communion in both physical and digital communities[271].

Such formation must teach people how to pray, discern, forgive, serve, and live communion.

4. Equipping Families to Hand on the Faith at Home

The home remains the first and most enduring school of discipleship. It is within the family that many people first learn to pray, to forgive, to trust, to serve, to make sacrifices for others, and to experience the love and belonging that reflect God's own communion[272].

For this reason, the Church has long recognized parents as the primary educators of their children in the faith[273]. The archdiocese reaffirms this responsibility and vocation, recognizing that the family is not merely a recipient of evangelization, but one of its most important agents. As the domestic Church, the Christian family is called to be a place where faith is lived, celebrated, nurtured, and handed on from one generation to the next[274].

This vision calls for a renewed pastoral approach throughout parish life. The task of catechesis cannot be delegated entirely to schools, parishes, or programs. Rather, parish catechesis must support and strengthen the faith life already taking root within the home[275].

Accordingly, sacramental preparation should increasingly be understood as family catechesis[276]. Moments of preparation for Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist, Confirmation, and Matrimony, provide valuable opportunities not only to form children and candidates, but also to evangelize, accompany, and support parents and families. When parents grow in faith alongside their children, the fruits of catechesis extend far beyond the celebration of a sacrament and become part of the ongoing life of the family[277].

Parishes are therefore called to work in partnership with families, equipping parents with the confidence, resources, and the support they need to live their vocation as the first witnesses and teachers of the faith[278]. In this way, catechesis strengthens not only individuals, but the domestic Church itself, helping homes become places where Christ is encountered, the Gospel is lived, and faith is joyfully transmitted to future generations[279].

The archdiocese will therefore support parishes to:

- strengthen family-based sacramental preparation;
- provide formation opportunities for parents;
- encourage family prayer and Scripture reading;
- develop resources for faith conversations within the home;
- support fathers and mothers in their distinct vocations;
- foster intergenerational catechesis;
- integrate digital discipleship and healthy technology use into formation; and
- encourage family participation in Sunday Eucharist as the centre of Christian life.

Lay ecclesial movements and associations such as the Schoenstatt Movement, the Domestic Church Movement, and the Family Foundations Institute, already demonstrate how family spirituality and formation can renew parish life through covenant spirituality, Marian pedagogy, and intentional Christian community.

The archdiocese seeks to expand these pathways of accompaniment so that families themselves become missionary centres of evangelization and hope.



5. Integrating Evangelization, Prayer, Outreach, and Catechesis

Catechesis cannot stand apart from the broader life and mission of the Church. It flourishes only when it is integrated with evangelization, prayer, sacramental life, outreach, communion, and service[280]. Likewise, formation is not a separate activity alongside the Church's mission; it is one of the principal ways by which that mission takes shape in the lives of believers[281].

The journey reflected in the previous jars reveals this interconnected reality. Families become the first schools of faith, where the Gospel is first encountered and lived. Social outreach awakens compassion and attentiveness to the needs of others. Prayer and the sacramental life deepen communion with Christ and sustain the life of grace. Catechesis, in turn, helps disciples understand, embrace, and live more fully the faith they have received. Each dimension strengthens the others, contributing to the growth of mature Christian disciples.

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* further emphasizes that formation must itself become increasingly synodal. It must be rooted in listening, discernment, participation, communion, and shared mission[282]. Formation is not something delivered to passive recipients; it is a process through which the People of God learn to walk together, listen to the Holy Spirit, and participate actively in the life and mission of the Church[283].

For this reason, faith can never be understood as a private or isolated reality. Catechesis unfolds within the communion of the Church, where believers are formed through shared prayer, worship, discernment, service, and mutual accompaniment. The Christian life is learned not only through instruction, but through participation in a community of disciples who seek to follow Christ together[284].

Formation must remain close to the lived realities of people's lives. It cannot become abstract, detached, or concerned only with concepts. Authentic catechesis engages the concrete experiences of families, the struggles of daily life, the realities of suffering and loss, the search for meaning, and the questions that arise in every stage of the human journey[285].

Parishes are therefore called to accompany people patiently and compassionately wherever they may be on the path of faith[286]. Some are taking their first steps toward belief, others seek healing, understanding, or renewal. Some wrestle with doubt, grief, loneliness, or disappointment. In each case, catechesis must help people encounter Jesus within the realities of their own lives and discover that the Gospel speaks not only to the mind, but to the whole human person[287].

When faith formation is integrated with prayer, community, service, and mission, it becomes more than instruction. It becomes a pathway of discipleship, leading believers into deeper communion with Christ and preparing them to participate fully in the Church's mission in the world[288].

For this reason, the archdiocese will support parishes to cultivate:

- minds capable of understanding the faith;
- hearts capable of loving God and neighbour;
- consciences capable of moral discernment;
- communities capable of communion; and
- disciples capable of mission.

This integration includes the collaboration of parishes, Catholic schools, families, lay ecclesial movements and associations, healthcare ministries,

charitable outreach, consecrated life, and archdiocesan pastoral offices.

Many lay ecclesial movements, associations and their apostolates already contribute significantly to evangelization, discipleship, outreach, and formation, including, lay charismatic communities, various forums and institutes, cultural Catholic communities, Marian movements, and numerous parish-based initiatives.

These realities demonstrate that catechesis extends far beyond formal classroom instruction. Formation occurs through liturgy, community, service, pilgrimage, friendship, witness, prayer, and participation in the life of the Church[289].

Toward Forming Missionary Disciples Capable of Discerning and Living Their Vocation in the Church and Society

The fourth jar ultimately calls us to foster a culture of missionary discipleship. Catechesis permeates the entire life of the Church. Its purpose is not simply to communicate the faith, but to form disciples who know Jesus, love him, and follow him in every aspect of their lives.

For this reason, every parish is called to be a place of encounter with Christ, a community of theological and spiritual formation, a school of discipleship, a home of belonging and accompaniment, and a centre of missionary outreach. We do not form disciples for self-preservation, but for mission.

When catechesis is rooted in encounter, nourished by prayer, strengthened by sound doctrine, sustained by communion, and directed toward service, mature disciples emerge, and mature disciples begin to discern how God is calling them to offer their lives in love and service.

Some are called to marriage and family life. Others are called to the priesthood, permanent diaconate, consecrated life, lay ecclesial ministry, professional witness, works of charity and justice, education, healthcare, evangelization, or public service. Yet beneath these diverse vocations lies a common call: the universal call to holiness and participation in the mission of Christ.

As *Ecclesia in America* reminds us, authentic conversion always leads to communion and solidarity. Formation therefore prepares Catholics not only for active participation within parish life, but also for faithful witness within society[290]. Likewise, the *Directory for Catechesis* teaches that authentic catechesis forms disciples capable of bringing the Gospel to every sphere of human life and contributing to the transformation of culture according to the values of the Kingdom of God[291].

Parishes must therefore form believers who can live and witness to their faith within families, workplaces, schools and universities, healthcare, public life, the digital environment, the world of business and economics, and in service to the poor, the vulnerable, and those on the margins. The measure of successful catechesis is not simply what people know, but how faithfully they live the Gospel in the ordinary circumstances of daily life.

At Cana, the servants filled the jars before they understood what Our Lord intended to accomplish. Their task was not to produce the miracle, but to respond faithfully to his command. So too we are called to fill the jar of catechesis and formation generously and completely, trusting that the Lord himself will bring forth the new wine.

When we truly encounter Christ, grow in friendship with him, and learn to follow him as disciples, our lives are transformed, vocations are awakened, communities are renewed, and we become capable once again of offering the world the new wine of faith, hope, and love.

This naturally leads to the fifth jar. For as disciples mature in faith and discipleship, they begin to ask a deeper question: “Lord, what are You asking of me”? The journey of catechesis and formation ultimately opens the door to discernment, vocation, charisms, and mission.










MYSTERIVM FIDEI



YEAR 6

Jar Five: Vocations and Charisms: Discernment and Promotion



Introduction

Every baptized person is called by the Lord and entrusted with a unique place within his saving plan[292]. The Church flourishes when each member comes to recognize and acknowledge not only that they are loved by him, but also that they are called to participate in his mission[293]. Marriage, priesthood, consecrated life, the permanent diaconate, lay ecclesial ministry, dedicated single life, apostolic service, contemplative witness, and the many charisms bestowed by the Holy Spirit, all contribute to the building up of the Body of Christ and the proclamation of the Gospel[294].

The fifth jar flows naturally from all that has come before. Families become the first place where vocations are nurtured and faith is lived. Social outreach awakens attentiveness to the needs of others and a willingness to serve. Prayer forms hearts capable of listening to the voice of God. Catechesis and formation deepen discipleship and help believers understand the call to holiness and service. From these foundations emerges one of the most important questions of the Christian life:

> *"Lord, what are You asking of me?"*

At its deepest level, vocation is not first about choosing a role or state of life. It is about responding to a relationship[295]. Every Christian vocation begins with the invitation of Christ to follow him. For this reason, discernment belongs not only to those considering priesthood or consecrated life, but to the entire People of God[296]. Every baptized person is called to listen for the voice of the Lord and to discover how he is inviting them to live, love, serve, and bear witness within the circumstances of their lives[297].

A culture of vocation emerges wherever people learn to recognize that the Lord continues to call his people today[298]. It grows wherever families pray together, parishes foster discipleship, communities encourage service, and believers are taught to listen attentively to the movements of the Holy Spirit[299]. In such an environment, discernment becomes a normal part of Christian life rather than an exceptional experience reserved for a few.



Once again, the servants at Cana offer a powerful image of this vocational journey. As already observed, the servants obey before they fully understand. They fill the jars without knowing what Christ intends to accomplish. Their trust precedes certainty, and their obedience creates the space in which grace can act. So too, vocational discernment requires faith before clarity. The Lord ordinarily reveals his will gradually, through prayer, relationships, formation, service, suffering, accompaniment, and mission. As disciples walk faithfully with him, they come to recognize more clearly the unique calling through which they are invited to glorify God and serve his people[300].

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to foster:

1. a culture of discernment;
2. a culture of vocation;
3. a culture of charisms and co-responsibility;
4. a culture of accompaniment; and
5. a culture of missionary discipleship.

Each parish must become a place where every person can hear anew that their life has meaning, mission, dignity, and purpose in Christ.

1. A Culture of Discernment
The Second Vatican Council brought renewed clarity to the Church's understanding of vocation by proclaiming the universal call to holiness. As *Lumen Gentium* teaches, every baptized person is called to holiness and mission according to his or her particular state of life. Vocation is therefore not reserved for a select few; it belongs to the whole People of God[301].

> *Every baptized person is called to holiness and mission.*

This insight finds particular resonance in *Dilexit Nos*, which reminds us that the human heart finds its true rest only in the love of Christ[302]. Vocations emerge from this encounter of love. When individuals discover themselves loved personally by God, they begin to ask how that love is to be received, lived, and shared. Discernment is born not from apprehension about the future, but from a desire to respond generously to the One who calls[303].

For this reason, parishes are to help all people rediscover several foundational truths: that life is a gift received from God, that every person possesses an inviolable dignity, that every Christian has a unique mission within the Church and the world, and that authentic fulfillment is found not in self-assertion, but in self-gift.

Such a vision requires a culture of discernment. Yet discernment is not merely a decision-making process reserved for moments of major life choice. It is a Christian way of living attentively before our Lord, seeking to recognize his presence and respond faithfully to his invitations in the ordinary circumstances of daily life[304].

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to foster a culture of discernment by:

- strengthening spiritual direction and accompaniment;
- fostering Eucharistic adoration and prayer;
- supporting retreat opportunities;
- integrating discernment into catechesis and youth ministry;
- forming parish leaders in spiritual accompaniment;
- expanding digital and online discernment resources; and
- helping parishioners recognize the movement of the Holy Spirit within ordinary life.

Discernment flourishes where people are given space to listen[305]. It grows through prayer, silence, sacramental life, service, community, trustworthy accompaniment, and openness to mission[306]. It matures gradually as individuals learn to interpret their experiences in the light of faith and to entrust themselves more fully to God's providence[307].

A culture of discernment ultimately helps believers move from asking, "What do I want to do with my life?", to the deeper question, "Lord, what are You asking of me"? It is in learning to ask this question that vocations are discovered, charisms are awakened, and disciples become increasingly available to the mission our Lord entrusts to them.

2. A Culture of Vocation
The first place where vocation is ordinarily heard is within the family. Long before a person begins to discern a particular vocation, the family provides the environment in which the fundamental attitudes of discernment are first learned[308]. Since it is within the home that children often first encounter prayer, trust, generosity, sacrifice, forgiveness, responsibility, service, and love, parents, grandparents, and other family members are called to be the first witnesses to what it means to live one's life as a response to Christ's call[309].

For this reason, the family remains the primary school of vocation[310]. As the domestic Church, it provides the human and spiritual foundation upon which discernment can take root and flourish. Vocation promotion can therefore never be separated from family ministry. A culture of vocation grows most naturally where faith is lived within the home and where the Lord's call is spoken of with confidence, hope, and joy[311].

The archdiocese is committed to supporting parishes to help families become places where vocation is discussed naturally, positively, and prayerfully.

This includes:

- encouraging prayer for vocations within the home;
- integrating vocational themes into sacramental preparation;
- equipping parents and grandparents to accompany young people in discernment;
- fostering positive conversations about marriage, priesthood, consecrated life, single lay mission, and the permanent diaconate; and
- helping families recognize that ordinary life itself is one of God's primary places of invitation and guidance.

At the same time, the Church recognizes that many families carry significant burdens[312]. Yet vocation is never limited to ideal circumstances. Throughout Scripture, God repeatedly calls people within the midst of their struggles, uncertainties, and imperfections. The Lord continues to call persons even amid wounded circumstances. We must never presume that vocation emerges only from ideal conditions[313].

Here, Pope Francis' image of the Church as a "field hospital" becomes once again especially illuminating[314]. Many young people discern their future while navigating anxiety, loneliness, fractured relationships, uncertainty, digital saturation, and a fear of long-term commitment. Beneath these challenges often lies a deeper question: not simply "What should I do with my life?" but "Does my life have meaning? Am I loved? Am I needed?"[315].

Vocational ministry must therefore be more than recruitment; it must be accompaniment. It must help young people discover that their lives are gifts, that they are loved by Jesus, and that they have a unique mission within the Church and the world. This requires patient listening, authentic relationships, trustworthy mentors, and communities where questions can be asked honestly and without fear.

The witness of the Virgin Mary at Cana provides a model for this ministry. She does not impose or pressure. She simply points others toward Christ: "Do whatever he tells you"[316]. Authentic vocation ministry follows the same path. Its purpose is not to direct people toward predetermined outcomes, but to help them encounter the Lord personally, recognize his voice, and respond with freedom and trust to whatever he asks of them[317].

As we prepare to celebrate the five-hundredth anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe in 2031, we are reminded of the profound relationship between vocation and mission. At Tepeyac, Our Lady did not choose a powerful leader or renowned preacher, but the humble layman Juan Diego[318]. By calling him personally and entrusting him with a mission, she revealed a truth that remains central to every culture of vocation: our Lord continues to call ordinary people to participate in his extraordinary work.

The archdiocese already witnesses many signs of hope in this area through youth ministry initiatives, discernment retreats, "Come and See" weekend experiences, vocation awareness gatherings, parish youth groups, Totus Tuus missions and other summer camp experiences, online discernment groups, school chaplaincy, university and college campus ministry, and relational accompaniment through clergy, consecrated persons, mentors, and lay leaders.

These initiatives reveal an important truth, that vocations grow where relationships, prayer, joy, mission, and witness are visible.

> *Does my life have meaning? Am I loved? Am I needed?*

In his 2023 *Mass of Installation* homily, Archbishop Leo urged young people throughout the archdiocese not to be afraid to give their lives in service, to commit themselves to Jesus and his Gospel, to share their talents, discover their giftedness, and ask the Lord to reveal his will for their lives [319]. A culture of vocation grows when this kind of invitation becomes natural within families, parishes, schools, ecclesial movements, and communities of faith, when people are helped not only to ask what they want from life, but to recognize what the Lord may be asking of them.

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to:

- strengthen youth and young adult ministry across parishes;
- ensure vocation awareness becomes integrated into ordinary parish life;
- increase opportunities for encounters with priests, seminarians, religious, married couples, and lay missionaries;
- support mentorship and accompaniment models;
- create spaces for silence, Eucharistic adoration, retreats, pilgrimage, and discernment;
- foster missionary service opportunities; and
- help young people discern not merely what they want from life, but what God desires for them.

Particular attention must be given to fostering a culture in which priesthood and consecrated life are presented with confidence, gratitude, and hope[320]. These vocations are not relics of the past, but living gifts through which Christ continues to serve his Church and the world. Young people deserve to encounter their beauty, understand their significance, and be invited to consider them with openness and freedom[321].

A culture of vocation flourishes when we speak naturally and joyfully about the many ways God calls his people[322]. Experience consistently shows that vocations are most readily discerned where they are prayerfully proposed, visibly supported, and warmly encouraged. Many never consider a special vocation simply because they have never been invited to ask whether our Lord might be calling them[323].

The priesthood remains indispensable to the pastoral, sacramental and missionary life of the Church. Through the ministry of priests, Christ continues to proclaim the Gospel, celebrate the sacraments, reconcile sinners, shepherd his people, and nourish the faithful with his Body and Blood. The priest is called to be a living sign of Christ the Good Shepherd, exercising his ministry not through power or privilege, but through humble and sacrificial spiritual fatherhood[324].

Pope Francis frequently reminded priests that authentic pastoral leadership when lived faithfully, becomes a powerful witness to Christ's presence



The priest is called to be a living sign of Christ the Good Shepherd.

among his people and an enduring source of hope, unity, and pastoral care within the Church[325].

The archdiocese is blessed with a structured vocations pathway through the Office of Vocations and its many initiatives. Yet the discernment snapshot also reveals an important pastoral reality: vocation promotion remains uneven at the parish level.

Parishes must therefore be not merely places that refer candidates elsewhere, but living environments where vocations are noticed, encouraged, prayed for, and supported.

The archdiocese will therefore support parishes to:

- regularly pray publicly for vocations;
- intentionally invite young men into discernment;
- support altar server and youth leadership formation;

- encourage relational contact with seminarians and clergy;
- include vocation witness talks within parish life;
- create environments where priests are visibly joyful and accessible;
- cultivate personal invitation rather than passive expectation; and
- incorporate vocation awareness in school visits and sacramental preparation.

One of the enduring insights of the historic *Called by Name*[326] initiative is that vocations often begin when another person recognizes and affirms the gifts that God has placed within someone. Many people first consider a vocation because a parent, priest, religious sister or brother, teacher, mentor, or friend sees something in them and has the courage to say, "Have you ever considered that God may be calling you"? A culture of vocation is built when communities learn to recognize, encourage, and nurture the gifts and possibilities present in one another.

Among the many vocations that enrich the Church, consecrated life occupies a unique and prophetic place. Through their witness, religious sisters, brothers, consecrated virgins, hermits, and cloistered monastics, point beyond the concerns of the present age toward the coming Kingdom of God[327]. Their lives proclaim that the Lord is worthy of complete trust and total self-gift, and they remind the Church that our ultimate destiny is communion with him.

The archdiocese is richly blessed by the presence of numerous communities of consecrated life whose prayer, ministry, and witness continue to strengthen the life of the local Church. Through education, healthcare, pastoral ministry, social outreach, contemplative prayer, spiritual accompaniment, and countless hidden acts of service, they reveal the many ways the Holy Spirit continues to work within the People of God.

Even as many communities face the realities of aging membership, changing demographics, and new pastoral challenges, consecrated life remains an indispensable gift to the Church[328]. Its witness of prayer, fraternity, simplicity of life, generous service, evangelical freedom, and radical discipleship, offers a powerful sign of hope in a culture often marked by individualism, materialism, and uncertainty. Consecrated life continues to remind us that Christ is worthy of a wholehearted response and that a life given completely to God bears abundant fruit[329].

The archdiocese, therefore, commits itself to:

- supporting collaboration with communities of consecrated life;
- increasing opportunities for encounter between youth and consecrated persons;
- highlighting the beauty and diversity of consecrated vocations;
- promoting awareness of contemplative life;
- supporting discernment for both men and women; and
- integrating communities of consecrated life more visibly into archdiocesan pastoral life.

Marriage likewise occupies a central place within the Church's culture of vocation. It is not simply a social institution, a private arrangement, or a personal choice among many possibilities. Christian marriage is a sacramental vocation through which spouses are called to holiness, mutual self-gift, and participation in the Lord's creative and redemptive love[330]. Through their covenant, husband and wife become a living sign of Christ's faithful love for his Church and a witness to the Gospel within the world[331].

At the same time, the archdiocese recognizes that marriage and family life are lived within a cultural environment marked by significant challenges. As noted previously, many individuals and families experience pressures arising from economic uncertainty, caregiving responsibilities, isolation, family fragmentation, delayed marriage, declining birth rates, and widespread confusion regarding commitment, sexuality, identity, and the meaning of human relationships. These realities often make the vocation of marriage more demanding and can leave many questioning its permanence, purpose, and beauty[332].

Yet it is precisely in this context that we must continue to proclaim marriage with confidence, joy, and hope. The vocation of marriage should never be presented merely as a moral obligation to be defended, but as a beautiful path of communion, fidelity, fruitfulness, sacrifice, and missionary witness[333]. The most convincing defense of marriage



Christian marriage is a sacramental vocation through which spouses are called to holiness.

remains the joyful witness of couples who strive to live their vocation faithfully and generously.

For this reason, the archdiocese commits to support parishes to:

- foster a culture in which married life is visibly valued, celebrated, and supported;
- accompany couples throughout the various stages of married and family life;
- encourage mentoring relationships between older and younger couples;
- integrate families into parish leadership and ministries; and
- assist spouses to recognize that their vocation extends beyond the home to become a witness within the Church and society.

The witness of faithful marriages is itself a powerful form of vocation promotion. When young people encounter couples who love generously, persevere through difficulties, pray together, serve others, and remain faithful to one another over time, they discover that Christian marriage is not only possible, but life-giving[334]. Such witness helps reveal that vocation is not primarily about personal fulfillment, but about responding to the Lord's call through a life of self-giving love.

In this way, strong marriages not only strengthen families; they help create a culture in which all vocations can flourish. They become living signs that God's call can be trusted and that a life given in love bears fruit for the Church, for society, and for future generations[335].

3. A Culture of Charisms and Co-Responsibility

The Holy Spirit continues to pour out his gifts upon the People of God for the building up of the Church and the advancement of her mission. These charisms are not reserved to clergy, consecrated persons, or a select group of leaders. They are gifts entrusted to the whole Body of Christ so that every baptized person may contribute, according to his or her vocation, to the life and mission of the Church[336].

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* emphasized that all the baptized share responsibility for the Church's mission[337]. The Church flourishes when the gifts of the Holy Spirit are recognized, discerned, welcomed, and placed at the service of communion, evangelization, and the common good. A vibrant ecclesial community is one in which people are encouraged not merely to participate, but to discover how the Lord has uniquely equipped them to serve[338].

The archdiocese already witnesses the rich diversity of charisms at work through stewardship initiatives, parish ministries, lay ecclesial movements and associations, evangelization efforts, outreach ministries, catechetical leadership, pastoral care, liturgical service, and countless hidden acts of generosity that sustain parish life each day. Lay



The discernment of charisms becomes an essential dimension of vocational discernment itself.

ecclesial movements and associations provide particularly visible examples of how charisms can awaken missionary zeal, strengthen faith, and build communion.

In recent years, the archdiocese has also taken important steps toward promoting the discernment of charisms through stewardship initiatives, leadership formation, and parish-based formation programs. This work remains essential and must continue to develop, helping parish communities move beyond a culture of recruitment toward a culture of discernment and co-responsibility.

For this reason, the archdiocese commits to support parishes to help the faithful recognize and develop the gifts entrusted to them by the Holy Spirit. This includes:

- teaching clearly about charisms;
- providing opportunities for prayerful discernment;
- creating pathways for meaningful ministry and service;
- offering accompaniment and mentorship;
- affirming both visible and hidden forms of service; and
- fostering collaboration among clergy, consecrated persons, and laity.

A truly synodal Church is one in which charisms are neither overlooked nor confined to a few, but gratefully received and wisely coordinated for the sake of mission[339]. When individuals discover the gifts God has entrusted to them and place those gifts at the service of others, we become more fully whom we are called to be: a communion of disciples united in mission, each contributing according to the grace we have received[340].

In this way, the discernment of charisms becomes an essential dimension of vocational discernment itself. To ask, "What gifts has God given me" is inseparable from asking, "How is God calling me to serve". For the Holy Spirit never bestows gifts for personal possession alone, but always for the building up of the Church and the transformation of the world.

4. A Culture of Accompaniment

Vocation unfolds within the real circumstances of human life. For this reason, we must accompany before we give direction. Genuine discernment grows where people feel heard, understood, respected, and loved. Before offering answers, we must first learn to listen. Before proposing a path, we must walk alongside those who are searching[341].

The Gospel account of Cana offers a profound model of this ministry. Mother Mary notices the need before anyone else. She remains present, attentive, and intercessory, quietly leading others toward her Son. For this reason, Pope Francis referred to her as the Mother of Closeness"[342]. Authentic vocational accompaniment reflects this same Marian spirit: attentive to the person, sensitive to their circumstances, patient in discernment, and always directed toward encounter with Christ[343].

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to:

- foster relational accompaniment throughout parish life;
- form clergy and lay leaders in listening and spiritual accompaniment;

- ensure discernment is rooted in trust, patience, and mercy;
- strengthen mentorship models for youth, young adults, engaged couples, seminarians, and lay ministers;
- support persons discerning amid wounded or complex life situations;
- integrate accompaniment into family ministry, outreach, catechesis, and youth ministry; and
- ensure that no person seeking God's will journeys alone.

Authentic accompaniment requires a particular pastoral style. It values listening before speaking, presence before activity, relationship before administration, and trust in the gradual action of the Holy Spirit's grace. It recognizes that discernment unfolds over time and that the Lord's call is often discovered through patient reflection, prayer, service, and lived experience[344].

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* repeatedly invites us to become more deeply a listening Church, one that walks together through discernment, participation, communion, and shared mission. Vocational accompaniment, therefore, cannot be delegated to a specialized ministry alone. It is a responsibility shared by the entire ecclesial community[345].

Every parish is called to become a place where people experience the nearness of Christ through the welcome of his people, where questions can be asked without fear, where discernment is encouraged, where gifts are recognized, and where individuals are helped to discover the vocation to which God is calling them[346].

In such communities, people come to know that they are not anonymous, but known, not abandoned, but accompanied, not overlooked, but invited, not judged, but encouraged. It is within this climate of trust, belonging, and hope, that vocations are most often heard, discerned, and embraced[347].

5. A Culture of Missionary Discipleship

Every vocation is ultimately ordered toward mission[348]. God does not call people solely for their own fulfillment or sanctification, but so that through their lives others may encounter his love. Every vocation, whether lived in marriage, priesthood, diaconate, consecrated life, lay ministry, professional service, or dedicated single life, participates in Christ's mission for the life of the world[349].

This missionary dimension finds a compelling local expression in Cardinal Leo's pastoral letter *That Blessed Upper Room*. Reflecting upon the community gathered in the Cenacle, His Eminence describes the Upper Room not only a place of prayer and communion, but also a place of sending. Those who encounter Christ, receive his Spirit and share in the life of his Church, are necessarily drawn outward toward others.

For this reason, vocation and mission can never be separated. The Lord calls in order to send. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given in order to serve. Prayer leads to witness, formation leads to proclamation, communion opens outward into evangelization. A genuine culture of vocation must therefore form disciples who understand that whatever their particular calling, their lives are entrusted to them for the building up of the Church and for the proclamation of the Gospel in the world.

Discernment therefore leads beyond the question "Who is God calling me to be", toward the deeper question, "How is God calling me to serve". The more deeply a person discovers their vocation, the more deeply they are drawn into the mission entrusted to them by Christ[350].



Each vocation becomes a unique way of making Christ present in the world.

Missionary discipleship cannot remain the responsibility solely of clergy, religious, or pastoral leaders. Every baptized person is called to participate in the Church's mission according to his or her vocation, gifts, charisms, and circumstances of life[351]. Some evangelize through preaching and catechesis. Others through service to the poor, works of charity, family life, professional witness, leadership, prayer, education, healthcare, public service, or quiet fidelity in daily life. Each vocation becomes a unique way of making Christ present in the world[352].

A culture of vocation therefore naturally becomes a culture of mission. As believers discover their gifts, discern the Lord's call, and place their lives at his service, we become increasingly capable of fulfilling the Church's missionary mandate. Vocations are not ends in themselves, they are gifts given so that the Gospel may be proclaimed, the Kingdom may grow, and the love of Christ may reach ever more deeply into the life of the world[353].

At Cana, the servants did not keep the wine for themselves. The gift was given for the joy of others. So too every vocation bears fruit when it is offered in service. The call of Christ always leads outward, transforming disciples into missionaries and inviting them to become instruments of his grace, hope, and love.

This missionary dimension is already visible throughout the archdiocese through: parish social outreach, Catholic education, healthcare ministries, refugee sponsorship, youth ministry, lay ecclesial movements and associations, charitable initiatives, pro-life witness, pastoral care ministries, and countless hidden acts of fidelity and service, justice and peace.

The archdiocese commits to continue to support parishes to form missionary disciples by:

- integrating vocation and mission within catechesis and formation;
- encouraging parishioners to recognize daily life as a place of apostolate;
- supporting lay leadership and evangelization;
- fostering service opportunities rooted in faith;
- encouraging missionary outreach within families and parish communities;
- strengthening collaboration among parish ministries, ecclesial movements, and archdiocesan offices; and
- helping all the faithful recognize that discipleship always leads outward in service.

Missionary discipleship is the willingness to encounter others with the tenderness of Christ rooted in communion.

Parishes, therefore, must form disciples capable of bringing the Gospel into families, workplaces, schools, healthcare, politics, media, culture, and the digital world.

Toward a Culture of Vocation and Mission

The fifth jar calls the entire archdiocese to foster a genuine culture of vocation. A culture in which every person is encouraged to listen for the voice of God and respond generously to his call.

Such a culture does not emerge through programs alone. It is born wherever faith is lived and shared. It grows when families pray together and speak naturally about the Lord's call, when parishes accompany people with patience and hope, when priests and deacons serve with joy, when consecrated persons offer a prophetic witness to the Kingdom, when married couples radiate fidelity and self-giving love, when charisms are recognized and placed at the service of others, when the wisdom of older generations is treasured, and when young people are personally invited to ask what God may be asking of them.

Above all, a culture of vocation flourishes when every baptized person comes to understand that life itself is a gift and that every disciple has a unique mission within the Church and the world.

The miracle at Cana reminds us that God delights in transforming what is ordinary into something



Vocation gives direction to freedom, meaning to our gifts, and purpose to our lives.

extraordinary. Just as water became wine, so too Christ continues to transform ordinary lives into instruments of his grace and signs of his Kingdom. Our task is not to manufacture vocations, but to create the conditions in which God's call can be heard, discerned, and embraced.

For this reason, the ultimate measure of success will not be found only in numbers, important though they may be. It will be found in whether our parishes become places where people genuinely discover that our Lord is calling them, places where they learn to listen, to discern, and to respond with trust.

For when people discover their vocation, they discover not only what they are called to do, but who they are called to become in Christ. Vocation gives direction to freedom, meaning to our gifts, and purpose to our lives. It teaches us that holiness is not reserved for a few, but is the calling and destiny of every disciple, and that every life, when offered generously to God, can become an instrument of his grace in the Church and in the world.

When this culture of vocation takes root, the Church becomes more fully herself: a communion of missionary disciples, united in faith, enriched by diverse gifts and charisms, attentive to the movement of the Holy Spirit, and ready to respond generously to the mission of Christ. Families, parishes, schools, communities, clergy, religious, and lay faithful all share in creating an environment in which people can hear the Lord's call, discern where he is leading them, and find the encouragement and accompaniment necessary to respond.

But a culture of vocation must also look toward the future. It must create the conditions in which a new generation can encounter Christ, discover that their lives have meaning and purpose, recognize the gifts God has entrusted to them, and hear his invitation to follow him. This is especially important for youth and young adults, who are often asking some of life's most fundamental questions: Who am I? Where do I belong? What gives my life meaning? What am I called to become? What difference can my life make? These are not questions peripheral to faith; they can become openings through which a young person encounters Christ and begins to discern his or her place within the life and mission of the Church.

Here again, Cana illuminates the way forward. After the jars are filled and Christ reveals his glory, St. John tells us that "his disciples believed in him"[354]. The miracle does more than meet an immediate need; it awakens and deepens the faith of those who witness it. In a similar way, everything contemplated in the preceding jars, strong families, a Church that reaches outward, a life rooted in prayer and the sacraments, faithful formation, and a culture of vocation, must ultimately help create the conditions in which a new generation can encounter the Lord and come to believe in him more deeply.

The sixth jar therefore turns our attention particularly to youth and young adults. The Church is called not merely to provide programs for them, but to walk with them as they encounter Christ, wrestle with questions of identity and belonging, discover their gifts and vocation, and grow into missionary disciples. Like the disciples at Cana, they too must be given opportunities to see the signs of Christ's presence, encounter his transforming love, and come to believe in him.

















YEAR 7

Jar Six: Youth and Young Adults



Introduction: Young Hearts at Cana

The final movement of the Cana narrative draws our attention to the disciples. Having witnessed the sign, they begin to believe. Their faith is still young. They do not yet understand everything they have seen. They have much to learn, many questions to ask, and a long journey ahead of them. Yet these same disciples will one day become apostles, evangelizers, leaders, and witnesses who carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth[355].

At Cana, we see in the present, the beginning of faith.

The Church's liturgy draws our attention to Mary's particular role in this awakening of faith. In the Communion Antiphon of the *Mass of Our Lady of Cana*, the Church recalls that, through Mary, the disciples learned to believe in their Master[356]. Her presence at Cana reveals a pattern of accompaniment that remains important for the Church today: Mary notices, listens, trusts, and points beyond herself to Christ. Her words, "Do whatever he tells you"[357], create the space in which others can encounter her Son, respond to his word, and grow in faith. The same maternal attentiveness that helped nurture the faith of the first disciples at Cana must continue to shape the our relationship with the young disciples of every generation.

> *Their gifts, questions, hopes, struggles, creativity, and generosity, already contribute to the vitality of the People of God.*

In our time, youth and young adults occupy a unique place within the life of the Church. They are not merely the Church of tomorrow; they are an essential part of the Church today[358]. Their gifts, questions, hopes, struggles, creativity, and generosity, already contribute to the vitality of the People of God. At the same time, they represent the future leadership of families, parishes, schools, ministries, professions, and society itself[359].

Cardinal Leo described young people as "a gift to us, to our families, our communities of faith and to the wider society," bringing strength, idealism, and hope for the future. He called upon the archdiocese to ensure that they are "loved and accompanied, listened to and cherished, welcomed and witnessed to," and to give them our attention, time, resources, and wisdom[360].

These words express the pastoral disposition that must shape all ministry with youth and young adults. Young people cannot be approached merely as a demographic to be retained or a group for whom programs are designed. They are members of the Body of Christ who are to be known personally, accompanied patiently, listened to attentively, formed deeply, entrusted with responsibility, and encouraged to place their gifts at the service of the archdiocese and the world.

This is all the more important when we encounter young people at a pivotal stages of life: years marked by important decisions, significant transitions, and profound questions about identity, belonging, purpose, relationships, and the future. Young people often possess remarkable idealism and generosity, yet they also navigate a world shaped by uncertainty[361].

The pastoral reality of the archdiocese reflects both the opportunities and challenges of this moment. Across our parishes, schools, campus ministries, lay ecclesial movements and associations, apostolates, and archdiocesan initiatives, many young people encounter Christ in the Church and grow in faith. Yet participation remains uneven, and many experience significant gaps during the transitions from adolescence into adulthood, from school into professional life, and from youthful engagement into long-term commitment within the Church[362].

The sixth jar therefore flows naturally from the previous five. Strong families provide the first experience of faith and belonging. Social outreach teaches compassion and solidarity. Prayer opens hearts to God's presence. Catechesis forms disciples capable of understanding and living the Gospel. Vocational discernment helps believers discover their mission. From these foundations emerges a



further challenge: helping young people become fully integrated participants in the life of the Church and confident witnesses of hope within the world.

The vitality of the Church depends greatly upon whether young people find within our communities a place where they can belong, participate, grow, lead, and serve. For when young people discover that they are needed, trusted, and called to contribute, they become not only recipients of the Church's care, but protagonists in her mission.

For this reason, the archdiocese commits to support parishes to foster among youth and young adults:

1. a culture of belonging and participation;
2. a culture of accompaniment and hope;
3. a culture of leadership; and
4. a culture of lifelong discipleship.

These commitments seek not merely to serve young people, but to help them become active participants in the Church's mission and the renewal of society.

Pope Francis offered a compelling image of this mission. Contemplating the stone jars filled "to the brim,"[363] he pointed to the Blessed Virgin Mary as the "new wineskin brimming with contagious joy"[364]. Mary's fullness of Gospel joy, he explains, overcomes fear and moves outward to fill others with joy. Young people, therefore, must be invited not simply to receive the faith, but to become joyful witnesses whose encounter with Christ overflows into friendship, service, vocation, and mission.

They long for authentic relationships, genuine community, and places where they are accepted and encouraged to contribute.

1. A Culture of Belonging and Participation
Young people remain where they are known, welcomed and valued[365].

One of the deepest challenges facing many young people today is not simply a lack of information or opportunity, but a lack of meaningful belonging[366].

Once again, as noted previously, despite unprecedented levels of connectivity, many young people continue to experience loneliness, fragmentation, and isolation. They long for authentic relationships, genuine community, and places where they are accepted and encouraged to contribute[367].

The pastoral experience of the archdiocese consistently demonstrates that faith is most often transmitted through relationships. Parents, grandparents, peers, mentors, pastors, teachers, coaches, youth ministers, and trusted communities, frequently become the channels through which young people encounter the life of faith and remain connected to the Church.

Family invitation remains one of the strongest influences on participation in parish life, while authentic friendships often become the foundation upon which lasting faith is built[368].

Young people should therefore never experience themselves as a separate Church existing alongside the parish community. They are members of the People of God here and now. Their gifts, charisms, perspectives, creativity, energy, and generosity enrich the life of the entire community[369].

Belonging naturally leads to participation. When young people know that they are valued, they become more willing to contribute their gifts and assume



responsibility within the life of the Church. The disciples at Cana did not remain passive observers. Having witnessed our Lord's work, they gradually became participants in his mission. Likewise, young people are called not merely to receive ministry, but to help shape and strengthen the life of the Church[370].

The principle of co-responsibility applies equally to youth and young adults. Parishes flourish when young people are invited to participate actively in worship, service, leadership, consultation, outreach, evangelization, and presence, according to their gifts and abilities[371].

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to:

- integrate youth and young adults into the ordinary life of the parish;
- create welcoming parish environments;
- encourage mentorship between older and younger generations;
- ensure that young people are visibly present in leadership and ministry, including outreach initiatives, faith formation programs, parochial and archdiocesan events, consultative bodies, pastoral and finance councils, and community building initiatives;
- strengthen parish hospitality and relational accompaniment;
- help youth discover that the Church is not merely an institution, but a spiritual family; and
- facilitate World Youth Days at international and archdiocesan levels.

Popes throughout the modern era have repeatedly encouraged the Church to trust young people and to give them space to contribute. Young people deserve to have their voices heard, their gifts recognized, and their contributions welcomed[372].

Every parish should therefore ask:

- Do young people know they belong here?
- Are they welcomed and known by name?
- Are they connected to meaningful relationships?
- Are they trusted with responsibility?
- Are their gifts and charisms recognized and encouraged?
- Are they accompanied through moments of transition?
- Do they see joy, authenticity, and missionary conviction within the parish community?
- Do they experience the parish as a community and not simply a place they attend?
- Do we create space and opportunities for them?

Leadership formation must become a major priority. The archdiocese already supports this endeavour through retreats, workshops, conferences, training programs, networking opportunities, regional collaboration, and youth leadership initiatives. These efforts should continue to expand and deepen[373].

A culture of belonging and participation is not peripheral to evangelization. It is often the soil in which faith takes root and grows[374].

2. A Culture of Accompaniment and Hope
From Cana, faith emerges gradually within a community gathered around our Lord. The miracle unfolds through relationships, trust, and participation.

The same remains true today. Young people rarely grow in faith through instruction alone. They grow through relationships, accompaniment, encouragement, and communities that help them recognize the presence of Christ within the realities of daily life[375].

Listening, participation, discernment, and shared responsibility, are particularly important in ministry with youth and young adults, who often seek places where they can ask honest questions, share their experiences openly, and explore the deeper meaning of their lives in the light of the Gospel[376].

Many young people today experience the world in way that previous generations did not. It is precisely here that we are called to become a credible witness of hope[377].

> *Hope grows when young people discover that they are seen, heard, accompanied, and loved.*

Christian hope is not the denial of struggle. It is the conviction that through the paschal mystery no person walks alone, that every life possesses meaning and dignity, and that Christ remains present even amid uncertainty, suffering, and unanswered questions. Hope grows when young people discover that they are seen, heard, accompanied, and loved[378].

For this reason, accompaniment is not simply a pastoral strategy, it is a ministry of hope. Through patient listening, trusted relationships, spiritual guidance, mentorship, and community life, parishes help young people recognize that God's grace continues to work within their lives and that their future remains open to his providence[379].

The archdiocese already witnesses many signs of this hope through family life ministries, parish youth ministry, campus ministry, chaplaincies, retreats, peer leadership initiatives, mentoring relationships, regional gatherings, and the dedicated service of countless clergy, consecrated persons, lay leaders, and volunteers. The Office of Catholic Youth has further strengthened this mission through regional collaboration, parish support, leadership development, subsidy initiatives, and networking structures. These efforts provide important foundations for a more connected and sustainable culture of hope throughout the archdiocese.

The archdiocese therefore commits to help parishes promote relationships and structures that help young people remain connected to Christ and his Church. This includes:

- strengthening parish-based accompaniment models;
- training youth ministers, mentors, and volunteers;
- supporting parents as primary companions in faith;
- expanding regional collaboration among parishes;
- fostering peer mentorship and leadership;
- strengthening pathways from youth ministry into young adult life;
- supporting campus ministry as a bridge during transitional years; and
- ensuring that no young person journeys alone.

Pope Leo XIV has repeatedly encouraged young people to become builders of hope. A culture of hope does not exist in isolation. It is nurtured through relationships, sustained through community, strengthened through prayer, and deepened through service[380].

Every parish should therefore ask:

- do our young people know that they are not alone?
- do they encounter trusted adults who accompany them?

- do they find communities that sustain hope?
- do they experience the parish as a place where their questions are welcomed and their future is encouraged?

A culture of hope emerges wherever young people discover that Christ walks beside them, that the Church walks with them, and that their lives possess a purpose greater than themselves. Such hope becomes the foundation upon which faith matures, leadership develops, and lifelong discipleship takes root[381].

3. A Culture of Leadership

The young disciples who first believed at Cana did not remain spectators. Having witnessed the sign, they gradually assumed responsibility for the mission that Christ entrusted to them and become the leaders through whom the Gospel spread throughout the world.

We continue to need young people who are prepared to lead with faith, wisdom, courage, and generosity.

For this reason, youth and young adult ministry must seek not only to engage young people, but also to form them as leaders. Leadership is not simply a matter of holding positions or exercising authority. Christian leadership is rooted in service, responsibility, collaboration, and a willingness to place one's gifts at the service of others[382].

Young people should therefore be encouraged not merely to participate in parish life, but to help shape it. Their perspectives, gifts, creativity, and energy are essential to the renewal of our communities[383].

Cardinal Leo has challenged young people not to be afraid to dream great dreams, to seek the transformation of the world, to commit themselves to Jesus and his Gospel, to remain close to the life of the Church, and to become actively involved in the needs of their schools, neighbourhoods, and communities[384]. Christian leadership grows from precisely this combination of faith, service, giftedness, and missionary responsibility.

The archdiocese already witnesses remarkable leadership among youth and young adults. Many young people generously offer their time, talents, and leadership in service to the Church and society.

The archdiocese therefore commits to support parishes to:

- identify and encourage emerging leaders;
- provide formation in servant leadership rooted in the Gospel;
- expand opportunities for youth and young adults to exercise responsibility within parish life;
- strengthen mentorship;
- foster collaboration between clergy, lay leaders, and young adults;
- support leadership development through training, retreats, conferences, and networking opportunities;
- encourage participation in consultative bodies, ministries, and diocesan initiatives; and
- help young people recognize how their gifts can contribute to the common good.

Particular attention should be given to forming leaders capable of serving both the Church and society[385]. The Gospel is needed not only within parish ministries, but also within families, schools, universities, workplaces, healthcare, business, public service, communications, and the digital environment. Young Catholics should be encouraged to see leadership as a form of Christian witness and service[386].

Pope Francis frequently challenged young people to take an active role in the life of the Church, not waiting passively for others to act, but becoming protagonists of renewal and evangelization[387]. Pope Leo XIV has similarly encouraged younger generations to become builders of confidence, friendship, and communion[388].

Young people should not simply inherit the Church; they should help shape her future. The investment made in their formation today will bear fruit for generations to come.

A culture of leadership emerges whenever young people are trusted, encouraged, formed, and given meaningful opportunities to contribute. When this occurs, we become richer in wisdom, stronger in mission, and better prepared to carry the Gospel into the future.



Christian leadership is rooted in service, responsibility, collaboration, and a willingness to place one's gifts at the service of others.

4. A Culture of Lifelong Discipleship

The formation of young leaders is not an end in itself. The Church does not seek merely to prepare young people to assume responsibilities, organize ministries, or exercise influence. Rather, she seeks to form disciples whose leadership flows from a deep and enduring relationship with Jesus Christ[389].

As noted previously, the disciples who first believed at Cana would eventually become leaders within the early Church, but their leadership emerged through years of prayer, growth, service, struggle, and fidelity. Leadership was not a destination, it was one expression of a lifelong journey of discipleship.

The same remains true today. Young people require more than opportunities to participate and lead. They require communities that accompany them through the many transitions of life, helping them remain rooted in faith as they navigate changing circumstances, responsibilities, relationships, and vocations[390]. The ultimate goal of youth ministry is not simply the formation of leaders, but the formation of lifelong disciples whose faith continues to mature and bear fruit throughout every stage of life.

One of the greatest pastoral challenges facing the Church today, then, is helping youth and young adults remain connected to Our Lord throughout the many transitions of life.

The years of adolescence and young adulthood are marked by significant change. Young people move from elementary school to high school, from high school to post-secondary education or employment, from dependence to greater independence, from family-centred relationships to new friendships and commitments, and eventually toward family life, professional vocations, and broader responsibilities within society. These transitions often coincide with important questions of identity, belonging, faith, and purpose[391].

Too often, participation in parish life declines during these years. Many young people who are active during sacramental preparation gradually lose connection with the Church after receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. Others struggle to find communities that accompany them through various stages of life, such as university, employment and early career development, relocation, vocational discernment, marriage preparation, or the demands of young family life[392].

For this reason, the archdiocese seeks to foster pathways of lifelong discipleship that accompany young people through each stage of their journey. Formation cannot end with the reception of a sacrament, nor can youth ministry conclude when a young person reaches adulthood. The Church must provide opportunities for ongoing growth, prayer, service, leadership, and community throughout the various seasons of life.

This requires stronger connections between parish life, Catholic education, campus ministry, chaplaincies, lay movements, family ministry, young adult ministry, and diocesan initiatives. It also requires particular attention to moments of transition, ensuring that young people do not experience gaps in accompaniment during pivotal periods of life.

The *Final Document of the Synod on Synodality* reminded us that formation is lifelong and that discipleship unfolds gradually through participation in the life of the Christian community[393]. The Church therefore accompanies young people not simply toward programs or events, but toward a mature and enduring relationship with Christ lived within the communion of the Church[394].

As we look toward the Jubilee of Redemption in 2033, marking two thousand years since the saving Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Our Lord, young people are invited to rediscover the heart of Christian discipleship. The mystery of Redemption is not merely a historical event remembered by the Church, it is a living reality into which every disciple is called. The journey toward 2033 offers a providential opportunity to help young people encounter Christ more deeply, renew their faith, embrace their vocation, and recognize that their lives find their fullest meaning in relationship with Christ the Redeemer. In this way, the Jubilee becomes not simply a future celebration, but a catalyst for lifelong discipleship in the present.

The archdiocese commits to support parishes to foster lifelong discipleship by:

- creating intentional pathways that connect sacramental preparation, youth ministry, young adult ministry, family life, and ongoing parish engagement;
- strengthening life-stage transitions between key stages of life, particularly from Confirmation to parish involvement, from secondary school to post-secondary education, and from young adulthood to marriage, family life, and mature adult discipleship;
- supporting parish based programs for youth such as Edge and Life-Teen
- supporting campus ministry, chaplaincies, and young adult ministry as vital bridges during periods of transition;
- promoting lifelong participation in the Eucharist, prayer, Scripture, service, and formation, as the foundations of Christian discipleship; and
- equipping parents, grandparents, and families to accompany one another in faith throughout life's various stages.

Discipleship grows when young people discover that faith is not a stage of life to be outgrown, but a lifelong relationship that continues to shape every season of human experience.

Every parish should therefore ask:

- How do we accompany young people beyond Confirmation?
- How do we remain connected to students, young adults, and young families?
- How do we support young people through life's transitions?
- How do we help them remain active participants in the life of the Church?
- What is the next step in discipleship for this person?

The goal is not simply retention, but transformation. We seek to form lifelong disciples who continue to grow in faith, hope, charity, and service throughout the whole of their lives.

Toward a Church Young People Can Believe in and Belong to

Young people today long for lives marked by meaning rather than emptiness, authentic relationships rather than isolation, hope rather than discouragement, purpose rather than uncertainty, and truth that can guide them amid the complexities of contemporary life.

The sixth jar therefore calls the entire archdiocese to renew its commitment to youth and young adults, not simply as recipients of pastoral care, but as essential participants and protagonists in the life and future of the Church.

Our parishes must be places where young people know that they belong, where their gifts are recognized and welcomed, where they are invited to participate meaningfully in the life of the community, where they are formed in hope, where they are entrusted with responsibility, and where they are supported in living a lifelong relationship with Jesus Christ.

This mission cannot be delegated to youth ministers or archdiocesan offices alone. It belongs to the whole Church. Families, schools, parishes, lay ecclesial movements and associations, campus ministries, clergy, consecrated persons, mentors, and young people themselves all share responsibility for creating communities in which faith can take root, questions can be welcomed, gifts can be discovered, vocations



can be discerned, and young disciples can grow toward Christian maturity. Accompanying youth and young adults is therefore not simply one pastoral priority among many; it is an investment in the present and future life and mission of the Church.

Pope Leo XIV has reminded young people that friendship possesses the power to change the world[395]. Christian friendship, rooted in Christ and nourished within the communion of the Church, remains one of the most powerful ways in which faith is shared and hope is sustained. Many young people first discover that the Gospel speaks to their lives through relationships of trust, encouragement, witness, and belonging, often long before they become deeply engaged in institutions or programs. Through such relationships, they begin to recognize that they have a place within the Church, gifts to offer, responsibilities to embrace, and a mission that extends beyond themselves.

For this reason, our concern for youth and young adults cannot be limited to keeping them connected to parish life. We seek to form disciples who will carry the Gospel into the places where they will live and serve: into marriages and families, workplaces and professions, schools and universities, neighbourhoods and communities, culture and public life. The young people we accompany today will become the parents, parishioners, teachers, catechists, clergy, consecrated persons, professionals, community leaders, neighbours, mentors, and witnesses of tomorrow. They will help shape not only the future of our parishes, but also the character of the society in which the Church is called to proclaim and embody the Gospel.

Here the cyclical nature of the six jars becomes especially clear. Young people who encounter Christ and grow into mature missionary disciples will, in time, help strengthen the very communities that first accompanied them. They will form families in which faith can be learned and lived, reach outward to those who are poor, isolated, wounded, or forgotten, build lives rooted in prayer and the sacraments, hand on the faith through catechesis, formation, and personal witness, and help others discover and respond to their own vocations. In turn, they will accompany another generation of young people as they begin their own journey of faith.

The sixth jar therefore does not bring the pastoral journey to an end. It brings us, in a certain sense, back to the beginning. The jars are filled again as one generation receives the faith, lives it, and entrusts it to the next. Family gives rise to mission, mission draws us more deeply to Christ in prayer and the sacraments, encounter with Christ awakens the desire to know and follow him, formation prepares disciples to recognize and respond to their vocation, and those disciples, especially the young, are sent forth to assume their place in the life of the Church and the transformation of the world.

At Cana, the filling of the jars culminates in more than the abundance of wine. Through the sign, Christ reveals his glory and "his disciples believed in him"[396]. So too, the ultimate purpose of these six jars is not simply greater pastoral activity, stronger programs, or more effective structures. It is that people encounter Jesus Christ, come to believe in him more deeply, and allow their lives to be transformed by his grace. From that encounter, they are sent forth to become witnesses who help others encounter him, in turn. In this way, the work of filling the jars continues from generation to generation, and the new wine of the Gospel is poured out anew for the life of the Church and the world.












February 14,2026 Saturday
3 pm to 11 pm
Saint Martha and Mary Church
1870 Burnhamthorpe Road East
Mississauga Ontario Canada



Conclusion: Filling the Jars to the Brim

At Cana, the servants offered what was asked of them. The miracle itself belonged to Jesus. This remains true for the Church today.

Authentic renewal is always the work of God's grace. Yet grace invites cooperation. The Lord continues to call us to participate in his mission by offering generously what has been entrusted to us.

The seven-year journey outlined in this pastoral plan represents one all encompassing, comprehensive response to that invitation. Through the work of pastoral councils, the archdiocese seeks first to listen, discern, and understand the realities of its communities. Through the six jars, it seeks to strengthen family life, deepen social outreach, renew prayer and sacramental life, foster catechesis and formation, cultivate vocations and charisms, and accompany youth and young adults toward mature discipleship.

None of these priorities stand alone. Strong families form disciples. Social outreach turns disciples towards others. Prayer sustains. Catechesis forms missionary disciples. Vocations and charisms reveal God's call. Young people carry the mission forward. As they grow, their mission extends into family life at all stages, as future spouses, parents, priests, deacons, consecrated persons, and lay leaders. Each jar strengthens the next. Together they form a single vision of an archdiocese increasingly rooted in Christ and increasingly engaged in mission.

The success of this pastoral plan will not be measured solely by statistics, programs, committees, or initiatives, important though these may be. The deeper question is whether our parishes and communities become places where people encounter Jesus Christ.

- Will families be strengthened?
- Will the lonely find accompaniment?
- Will the wounded experience healing?
- Will the faithful grow in prayer?
- Will disciples be formed?
- Will vocations be discovered?
- Will young people find hope?
- Will the Gospel be proclaimed with renewed conviction?

These are the questions that must guide our efforts throughout the years ahead.

The responsibility for this renewal belongs to the whole people of the archdiocese. Bishops, priests, deacons, consecrated persons, parish lay leaders, families, individuals, educators, volunteers, young people, seniors, lay ecclesial movements and associations, and ministries, all have a part to play. Each brings gifts through which they participate in the mission of the Church.

As we move forward, we do so with confidence. The same Lord who transformed water into wine at Cana continues to act within his Church. He continues to

call disciples. He continues to heal, teach, forgive, sanctify, and sends us forth in mission.

The future of the Church and our archdiocese will not be secured merely by preserving what has been received, but by allowing Christ to continually renew it. The new wine of the Kingdom is still being poured out wherever believers listen to his voice and respond with faith.

This renewal calls us, in the words of Cardinal Leo, to seek the Kingdom of God "above and beyond all other things". The Kingdom provides the horizon within which every pastoral priority, decision, and initiative must ultimately be discerned. Our families, parishes, schools, ministries, institutions, vocations, and works of service do not exist as ends in themselves, but as places in which the reign of Christ is received, lived, and made visible. To seek the Kingdom first is therefore to allow the Gospel to order our priorities, shape our choices, deepen our communion, and direct our energies toward the mission Christ has entrusted to us.

The Church's liturgy gives prayerful expression to this same hope. In the Prayer after Communion of the *Mass of Our Lady of Cana*[397], we pray that, following the example of Mary, we may remain faithful in following Christ, attend to the needs of his Church, and, united in mind and heart, become even now a sign of the Kingdom that is to come.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Cana, who first recognized the need at the wedding feast, continue to be our model and intercede for our archdiocese. May she teach us to notice the needs around us, to bring them to her Son, and to trust in his providence.

And may the Lord, who instructed the servants to fill the jars to the brim, bless our efforts, renew our communities, strengthen our mission, and transform our local Church into an ever more faithful sign of his presence, his mercy, and his love for the world.

For the work is his.

Our task is filling the jars to the brim.



Endnotes

1 John 2:3 (New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition).

2 John 2:11.

3 John 2:7.

4 John 2:7.

5 Cf. International Theological Commission, *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church* (2 March 2018), nos. 6–8, 53–55; XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, *Final Document: For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission* (26 October 2024), nos. 28–33.

6 Congregation for Clergy, Instruction *The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community in the Service of the Evangelizing Mission of the Church* (29 June 2020), nos. 2–6, 16–20, 34–37.

7 Archbishop Frank Leo, *Homily of Mass of Installation of the Most Rev. Frank Leo* (St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica, Toronto, ON, 25 March 2023).

8 Frank Cardinal Leo, *Seeking the Kingdom of God Above and Beyond All Other Things: Pastoral Letter to the People of God in Toronto*, Archdiocese of Toronto, 1 January 2024.

9 Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium* (21 November 1964), nos. 8–9; Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (24 November 2013), nos. 20–24.

10 *The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community*, nos. 17, 34–35.

11 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canons 511 and 536; Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops *Christus Dominus* (28 October 1965), no. 27.

12 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 28–33, 88–97; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121.

13 John 2:5.

14 *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, vol. 1, Missal [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012], Formulary 9, p 27.

15 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 30–38.

16 *Christus Dominus*, no. 27; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 53–55.

17 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 9–17, 30–38.

18 Ibid., nos. 9, 31-33, 39-40.

19 *Christus Dominus*, no. 27.

20 Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Mission Activity of the Church *Ad Gentes* (7 December 1965), no. 30.

21 Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (18 November 1965), no. 26.

22 Pope St. Paul VI, Motu Proprio *Ecclesiae Sanctae* (6 August 1966), I, no. 16.

23 Synod of Bishops, *Justice in the World* (30 November 1971), Introduction and Conclusion.

24 Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, Circular Letter *Omnes Christifideles* (25 January 1973), nos. 4–6.

25 Sacred Congregation for Bishops, *Ecclesiae Imago*: Directory on the Pastoral Ministry of Bishops (22 February 1973), nos. 204–213.

26 Pope St. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* (30 December 1988), no. 27.

27 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canons 511–514; canon 536.

28 *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 6–8, 53–55.

29 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 12; International Theological Commission, *Sensus Fidei in the Life of the Church* (10 June 2014), nos. 49–63.

30 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 28–33, 67–73.

31 Pope St. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (8 December 1975), nos. 14–20; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 71–75.

32 Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (7 December 1965), no. 4; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 104–110.

33 *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 4; Pope Francis, Address for the Opening of the Synodal Process of the Synod on Synodality (9 October 2021); Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 43–50.

34 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 25–33.

35 *The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community*, nos. 34-37.

36 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 67–73; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 64–70.

37 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canons 511 and 536 §1; *Christus Dominus*, no. 27.

38 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canons 514 §1 and 536 §2.

39 *Ecclesiae Imago,* nos. 204–213.

40 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canon 537.

41 *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 68–70, 119–121.

42 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canons 511 and 536 §1; *Christus Dominus*, no. 27.

43 *Ecclesiae Imago*, nos. 204–213.

44 Conversation in the Spirit is a prayerful process of ecclesial listening and communal discernment in which participants, attentive to the Word of God and to one another, seek together to recognize what the Holy Spirit is saying to the Church and the concrete steps to which the Spirit is calling the community in communion and mission.

45 Cf. General Secretariat of the Synod, *Instrumentum Laboris for the First Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops* (20 June 2023), nos. 32–42, especially nos. 32–33, 37–39; XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, Final Document: *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission*, nos. 45–46.

46 *Ecclesiae Sanctae*, I, no. 16.

47 *Omnes Christifideles*, nos. 5–6.

48 *Christifideles Laici*, no. 27.

49 *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 104–110.

50 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 30–38.

51 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 81–87; General Secretariat of the Synod, *Conversation in the Spirit: A Method for Synodal Discernment*.

52 *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 111–121.

53 Pope Francis, Apostolic Constitution *Episcopalis Communio* (15 September 2018), nos. 5–7.

54 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canons 511 and 536 §1; *Christus Dominus*, no. 27.

55 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canons 514 §1 and 536 §2.

56 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 25–33.

57 *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 4.

58 Pope St. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (6 January 2001), no. 43.

59 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canon 537; *Ecclesiae Imago*, nos. 204–213.

60 *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 116–121.

61 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 28–33, 67–73.

62 *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canons 511 and 536 §1; *Christus Dominus*, no. 27.

63 *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 68–70, 104–110; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 43–50.

64 John 2:7.

65 *Gaudium et Spes,* no. 4; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 50–51.

66 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 81–87; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 111–121.

67 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 4, 9, 12; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 104–110.

68 John 10:1–18, especially John 10:14, 27; Pope Francis, *Address for the Opening of the Synodal Process of the Synod on Synodality; Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 119–121.

69 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 9–17, 30–38; *Code of Canon Law* (1983), canon 512 §2; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 52–60.

70 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 81–87; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 111–121; *Gaudium et Spes* (7 December 1965), no. 4.

71 Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

72 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997), no. 1613; cf. Jn 2:1–11.

73 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658, 2204–2206; Pope St. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (22 November 1981), nos. 21, 36–39.

74 Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (19 March 2016), nos. 31–57, 200–258; Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, *Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life* (15 June 2022), Introduction and nos. 19–36.

75 *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 47–52; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 42–64.

76 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11.

77 Pope Benedict XVI, *Address at the Opening of the Ecclesial Convention of the Diocese of Rome* (6 June 2005); Pope Benedict XVI, *Homily at the Fifth World Meeting of Families*, Valencia (9 July 2006).

78 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658, 2204–2206; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 36–39.

79 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 31–57; *Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life*, nos. 1–18.

80 Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration *Dignitas Infinita* (8 April 2024), nos. 47–62.

81 Pope Francis, Address to Participants in the Conference *The Theology of Tenderness in Pope Francis* (13 September 2018); Pope Francis, Angelus Address, St. Peter's Square, Vatican City (14 July 2019).

82 *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 43; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 28–31.

83 *Final Document: For a Synodal Church*, nos. 11-20, 27-28, 57-94.

84 Ibid, nos. 28–50.

85 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 205–211; *Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life*, nos. 19–36.

86 *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 48–49; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1601–1605.

87 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1641–1654; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 11–17.

88 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 29.

89 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 206–211; *Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life*, nos. 37–56.

90 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 53–54; Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (24 May 2015), no. 22; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 39, 123.

91 *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 19–20; Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Deus Caritas Est* (25 December 2005), no. 11.

92 Pope Leo XIV, *Address to the Faculty and Students of the Pontifical John Paul II Theological Institute for Marriage and Family* (24 October 2025).

93 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 71; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 200–203, 290, 324–325.

94 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1612–1617; Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

95 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 67–75, 315–325.

96 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 217–230; *Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life*, nos. 58–71.

97 *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 65–86; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 88–164.

98 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 32–57; *Catechumenal Pathways for Married Life*, nos. 1–18.

99 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 223–230; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 43.

100 *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 43.

101 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 220–221; Pope Francis, *Address during the Vigil of Pentecost with Ecclesial Movements* (18 May 2013); Pope Francis, *Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2024* (25 May 2024).

102 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 7, 9, 13; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 87, 181–186.

103 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 223–230, 314–325; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 43.

104 Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

105 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Declaration on Christian Education *Gravissimum Educationis* (28 October 1965), no. 3; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2221–2231.

106 Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, *The Rite of Baptism of Children*, 2nd ed. (Ottawa: CCCB Publications, 1973), no. 39.

107 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2226.

108 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1656–1657, 2223–2226; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 36–39.

109 Cf. *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 287–290; Dicastery for Evangelization, *Directory for Catechesis* (23 March 2020), nos. 227–232, 259–266.

110 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 39–42; Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith, Declaration *Dignitas Infinita* (8 April 2024), nos. 1–15; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1691–1698, 2012–2016.

111 *Dignitas Infinita*, nos. 1–15, 18–23, 34–35; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1700–1706, 2207.

112 Pope Leo XIV, Apostolic Letter *Drawing New Maps of Hope* (2025), Introduction and concluding reflections on Christian hope amid cultural transformation.

113 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 11, 39–42; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2230, 2556; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 53–64.

114 Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia; *Gravissimum Educationis*, no. 3; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2221–2231; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 16–18, 84–88.

115 Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Mater* (25 March 1987), nos. 21–22.

116 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 20–24, 46–49; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 291–312.

117 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 31–57, 241–258; *Dignitas Infinita*, nos. 47–62.

118 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 53–54, 179–183; Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* (3 October 2020), nos. 63–68.

119 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 291–312; *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 94–100.

120 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 291–312; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173.

121 Pope Francis, Bull of Indiction for the Ordinary Jubilee of 2025 *Spes Non Confundit* (9 May 2024), nos. 10–15; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 50.

122 Pope Francis, *Message for the First World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly* (31 January 2021); Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, *The Richness of Many Years of Life* (2 February 2021), Introduction.

123 Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit* (25 March 2019), nos. 187–197; Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Spe Salvi* (30 November 2007), nos. 14–1.

124 Pope Francis, *Message for the Second World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly* (3 May 2022).

125 Pope Francis, *Address in Québec City during the Apostolic Journey to Canada* (28 July 2022); Pope St. John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in America* (22 January 1999), nos. 54–55.

126 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Threefold Garland: The World's Salvation in Mary's Prayer*, trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985), p. 131.

127 Pope Francis, *Address to Civil Authorities, Indigenous Representatives and Members of the Diplomatic Corps*, Québec City (27 July 2022); Pope Francis, *Homily at the Shrine of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré* (28 July 2022); Pope Francis, *Address at the Cathedral Basilica of Notre-Dame de Québec* (28 July 2022).

128 Pope Francis, *Message for the First World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly; The Richness of Many Years of Life*, nos. 11–18.

129 *Ecclesia in America*, nos. 39–42, 54–55.

130 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 187–197; Pope Francis, *Message for the Third World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly*; Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America*, nos. 46–47.

131 Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

132 *Spe Salvi*, nos. 1–3, 31–34.

133 *Redemptoris Mater*, nos. 21–22; Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

134 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 200–203, 290.

135 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 120–121, 262–283; *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 71.

136 Pope St. John Paul II, General Audience, *Mary at the Wedding Feast of Cana*, 19 June 1996, no. 2, in Insegnamenti di Giovanni Paolo II, XIX/1 (1996).

137 John 2:3.

138 Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Crostia; *Spes Non Confundit*, nos. 1–3.

139 Evangelii Gaudium, no. 288.

140 Ibid., no. 183.

141 *Deus Caritas Est*, nos. 20–25.

142 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2447, 1928–1942; *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 62–86.

143 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 14, 29–31; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 176–181.

144 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 1.

145 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 28–50, 81–87.

146 Ibid., nos. 43–50, 57–60, 109–118.

147 Pope Francis, Interview with Antonio Spadaro, S.J., *La Civiltà Cattolica*, 19 September 2013.

148 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 20–24, 46–49; *Spes Non Confundit*, nos. 10–15.

149 Frank Cardinal Leo, *Seeking the Kingdom of God Above and Beyond All Other Things*, nos. 13–14; citing *Building the Kingdom Here and Now*, Gerald Darring, St. Louis University, Center for Liturgy.

150 *The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community*, nos. 24–33.

151 Pope Francis, Address to Participants in the Conference *"The Theology of Tenderness in Pope Francis"*; Pope Francis, Angelus Address, St. Peter' Square, Vatican City, 14 July 2019.

152 Frank Cardinal Leo, *Seeking the Kingdom of God Above and Beyond All Other Things*, nos. 24–25.

153 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1700–1706; *Dignitas Infinita*, nos. 8–15; Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae* (25 March 1995), no. 34.

154 *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 63–86, 114–117; *Spes Non Confundit*, nos. 10–15; *Deus Caritas Est*, nos. 20–31.

155 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 179–183; *Evangelium Vitae*, nos. 78–90; *Deus Caritas Est*, nos. 20–31.

156 *Redemptoris Mater*, nos. 21–22; Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

157 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 24, 67, 220; Pope Francis, *Address at the Vigil of Pentecost with Ecclesial Movements* (18 May 2013); *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 30–31.

158 *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 9–17, 30–55; Pope Francis, Message for the First World Day of the Poor, *"Let us love not with words but with deeds"*, (13 June 2017), nos. 3–6.

159 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 87–92, 169–173; *Redemptoris Mater*, nos. 21–22.

160 *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 1–4, 21; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 238–258.

161 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 43–50, 81–87.

162 *Ibid.*, nos. 28–50; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 6–10, 106–110.

163 *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 43, 75–76; Pope St. Paul VI, Encyclical Letter, *Ecclesiam Suam* (6 August 1964), nos. 60–72; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 183–185, 238–258.

164 *Ecclesiam Suam*, nos. 81–90; Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Doctrinal Note on Some Aspects of Evangelization* (3 December 2007), nos. 7–10; Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* (29 June 2009), nos. 1–9.

165 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 43–50, 81–87; *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 198–224; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 43.

166 *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 9–30, 42–55; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 52–75; *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 25.

167 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 4.

168 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 7, 9, 13; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 43–45; *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 87–95.

169 *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 43; *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 94–100; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 50–60.

170 *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 1–8, 87–95, 180–197; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 87–92, 220.

171 *Spes Non Confundit*, nos. 10–15.

172 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173, 199–201; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 43–50.

173 *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, no. 43-45

174 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 25-33, 169–173, 199–201.

175 John 2:3.

176 *Redemptoris Mater*, nos. 21–22.

177 Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

178 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2618.

179 Ibid.

180 Ibid., nos. 1322–1419.

181 Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (4 December 1963), no. 7; Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (7 December 1965), no. 5; Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (17 April 2003), nos. 22–25.

182 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1324.

183 *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, nos. 20–25; Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum Caritatis* (22 February 2007), nos. 70–76.

184 *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 32–34.

185 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 81–83, 262; Pope Francis, *Address to Participants in the International Meeting for Parish Priests* (22 June 2017).

186 *Deus Caritas Est*, nos. 36–39; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 269–270.

187 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 28–50, 81–87; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 68–70, 106–110.

188 *Drawing New Maps of Hope*, nos. 4.1, 4.2, 9.1-9.3, 10.3.

189 *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, p 27.

190 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, no. 5; *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, nos. 1, 22–25.

191 Frank Cardinal Leo, *That Blessed Upper Room: 2025 Pastoral Letter* (Archdiocese of Toronto, 2025), nos. 3–5, 16–25.

192 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 14–24; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 11–18, 24, 34–39; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, nos. 35–42; Pope St. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini* (31 May 1998), nos. 81–87.

193 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 53–54; *Laudato Si'*, no. 22; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 39, 123.

194 *Drawing New Maps of Hope*; Pope Leo XIV, *Homily for the Solemnity of Pentecost*, 2025.

195 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 1, 7, 11; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1322–1327, 1391–1401; *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, nos. 20–24; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, nos. 15, 89.

196 *Sacramentum Caritatis*, nos. 89–91; *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 215–224.

197 *Dies Domini*, nos. 31–36; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 24, 87–92.

198 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1113–1134; *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nos. 59–61; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, nos. 7–10.

199 *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 7; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1084–1112; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, nos. 11–13.

200 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 25–33, 47–49; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 40–41; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 56–60.

201 Directory for Catechesis, nos. 21–25, 226–233; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–175; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1076, 1113–1134; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, nos. 17–19.

202 *Catechism of the Catholic Churc*h, nos. 1422–1424, 1468–1470; Pope St. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, nos. 28–34.

203 *Spes Non Confundit*, nos. 3–15; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 52–75; *Spe Salvi*, nos. 35–40.

204 Pope St. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Veritatis Splendor* (6 August 1993), nos. 84–87; Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate* (19 March 2018), nos. 70–75.

205 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1441–1446; Pope Francis, Apostolic Letter *Misericordia et Misera* (20 November 2016), nos. 1–2.

206 Pope Francis, Angelus Address, 17 March 2013; Pope Francis, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy *Misericordiae Vultus* (11 April 2015), no. 22.

207 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 44, 47, 164–168; Dicastery for Evangelization, Jubilee 2025 Catechetical Resources on Reconciliation and Hope; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, no. 20.

208 Pope Leo XIV, General Audience, *"Jubilee 2025: Jesus Christ Our Hope. III. The Passover of Jesus. 3. Betrayal"*, 13 August 2025; idem, General Audience, *"Jubilee 2025: Jesus Christ Our Hope. IV. The Resurrection of Christ and the Challenges of the Contemporary World. 1. 'Peace be with you!',"* 1 October 2025; idem, *Address to Participants in the XXXVI Course on the Internal Forum Organized by the Apostolic Penitentiary*, 13 March 2026.

209 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1422–1470; *Misericordia et Misera*, nos. 8–10; *Spe Salvi*, nos. 26–29.

210 *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 15, 32–34; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, nos. 66–69.

211 *Sacramentum Caritatis*, no. 88; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 179–183, 270.

212 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 48; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 122–126.

213 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 122–126.

214 Pope Leo XIV, *Address to Participants in the Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Human Dignity*, 2025.

215 *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 13–16; Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

216 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 287–290.

217 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 287–290; *Familiaris Consortio* , nos. 21, 36–39; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2204–2206.

218 Pope Francis, Message to Participants in the International Forum *"Where Do We Stand with Amoris Laetitia?"* (9 June 2021); Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, *The Joy of Family Prayer* (2021); Pope Francis, General Audience of 2 September 2020, on family prayer during the pandemic.

219 *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 21; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 315–325; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 32–34.

220 Pope Leo XIV, *Message for the Jubilee Year of Hope*, 2025.

221 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 315–325; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658; 2685, 2694–2696; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 59–64; *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Spe Salvi*, nos. 31–34.

222 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2697–2699, 2725; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 32–34.

223 S*acrosanctum Concilium*, nos. 84–88; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1174–1176.

224 *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 34–39, 43; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 31, 40–42; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 6–9, 14–18.

225 *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 147–157; *Spe Salvi*, nos. 32–34; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2709–2719; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 71, 272–274; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 30–31.

226 *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 30–33, 42–55; *Spe Salvi*, nos. 16–23; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 52–75.

227 Pope Francis, Interview with Antonio Spadaro, S.J., *La Civiltà Cattolica*.

228 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173, 270; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 43–50; *Spes Non Confundit*, nos. 7–15; *Spe Salvi*, nos. 32–34; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 43–45.

229 Cf. *Drawing New Maps of Hope*; *Address to Participants in the Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Human Dignity*, 2025.

230 Cf. *That Blessed Upper Room*, chapters 1,5, 6,7,8.

231 John 2:5.

232 John 2:5.

233 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 286–288.

234 Exodus 19:8; cf. 24:3, 7

235 Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience of 8 June 2011, Apostolic Journey to Croatia.

236 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–168; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 55–57, 69–79; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 426–429.

237 Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* (16 October 1979), no. 5.

238 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 31–54, 56–57, 75–79.

239 *Catechesi Tradendae*, nos. 18–20; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 79–88; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–175.

240 *Catechesi Tradendae* nos. 19–20; Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* (15 August 1997), nos. 69–72; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 1–5, 55–57.

241 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 77–79, 132–136; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–168.

242 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 47; *Sacramentum Caritatis*, nos. 17–19; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1072, 1122–1126.

243 John 2:5.

244 *Catechesi Tradendae*, no. 5; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 426–429.

245 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 14, 22, 27; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 3, 164–165.

246 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 56–60, 69–79; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 164–165; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 426–429; *General Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 80–87.

247 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121, 160; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 30–34, 89–92.

248 Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum* (18 November 1965), nos. 21–25; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1074–1075, 2688–2690; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 79–88, 113–135; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–175.

249 *Seeking the Kingdom of God Above and Beyond All Other Things*, p. 3-4, 24-26.

250 Ibid.

251 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 106–109, 209–214; Pope Benedict XVI, *Address to Artists*, Sistine Chapel (21 November 2009); *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 167–168; *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nos. 122–130.

252 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 291–299; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 58–60, 111–114.

253 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 165–168; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 75–79, 113–135; *Catechesi Tradendae*, nos. 20–22.

254 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 110–113, 132–136; *Catechesi Tradendae*, nos. 66–71.

255 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 14–15; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 113–116; *Catechesi Tradendae*, nos. 24–25.

256 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 86–90, 210–214; Dicastery for Culture and Education, *Towards Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media* (28 May 2023); *Dignitas Infinita*, nos. 61–67, 105–114; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 132–136; *General Directory for Catechesis,* nos. 238–247.

257 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 110–113.

258 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 41; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 110–112.

259 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 113–116, 132–136; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2688–2690; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173.

260 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 77–84, 97–101.

261 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 30–38; Pope Francis, Apostolic Constitution *Praedicate Evangelium* (19 March 2022), nos. 10–12.

262 Pope Leo XIV, *Address to Catechists and Catholic Educators*, 2025.

263 *Spe Salvi*, nos. 2–3; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 110–113.

264 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 257–265; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–168; *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 4–10.

265 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121, 160; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 257–265; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 39–42; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1427–1433; *Catechesi Tradendae*, no. 43.

266 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 94, 131–133, 2688–2690; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 79–88, 257–265.

267 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 261–265; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 80–84, 97–101; *Catechesi Tradendae*, no. 43; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 257–265; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–168.

268 *Dignitas Infinita*, nos. 1–7, 11–15, 24–26.

269 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 359–372.

270 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 86–90; *Towards Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media*, nos. 8–18; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 62–70; Pope Benedict XVI, Message for the 45th World Communications Day, *"Truth, Proclamation and Authenticity of Life in the Digital Age"* (24 January 2011).

271 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 86–90, 210–214; *Towards Full Presence*, nos. 33–50; *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 42–50, 215–224.

272 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 21, 36–39; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658, 2204–2206.

273 *Gravissimum Educationis,* no. 3; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2221–2231; Code of Canon Law (1983), canon 226 §2.

274 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 71; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 15, 67, 200, 287; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 49–54; *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658.

275 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 227–231, 232–235; *General Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 226–227.

276 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 227–231; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 287–290; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2226.

277 *Catechesi Tradendae*, nos. 68–69; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 227–235; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2225–2226.

278 *Gravissimum Educationis*, no. 3; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2221–2231; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 232–235; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 84–88, 287.

279 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 49–64; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 287–290.

280 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 17–24; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 31–54, 55–57; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–175.

281 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 75–79, 89–92; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 17, 33.

282 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 97–101, 108–112.

283 *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 67–76.

284 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 7, 9, 13; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 946–962; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 87–92; *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, nos. 43–45; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 79–88.

285 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 77–79, 113–135, 197–214. *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 1, 4, 10.

286 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 43–50, 97–101.

287 *Catechesi Tradendae*, nos. 20–22; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 77–79; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 160–168.

288 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 17–24; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 75–92; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1074–1075, 2688–2690; *Evangelii Gaudium,* nos. 119–121, 160–168.

289 *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, nos. 10, 14; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 9–17; *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 41–48; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 122–126; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 88–92, 284–290.

290 *Ecclesia in America*, nos. 26-28, 66-70.

291 *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 31, 55, 102–105.

292 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 11, 31–33, 39–42; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 871–873, 1878, 2013–2014.

293 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121; *Christifideles Laici*, nos. 1–3, 17–18.

294 L*umen Gentium*, nos. 10–13, 30–38; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 873, 897–913, 914–945, 1533–1600; Pope St. John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (25 March 1996), nos. 1–16; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 57–76.

295 Pope Benedict XVI, Message for the 47th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, *Witness Awakens Vocations* (25 April 2010); Pope Francis, Message for the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations (21 April 2024).

296 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 248–277; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 53–56.

297 *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 19–34; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 898–913, 1691–1698.

298 Message for the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations; Pope John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (25 March 1992), no. 34.

299 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 248–277; *Familiaris Consortio,* nos. 52–53; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658, 2221–2231.

300 *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 166–175; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 278–298; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 898–913.

301 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 11, 31–33, 39–42; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 823–826, 897–913, 2013–2014; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 10–34.

302 Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Dilexit Nos* (24 October 2024), nos. 20–24, 59–65.

303 Ibid.

304 *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 166–175; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 68–71; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 278–298.

305 *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 68–71.

306 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2558–2565, 2697–2699; *Novo Millennio Ineunte,* nos. 32–39; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173.

307 *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 166–175; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 302–314.

308 *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 52–53; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 16, 259–290; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247; Pope Benedict XVI, *Message for the 48th World Day of Prayer for Vocations* (15 May 2011); Pontifical Work for Ecclesiastical Vocations, *New Vocations for a New Europe* (1997), nos. 26–33.

309 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2204–2206, 2223–2226; *Gravissimum Educationis*, no. 3; *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (8 December 1975), no. 71; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 39, 53; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 287–290.

310 *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 52–54; Pontifical Work for Ecclesiastical Vocations, *New Vocations for a New Europe* (1997), nos. 26–33.

311 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 67, 287; Message for the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations; *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, no. 41; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 248–277; Message for the 47th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, *Witness Awakens Vocations*; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 14–18.

312 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 31–57, 232–258; *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 47–52.

313 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 248–277; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 11–18; Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 2013–2016.

314 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 46–49.

315 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 86–90, 104–133, 242–277; *Towards Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media*, nos. 8–18, 33–50; *Spe Salvi*, nos. 1–3; *Dilexit Nos*, nos. 20–24, 59–65.

316 John 2:5.

317 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 278–298; G*audete et Exsultate*, nos. 166–175; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 68–71.

318 Pope St. John Paul II, *Homily for the Canonization of St. Juan Diego* (31 July 2002); *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121.

319 *Homily of Mass of Installation as Archbishop of Toronto*.

320 *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, nos. 34–39; *Message for the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations*; Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Instruction *Starting Afresh from Christ* (19 May 2002), nos. 1–13.

321 *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, nos. 1–6; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 1–5; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 276–289; *Message for the 47th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, Witness Awakens Vocations*.

322 *New Vocations for a New Europe*, nos. 13–26; Pope Francis, *Message for the 58th World Day of Prayer for Vocations* (25 April 2021).

323 *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, no. 41; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 291–298; *Message for the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations*.

324 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1548–1551; *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, nos. 4–6; *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, nos. 21–23; Pope Benedict XVI, *Homily for the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Closing of the Year for Priests* (11 June 2010).

325 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 24, 31, 268–274; Pope Francis, *Address to Priests, Consecrated Persons and Seminarians, Cathedral of Saint Louis*, Bangkok (22 November 2019).

326 Archdiocese of Toronto Office of Vocations initiative which began in the 1990s, and engaged parishes and parishioners throughout the four pastoral regions to nominate individuals whom they believed may have had a vocation to the priesthood, the diaconate, or to consecrated life.

327 *Vita Consecrata*, nos. 1–16, 26, 84-85; *Lumen Gentium*, no. 44; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 914–933.

328 Pope Francis, *Address to Participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Dicastery for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life* (28 January 2022); Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Instruction *The Service of Authority and Obedience* (11 May 2008), nos. 1–4.

329 *Vita Consecrata*, nos. 84–87, 104-105; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 76–109; Pope Francis, *Apostolic Letter to All Consecrated People* (21 November 2014).

330 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 11–16; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1601–1605; *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 48–52; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 71–75.

331 *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 13; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1616–1617.

332 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 33–57, 199–201; *Caritas in Veritate*, nos. 44, 51.

333 Pope Francis, *Message for the World Meeting of Families* (22 June 2022); *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 48–52; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 17–18; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 120–164.

334 *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 88, 121–130, 200–201; *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 52–54; Message for the 47th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, *Witness Awakens Vocations*.

335 *Familiaris Consortio*, nos. 52–54; *New Vocations for a New Europe* (1997), nos. 26–33; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1655–1658, 2221–2231.

336 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 798–801, 873–913; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 12, 30–38.

337 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 57–76, 97–108.

338 *Lumen Gentium*, no. 12; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 130–131; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 286–290.

339 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 57–76, 97–108; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 64–70; *Lumen Gentium*, no. 12.

340 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 798–801, 873–913.

341 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 291–298; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 291–312; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 43–50, 84–96; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos. 68–71; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 166–175.

342 Pope Francis, *Homily at the Chrism Mass*, Vatican Basilica, Holy Thursday, 29 March 2018.

343 *Redemptoris Mater*, nos. 21–24, 38-41; Pope St. Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus* (2 February 1974), no. 57; *Dilexit Nos*, nos. 203–216.

344 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173; *Amoris Laetitia*, nos. 291–312; *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 166–175; Congregation for the Clergy, *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation (Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis)* (8 December 2016), nos. 43–45.

345 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 43–50, 57–76, 84–108; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 30–38; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247.

346 *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, no. 41; *New Vocations for a New Europe* (1997), nos. 26–33; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 291–298.

347 *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173, 220–221; *Dilexit Nos*, nos. 203–216; *Message for the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations*; Message for the 47th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, *Witness Awakens Vocations*.

348 *Lumen Gentium,* nos. 31–33, 39–42; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121, 273; *Christifideles Laici*, no. 17.

349 *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 19–34; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 10–13, 31–38; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 871–913; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 253–258.

350 *Gaudete et Exsultate*, nos. 23–34; *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 24; *Dilexit Nos*, nos. 87–95, 203–216; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 248–277; *Dilexit Nos*, nos. 203–216; *Deus Caritas Est,* nos. 17–18.

351 *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, nos. 2–3; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 30–38; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church*, nos. 57–76.

352 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 70–73; *Christifideles Laici*, nos. 23, 34–44; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 120–121;

353 Message for the 61st World Day of Prayer for Vocations; *New Vocations for a New Europe* (1997), nos. 26–33; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 119–121, 273.

354 John 2:11.

355 Pope Benedict XVI, Homily for the Opening of the Year of Faith (11 October 2012).

356 *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, p 28.

357 John 2:5.

358 Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Pastoral Letter to Young People* (12 October 2022); Pope St. John Paul II, A*ddress at the Welcome Ceremony*, World Youth Day, Toronto (25 July 2002).

359 *Christus Vivit*, no. 64–67, 134–178; *Final Document: For a Synodal Church*, nos. 116–119; *Lumen Gentium* nos. 30–38; *Christifideles Laici*, nos. 46–47.

360 *Homily of Mass of Installation as Archbishop of Toronto*.

361 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 248–277; *Final Document: For a Synodal Church*, nos. 68–76; Pope Benedict XVI, *Message for the 28th World Youth Day* (18 October 2012).

362 Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educating to Fraternal Humanism* (16 April 2017); *Final Document: For a Synodal Church*, nos. 117–133; Synod of Bishops, XV Ordinary General Assembly, *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document* (27 October 2018), nos. 117–122.

363 John 2:7.

364 Pope Francis, *Homily at the Chrism Mass*, Holy Thursday, 13 April 2017.

365 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 216–220, 242–247; *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 138–143.

366 Dicastery for Communication, *Towards Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media* (28 May 2023), nos. 8–18, 33–50.

367 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 88–90; *Towards Full Presence*, nos. 33–50; *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 42–55; *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 92-102.

368 *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 51–52, 138–143.

369 *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 30–38; *Christus Vivit*, no. 64; *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 116–119.

370 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 169–178, 203–210; *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 116–119, 138–143.

371 *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 57–76, 97–108; *Synodality in the Life and Mission of the Church,* nos. 64–70; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 102–104, 120; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 203–210, 242–247; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 30–38.

372 Pope St. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter *Dilecti Amici* (31 March 1985), nos. 1–16; Pope Benedict XVI, *Message for the 25th World Youth Day* (28 March 2010); *Christus Vivit*, nos. 64–67, 203–210; *Drawing New Maps of Hope*.

373 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 117-122, 242–247, 299; *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 117–122, 138-143; Drawing New Maps of Hope.

374 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 41; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 127–129; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 216–220; *Drawing New Maps of Hope*.

375 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 291–298; *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, no. 41.

376 *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 8–10, 51–52, 138–143; Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 43–50, 57–76.

377 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 86–94, 11-133; *Towards Full Presence*, nos. 8–18, 33–50; *Drawing New Maps of Hope*.

378 *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1817–1821; *Spe Salvi*, nos. 1–9.

379 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 291–298; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 169–173.

380 Pope Leo XIV, Encyclical Letter *Magnifica Humanitas* (15 August 2026), nos. 13, 14, 62, 63.

381 *Spe Salvi*, nos. 1–3, 27–34; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 111–133, 242–247; *Magnifica Humanitas*, nos. 2, 10, 13–15.

382 *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 116–119, 138–143; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 203–210, 242–247; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 24, 272; *Magnifica Humanitas*, nos. 13–14.

383 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 57–76, 91–96.

384 *Homily of Mass of Installation as Archbishop of Toronto*.

385 *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, nos. 2–7; *Christifideles Laici*, nos. 34–44; *Christus Vivit*, nos. 168–178.

386 *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, nos. 18–20, 70; *Evangelii Gaudium*, nos. 176–185; *Towards Full Presence,* nos. 33–50; *Deus Caritas Est*, nos. 29–31.

387 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 15, 64, 174–178, 203–210; *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 116–119.

388 *Magnifica Humanitas*, nos. 10, 13–15, 62–63.

389 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 158–161, 242–247; Pope Benedict XVI, *Homily at the Vigil of the XX World Youth Day*, Cologne (20 August 2005).

390 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 230–242, 242–247, 291–298; *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 95–102.

391 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 134–143, 248–277; *Dilecti Amici,* nos. 3–6.

392 *Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment: Final Document*, nos. 117–122, 138–143.

393 Final Document: *For a Synodal Church,* nos. 84–96, 108–115; *Directory for Catechesis*, nos. 54–57, 79–80.

394 *Christus Vivit*, nos. 242–247, 291–298; *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 7, 9, 32.

395 Pope Leo XIV, *Dialogue with Young People during the Prayer Vigil for the Jubilee of Young People*, Tor Vergata, Rome (2 August 2025).

396 John 2:11.

397 *Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, p 28.



Pastoral Plan Prayer
Filling the Jars to the Brim

Father in Heaven,
as we undertake this journey of renewal and mission,
draw us closer to you and to one another,
and send us forth to share the joy of the Gospel.
Strengthen our faith, deepen our hope,
and make our local Church a living witness to your love.

Lord Jesus Christ,
you revealed your glory at Cana,
and transformed what was offered to you.
Receive the offering of our lives and service,
and make our efforts fruitful through your grace.

Holy Spirit,
guide us on this pastoral journey.
Teach us to listen with open hearts,
to discern your will with faith,
to respond with courage,
and to serve with generosity and love.

Mary, Our Lady of Cana,
accompany us with your maternal care.
Show us how to be attentive to the needs of others,
and to follow your Son faithfully,
so that, united in mind and heart,
we may become a living sign of his Kingdom.

Amen