



# BECOMING A PARISH-IN-COUNCIL















An aerial photograph of a city, likely Chatswood, Australia. In the foreground, a large brick church with a prominent steeple and arched entrance is visible. The church is surrounded by greenery and a paved area with some outdoor seating. In the background, a dense urban landscape of high-rise apartment buildings and commercial structures stretches towards the horizon. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

**“We are the only truly city church in our Diocese.**

**This has occasioned me to keep reflecting on what it might mean to be Church in the city.**

**And not just any city, but in the very multi-cultural context which is Chatswood.**

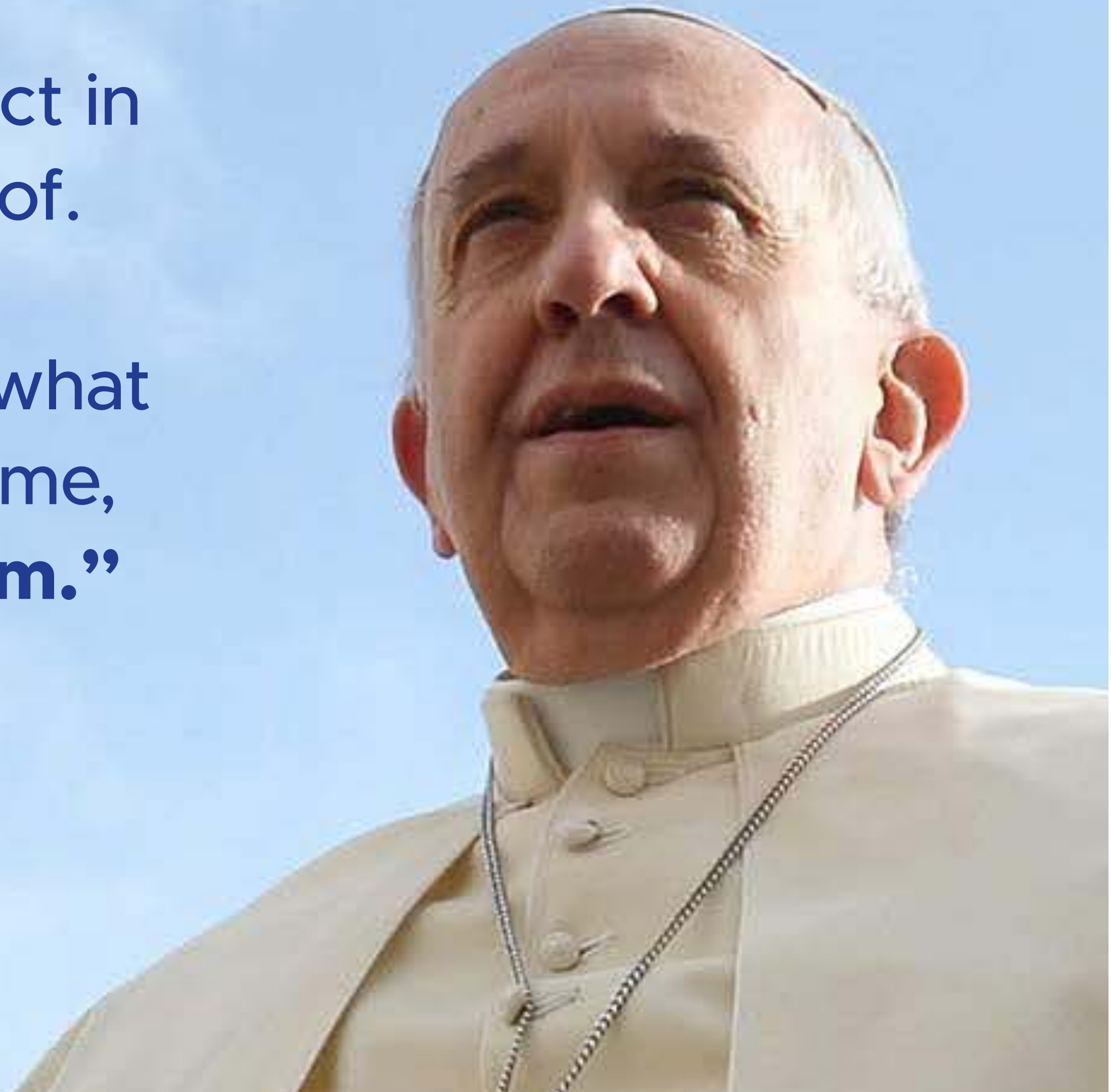
**I have recognised that our church truly is a regional hub, a centre to which many people from wide and far come, and from which many people go.”**



“This is a moment to **dream big**, to **rethink our priorities** - what we value, what we want, what we seek- and to commit to act in our daily life on what we have dreamed of.

What I hear at this moment is similar to what Isaiah hears God saying through him: Come, let us talk this over. **Let us dare to dream.**”

**Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future**





“I dream of a “missionary option”, that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today’s world rather than for her self-preservation.”

**Evangelii Gaudium**







# OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER






### Sharing our dreams

Once you have considered these questions, I would love for you to share your dreams and help to shape the future of our church, parish, and precinct.

Feeding these back to our community and building on them with further initiatives will begin to give shape to the possibilities being given us by the Spirit of God.

You can share your dreams by...

-  visiting [www.churchinthecity.com.au/dreams](http://www.churchinthecity.com.au/dreams) and filling in the questions; or
-  emailing [dreams@churchinthecity.com.au](mailto:dreams@churchinthecity.com.au) and sharing your dreams; or
-  filling out the *dreams booklet* found in the church foyer and pews.

### And so, let us begin our journey together!

As we now emerge from COVID we are set on a journey of renewal. Let us take a step at a time, but also with commitment and purpose.

Let us celebrate all that makes us a unique community of faith in all its diverse features.

Let us share our dreams and together discover what the Spirit is saying to the Churches – to our Church in Chatswood and now let us lay the foundations for the second 100 years of our life.

With you on this very exciting, grace-filled journey,



Fr. David Renson PP VG  
Our Lady of Dolours Chatswood Catholic Parish



# BEING CHURCH IN THE CITY

## OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER



OUR LADY OF DOLOURS  
Chatswood Catholic Parish



## Being Church in the city

Dear Friend,

From my first days with our parish, I have been excited by the richness of Our Lady of Dolours. We are the only truly urban, the most multicultural, and the largest parish in our Diocese.

### Our unique Church in the city

This has prompted me to keep reflecting on what it might mean to be Church in the city. And not just any city, but in the very multicultural, growing context which is Chatswood.

This provides our church and parish with a unique character, quite different from other more suburban communities.

I have recognised that our church truly is a regional hub, a centre to which many people from wide and far come, and from which many people go.

This is helped by the presence of three schools in our precinct: Mercy College, St Plus X College, and our own Our Lady of Dolours Primary School.

Every school day, over 2,000 students come to our precinct. And our church is in the middle of it all, the point of intersection between all three schools – and for many students an experience of Church by which they will identify for their whole lives.

Consequently, we are a place of welcome for many people, near and far, and at all times of the day and night. It is extraordinary to see how many people come through the day, taking back to their homes something of the spirit they have experienced.

### A new 'moment'

We have just celebrated the 100th anniversary of the opening of our church, our parish having been established in 1910. We are now into our second century as a parish community.

We have endured two years of disruption created by a global pandemic which has placed unexpected pressure on the vitality of parish life and has impacted participation in our parish communities.

On a global level, Pope Francis has called the Church to a new way of being, a 'synodal' way. Being synodal means we journey together in discernment of where the Spirit of God is leading us.

This is creating the opportunity for listening and dialogue, at every level of the Church, and involves a process of humbly learning together.

It is therefore a wonderful opportunity for us as a parish community to enter this invitation of the Holy Father and to apply in our own community what is being discussed in the worldwide Church and at the synod of bishops 2023, as well as through our own Fifth Plenary Council of the Church in Australia.

## Being Church in the city, our journey together

We have embarked on a journey together, guided by the Spirit, to discover what it means to be Church in the city. Our journey together will have six steps, taking us through to Pentecost 2023.



Over the next year and a half, we will

- Develop a clear mission and vision for the next 5, 10, 50 years
- Create a parish strategic plan and priorities
- Maximise our strengths
- Renew our church building and space
- Consider how we might redevelop our entire precinct in a staged way

### What are our dreams?

The first step in our journey together is a call to share our hopes and dreams. Let us dream about what is possible in the next 5, 10, 50 years for our:

**Church:** the visible sign of our presence, and our point of gathering

**Community:** our parish community

**Precinct:** our significant spiritual and educational precinct including our church buildings, Our Lady of Dolours Primary School and Mercy College

Let us begin a great conversation and let us dream how we can become truly Church in, and for, the city.

The sharing of our dreams will give us the first hints of where the Spirit may be leading us.

To do this, I encourage you to consider carefully the following questions...

- Q. What are my hopes and dreams for our Chatswood **church**?
- Q. What are my hopes and dreams for our Chatswood parish **community**?
- Q. What are my hopes and dreams for our church and school **precinct**?
- Q. What **obstacles or challenges** do I think might come our way?
- Q. What might be the **first things** we need to do?





### 分享你的理念

當你考慮這些問題的時候，我希望你能分享你的理念，幫助塑造我們教會、教區和學區的未来。現在就讓我們呼求聖神，願祂的理念能夠得到實踐，並且回饋給社區。

你可以從以下途徑分享你的理念...

 瀏覽網站 [www.churchinthecity.com.au/dreams](http://www.churchinthecity.com.au/dreams) 並且填寫問卷; 或者

 電郵至 [dreams@churchinthecity.com.au](mailto:dreams@churchinthecity.com.au) 並分享你的理念; 或者

 填寫在教堂門廳和長椅上發現的夢想小冊子

現在，就讓我們一起同行吧！

現在，隨著我們從疫情中走出來，我們正踏上更新的旅程。讓我們踏出每一步，有著承諾和目標。

讓我們慶祝所有使我們成為具有所有不同特徵的獨特信仰社區的一切。

現在讓我們位於Chatswood的教會內，分享我們的理念，共同發現聖神對教會，為我們生命的第二個 100 年奠定的基礎。

就讓我和你一起踏上這鼓舞人心、充滿恩典的旅程。



Fr. David Ranson PP VG  
Our Lady of Dolours Chatswood Catholic Parish



# 作為城中的教會 我們一起同行






OUR LADY OF DOLOURS  
Chatswood Catholic Parish



### 당신의 꿈을 공유...

어려운 질문을 고려한 후에는 꿈을 공유하고 싶습니다.  
우리 교회, 본당, 교구의 미래를 형성하는 데 도움이 됩니다.  
이들 공동체에 다시 제공되고 추가 계획, 이를 기반으로 구축할 것입니다.  
하나님의 영이 우리에게 주신 가능성을 구체화합니다.

당신은 당신의 꿈을 공유할 수 있습니다..

-  [www.churchinthecity.com.au/dreams](http://www.churchinthecity.com.au/dreams) 를 방문하여 질문을 작성하십시오. 또는
-  [dreams@churchinthecity.com.au](mailto:dreams@churchinthecity.com.au) 로 이메일을 보내 꿈을 공유하십시오. 또는
-  교회 로비와 회의실에서 찾은 문의 소재자를 작성하십시오.

### 자, 함께 여행을 시작합시다

우리는 이제 COVID에서 벗어나 경신적 여행을 시작합니다. 한 번에 한 걸음씩,  
그러나 또한 헌신과 목적을 가지고 갑시다.

다양한 목적을 지닌 특별한 신앙 공동체를 이루는 모든 것을 환영합니다.

우리의 꿈을 나누고 성령께서 Chatswood 교회에 임하시길 것을 함께 발견하고  
어제 우리 헌생의 두 번째 100년을 위한 기초를 놓도록 합시다.

매우 흥미롭고 은혜로 가득 한 이어짐에서 당신과 함께.



Fr. David Ranson PP VG  
Our Lady of Dolours Chatswood Catholic Parish



# 도시 속의 교회

## 함께하는 여정



OUR LADY OF DOLOURS  
Chatswood Catholic Parish






### Berbagi impian anda.

Setelah anda mempertimbangkan pertanyaan-pertanyaan ini, saya akan dengan senang hati berbagi impian dengan anda untuk membantu membentuk masa depan gereja, paroki dan kawasan kita.

Memberi masukan kembali ke komunitas kami dan bersama mereka membangun prakarsa lebih lanjut untuk dimulainya pembentukan pada kemungkinan-kemungkinan yang diberikan kepada kita oleh Roh Allah.

Anda dapat berbagi impian anda dengan..

-  Mengunjungi [www.churchinthecity.com.au/Abreams](http://www.churchinthecity.com.au/Abreams) dan mengisi pertanyaan-pertanyaan
-  atau mengirim email ke [dreams@churchinthecity.com.au](mailto:dreams@churchinthecity.com.au) dan berbagi impian anda.
-  atau mengisi buklet mimpi yang tersedia di lobi dan bangku gereja.

### Jadi, mari kita mulai perjalanan kita bersama!

Karena dengan adanya COVID, kami melakukan pembaharuan perjalanan. Mari kita menggaris langkah pada saat ini tetapi dengan komitmen dan tujuan.

Mari kita syukani semua yang membuat kita menjadi komunitas iman yang unik dengan semua karakter yang beragam.

Marilah kita berbagi impian kita dan bersama menemukan apa yang Roh Kudus katakan kepada gereja-gereja, kepada Gereja kita di Chatswood dan sekarang marilah kita letakan dasar bagi 100 tahun ke dua kehidupan kita.

Bersamamu dalam perjalanan yang sangat menarik dan penuh rahmat.



Fr. David Ranson PP VG  
Our Lady of Dolours Chatswood Catholic Parish



# MENJADI GEREJA DI KOTA

## PERJALANAN KITA BERSAMA



OUR LADY OF DOLOURS  
Chatswood Catholic Parish



# OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER

1

What are our **Dreams?**



2

Where are we **Today?**



3

What is our **Mission?**



4

Where do we want to **go?**



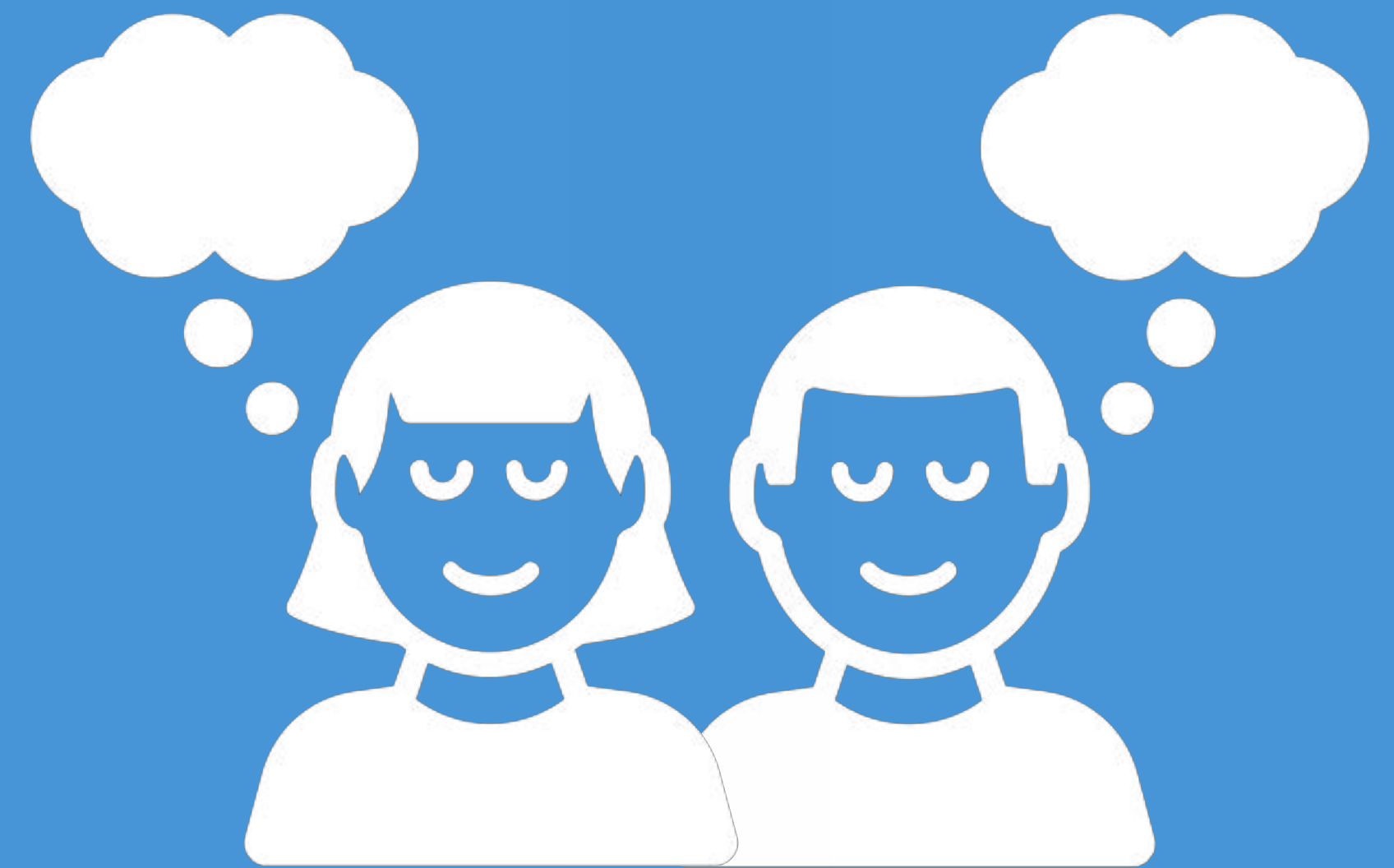
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How are we going to **get there?**





**WHAT ARE  
OUR DREAMS?**





# WHAT ARE OUR DREAMS?

## MY HOPES & DREAMS FOR OUR CHURCH IN THE CITY

Chatswood Catholic Parish is the only truly urban, the most multicultural, and the largest parish in our Diocese.

We are a spiritual and educational hub to which many people from wide and far come, and from which many people go.

Now in our second century as a parish community, we are embarking on a journey together, guided by the Spirit, to discover what it means to be Church in the city.

In our journey together, we will:

- Develop a clear parish mission and vision for the next 5, 10, 50 years
- Create a strategic plan and priorities
- Maximise our strengths
- Renew our church building and space
- Consider how we might redevelop our entire precinct in a staged way

The first step in our journey together is a call to share our dreams. The sharing of our dreams will give us the first hints of where the Spirit may be leading us.

Let us dream about what is possible in the next 5, 10, 50 years for our:

- **Church:** the visible sign of our presence, and our point of gathering
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You can share your dreams by:

 **Visiting**  
[www.churchinthecity.com.au/dreams](http://www.churchinthecity.com.au/dreams)

 **Emailing**  
[dreams@churchinthecity.com.au](mailto:dreams@churchinthecity.com.au)

 **Writing**  
filling out the questions in this booklet

1. My hopes & dreams for our Chatswood **church** are...

2. My hopes & dreams for our **parish community** are...

3. My hopes & dreams for our **church and schools precinct** are...

4. The **obstacles or challenges** I think we could face are...





# WHAT ARE OUR DREAMS?

5. The **first things** I think we should focus on are...

**Optional.** My name is...

**Thank you** for helping to shape the future of our church, parish community and precinct!

**Please drop** your completed booklet into the dreams collection box in the church foyer or with the parish office.

**We'd love to hear from you!** If you have any questions or would like to contribute further, email [dreams@churchinthecity.com.au](mailto:dreams@churchinthecity.com.au)



## OUR HOPES & DREAMS

A SAMPLE OF WHAT HAS BEEN RECEIVED SO FAR

### The first things I think we should focus on are...

"Having good strong lay leadership  
Considering an outside facilitator  
Concentrating on good process and inclusion. Trusting in the Holy Spirit."

**Trish**

"Rebuilding community after 2 years of pandemic, which has affected people and made them feel more distanced."

**Brent**

"Get the music right. Good music is a drawcard for Mass attendance."

**Terence & Bernadette**

"Homilies, hymns and hospitality need to be our focus, and we need quality and consistency."

We have to bravely do what is essential if we are to evangelise, though it will require a significant change in culture.

[...] We need to find out who we have lost from Mass attendance in the last two years and find ways to invite them back into the life of the parish."

**Martin**

"Prayer, Fasting, Alms Giving, Central lesson of Lent. Figure out ways to engage families: start with low hanging fruit (or should be low hanging fruit) our school families."

There is an assault on the family in modern secular society. OLD should become a bulwark to encourage, uplift and strengthen the family.

More smiles, more welcoming body language. More encouragement. More laughter. More Joy... it's all contagious."

**Chris**

"Definitely repainting the church  
Encouraging the young ones what sort of plans they can help with their ideas."

**Parishioner**

"For our current students within our precinct, to have more opportunity to hear mass on special occasions and to have the sacrament of reconciliation be made available to them."

Our children and youth are the 'salt and light of the earth' and so are we."

**Rowena**

## ONLY TWO WEEKS TO GO!

Share your hopes & dreams by 30 May

### How to share your hopes & dreams

We would love for you to share your dreams and help to shape the future of our church, parish, and precinct. Feeding these back to our community and building on them with further initiatives will begin to give shape to the possibilities being given us by the Spirit of God.

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-  filling out the **dreams booklet** found in the church foyer and pews

or scan here!





# WHAT ARE OUR DREAMS?



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**Dreams  
Shared**





**Respect the church building's heritage**

**Be an example...  
a lighthouse**

**Improve Mass music**

**Create a Baby/Children's room for Mass**

**Hopes & dreams for our Chatswood church**

**More car parking closer to the church**

**Refurbish the church interior**

**Greater opportunities for Mass, Reconciliation and worship**

**Ensure the church is always well maintained**





**Offer more social activities and events**

**Attract and engage young people**

**Involve and care for our seniors**

**Build a welcoming & belonging culture**

**Hopes & dreams for our parish community**

**Care for the community and the poor**

**Evangelise to non-Catholics**

**Re-evangelise to lapsed Catholics**

**Offer small group studies and seminars**





**Build a community cafe  
and store**

**Draw income from our  
land**

**Redevelop our land to  
its best use**

**Create multi-use  
spaces**

**Hopes & dreams  
for our parish  
precinct**

**Create green and  
reflective spaces**

**Greater student &  
parent involvement**

**Improve and increase  
car parking**

**Introduce a community  
bus**





Engaging young people/lack of youth in the parish

Attracting and retaining volunteers

Budget, funding and resources

Resistance to change

**Potential Obstacles & Challenges**


Apathy to the Good News

Full involvement and participation of the parish community

Lack of time/busy lives

Change of Clergy





**Improving the quality of the liturgy and music to inspire and engage parishioners**

**Reaching out to young people and investing in their faith formation**

**Outreach to those who stopped attending Mass during the pandemic and finding ways to invite them back**

**Building a strong sense of community and belongingness within the parish**

**First things to focus on**

**Creating opportunities for social events and getting to know each other**

**Strengthening lay leadership and involving more parishioners in the life of the parish**

**Offering programs and services for the elderly and vulnerable in the community**

**Building a bold and visible Christian presence in the local area**



**WHERE ARE  
WE TODAY?**





# PARISH CENSUS

**Census Card**

OUR LADY OF DOLOURS  
Chatswood Catholic Parish

Surname(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Home phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_  
First names \_\_\_\_\_ Gender Occupation Mobile Email address  
M F \_\_\_\_\_  
M F \_\_\_\_\_  
Children's names M/F Age School  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
6. \_\_\_\_\_

I/we have been members of this parish since: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mass most often attended:  
 Sat 5.30pm  Sun 9.00am  Sun 5.30pm  
 Sun 7.30am  Sun 10.30am  Don't attend  
Language most spoken at home: \_\_\_\_\_  
The two things I like most about Our Lady of Dolours are: \_\_\_\_\_

Please turn over card...

408  
Cards Completed

**Census Card**

I am actively involved in one or more aspects of parish life e.g., a ministry, part of a parish group etc

Over the next year, I would like my involvement in parish life to be (choose one option):

- Less than today
- Same as today
- More than today

I/we can serve our parish and community through personal skills and talents in...

- Adult Faith Education (e.g., Alpha)
- A Ministry at Mass (e.g., music, welcoming)
- Assistance in the parish office
- Children's activities
- Parish social activities
- Prayer and faith groups
- Social Justice & Ecology
- Young adult activities
- Caring for others
- Communications
- Construction/Repair
- Encouraging others
- Graphic Design
- Hospitality
- Marketing
- Music
- Office administration
- Outreach
- Photography/Video
- Research
- Sharing my faith
- Strategy development
- Teaching
- Writing

Please hand your completed Census Card to a Mass warden or drop in the parish office.

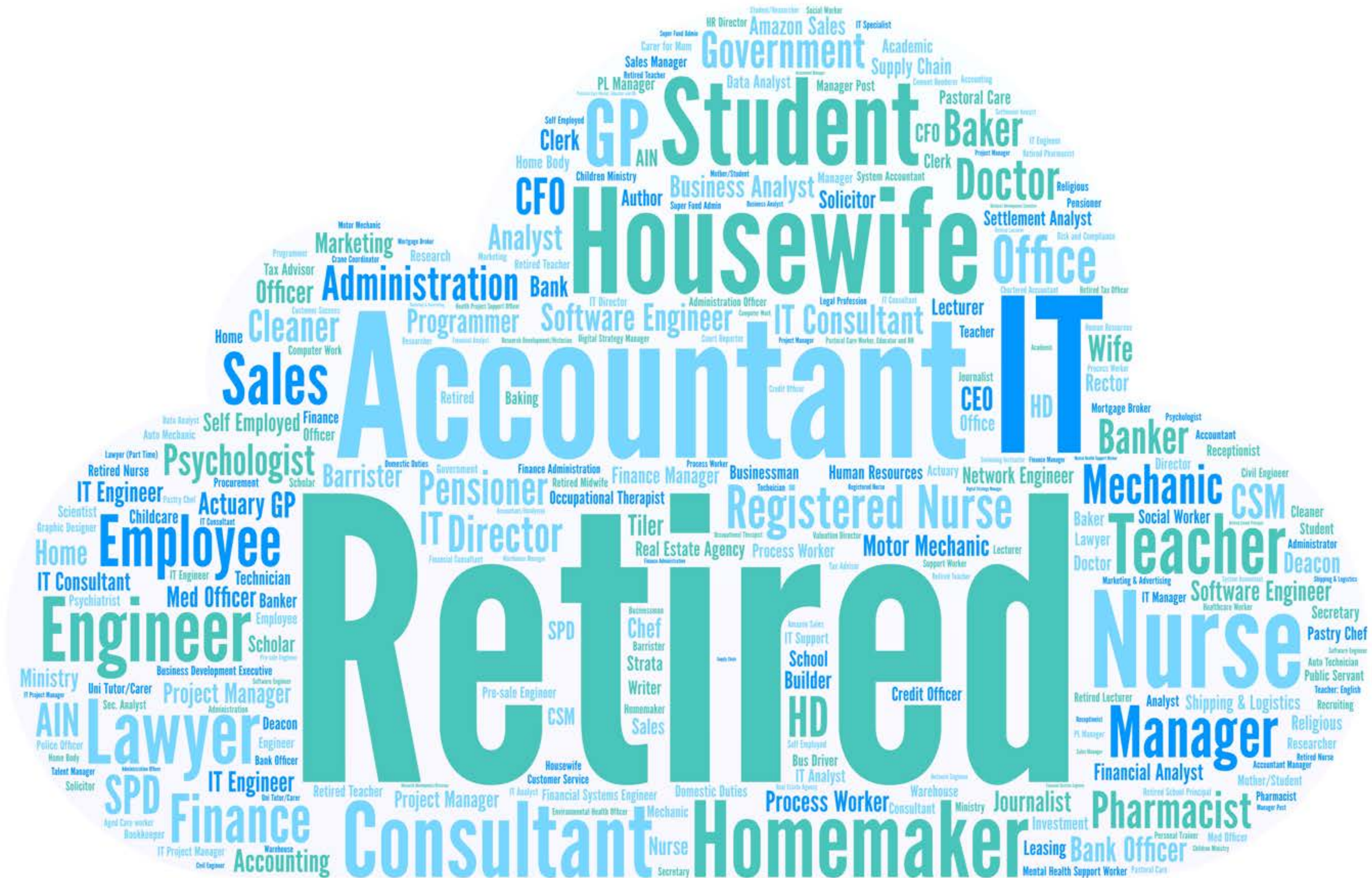
The information provided is collected and handled in accordance with the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay Privacy Policy, available on the Diocese and Parish websites.







# PARISHIONER OCCUPATIONS





# INTEREST CARD

OUR LADY OF DOLOURS

*Chatswood Catholic Parish*

## Interest Card

**Our parish enjoys a remarkably active network of ministry with activities and opportunities to serve available for all ages and groups!**

We encourage you to become involved and participate, sharing your gifts, time and capacity. Do take time to consider all the various opportunities listed below, ticking any of interest and one of our friendly ministry leaders will be in contact with you.

First name

Phone number

Email address

I would be interested in becoming involved in and/or learning more about...

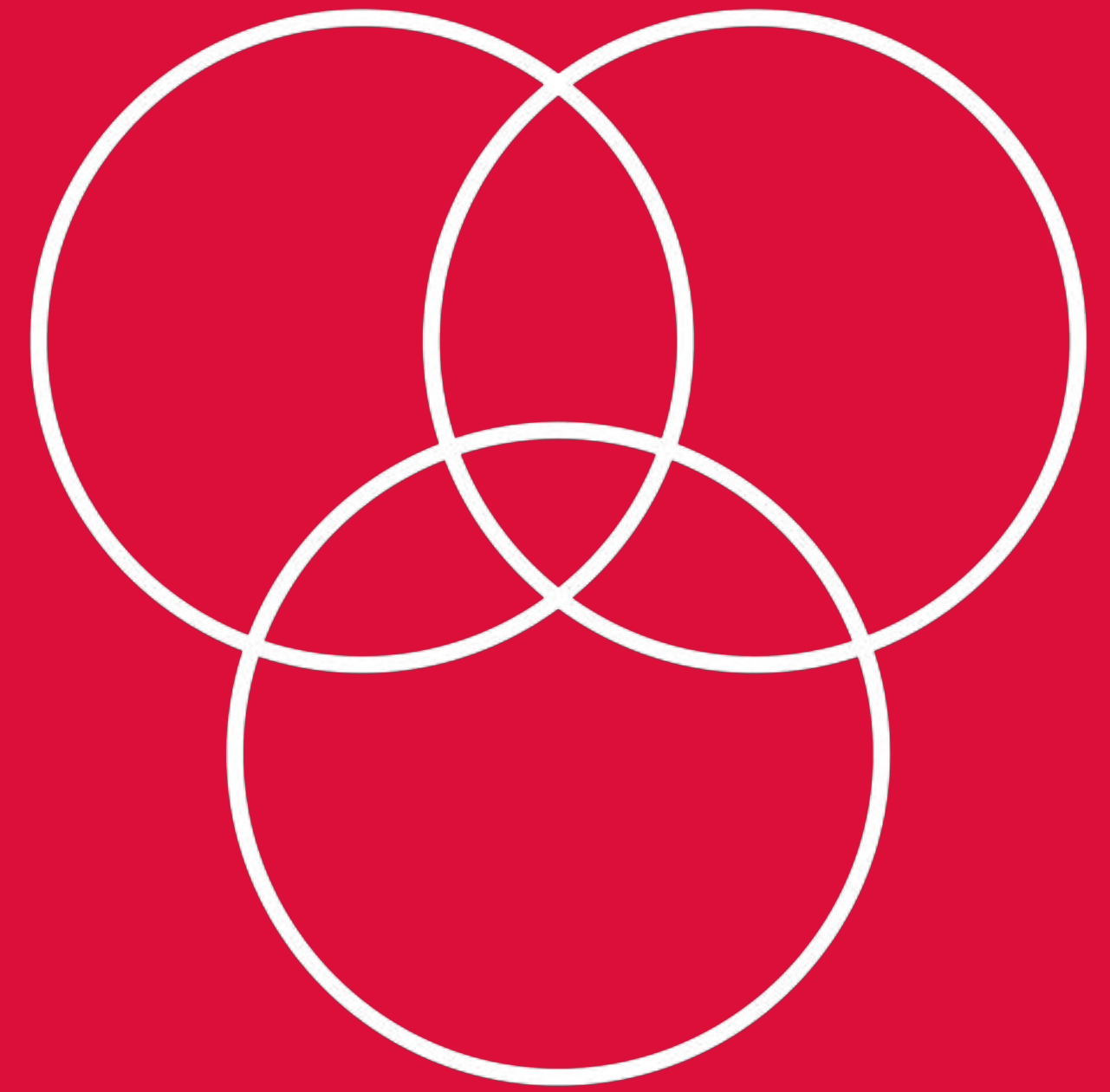
	Participating in	Helping with or Leading		Participating in	Helping with or Leading		Participating in	Helping with or Leading
<b>Worshipping Together</b>			<b>Growing in Faith</b>			<b>Nurturing Relationships</b>		
Welcoming at Mass	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Alpha	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Foundation Youth Ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reading at Mass	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	RCIA	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Seniors Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mass Wardens (Collectors)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Bible Discussion Group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Parishioner Connect Team	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music Ministry	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	SRE Catechists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	MenAlive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Altar Servers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<b>Leading Reflective Lives</b>			<b>Caring for our World</b>		
Ministers of Communion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Meditation Group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Marian Catholic Action Group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Church cleaning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Home Rosary	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Community Action Group	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Please hand your completed card to a Mass warden or drop in the parish office.



# MINISTRY CIRCLES

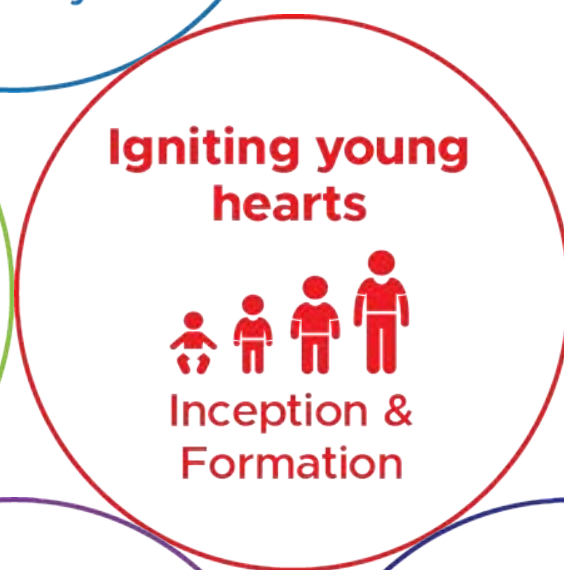




# OUR MINISTRY CIRCLES

## We seek God

Mark 12:30



## We serve with love

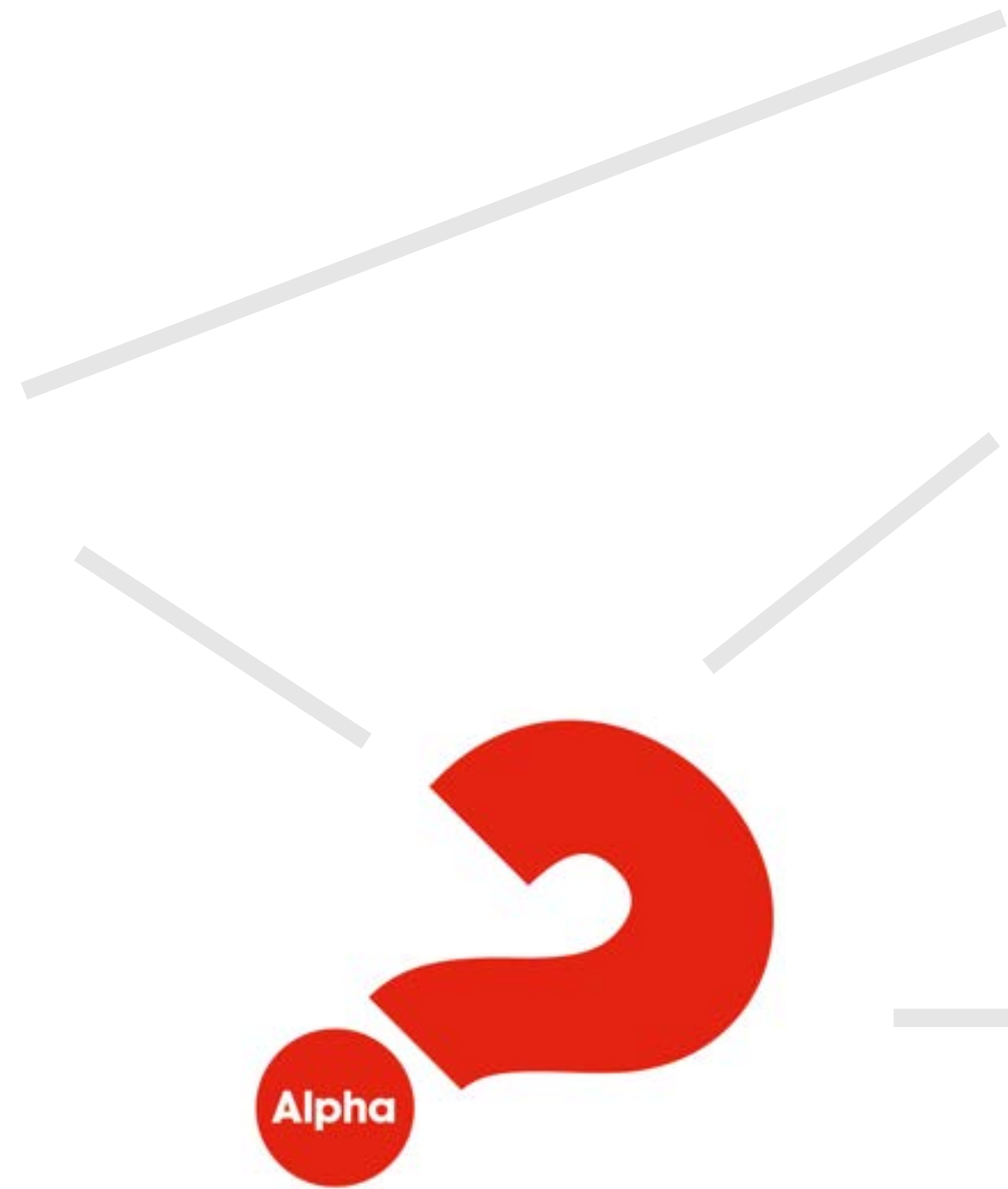
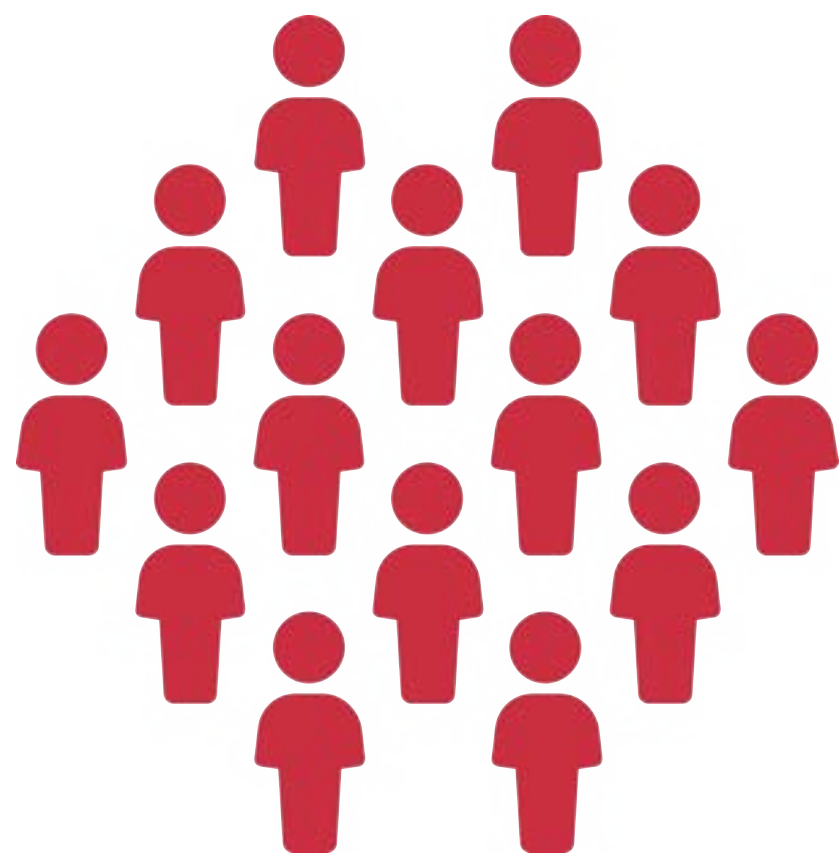
John 13:34

## We make disciples

Matthew 28:18-20



# GROWING IN FAITH CIRCLE





# PARISH DIRECTORY



## Opportunities to Love, Grow & Serve

Parish Directory  
April 2024

### Caring for One Another Support & Visitations

*"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."  
Galatians 2:6*



#### Communion to the Sick

Assist with distribution of communion at Mass and take communion to the sick and housebound.

For more information, phone Gerard on 9419 8310 or email [gerardryan@bigpond.com](mailto:gerardryan@bigpond.com)

#### St Vincent de Paul Society

Assists people in material need. To learn more, call Bob on 9419 2824.

#### Vinnies Youth

Vinnies Youth is the term given to Young Adult members and volunteers of St Vincent de Paul Society. Getting involved in Vinnies Youth is about putting faith in action – we offer a number of opportunities to serve people in your local community.

These include: Kids Days Out, Buddy Camps, Home Visitation, Tutoring and Mentoring, Vinnies Shops, Soup Vans and even school's engagement.

To find out more, email Helena Cullis at [helenacullis@vinnies.org.au](mailto:helenacullis@vinnies.org.au)

#### Lifestyle English Conversation Program

Giving people of all backgrounds who are not comfortable with the use of everyday English, the opportunity to improve their language skills and build confidence in a friendly and supportive environment. Meets Wednesday mornings during school terms from 9:30am - 11am.

To learn more, email Anthony at [anthony@churchinthecity.com.au](mailto:anthony@churchinthecity.com.au)

#### Aged Care Facilities

- St Peter's Green (Catholic HealthCare facility with Catholic Chapel)
- Archbold House
- Dougherty Centre
- Willowood Nursing Home
- Windsor Gardens

To find out the details of when each facility is visited, contact the Parish on 9410 9000.

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### Nurturing Relationships Community & Family



*"You are living stones that God is building into  
his spiritual temple." 1 Peter 2:5*

#### Morning Teas

##### 7.30 am Mass Sunday Morning Tea

For more information, contact Jan Hunter at [gfiadino@bigpond.net.au](mailto:gfiadino@bigpond.net.au)

##### 9 am Mass Sunday Morning Tea

For more information, contact Margaret Chan at [margaret.chan@internode.on.net](mailto:margaret.chan@internode.on.net)

#### Cultural Communities

##### Indonesian Community

Support, friendship and community for immigrant families and students from Indonesia. Mass at 7 pm, on the third Sunday of each month. Contact Anny at [annylwidagdo@yahoo.com](mailto:annylwidagdo@yahoo.com)

##### Chinese Catholic Association

Seeking ways of inclusion of our people with Chinese heritage. For more information, contact Amelia Lee at [amelia.lee@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:amelia.lee@bbcatholic.org.au)

##### Filipino Catholic Chatswood Parish (FCCP)

Social activities and Mass in English at 12 noon on the first Sunday of each month. For more information, contact Giselle Goloy at [giselle.goloy@gmail.com](mailto:giselle.goloy@gmail.com)

#### Seniors

Providing a social opportunity for our seniors with various activities and speakers. Meets the first Thursday of each month at 10 am in the Magnificat meeting room for coffee and a chat. For more information, contact Mona Saouma at [mona.saouma@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:mona.saouma@bbcatholic.org.au)

#### Our Lady's Ladies

A women's group for all women, all ages, all walks of life to share and reflect on their faith in light of the gift of womanhood. Meets on the third Friday of each month from 7 pm to 9 pm. To learn more, contact Chloe at [chloe.aylward@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:chloe.aylward@bbcatholic.org.au)

#### menALIVE

Fellowship, prayer and reflection for men. Meets every fortnight on Wednesday evenings. For more information, contact Peter on 0433 030 016 or email [pwoo2010@gmail.com](mailto:pwoo2010@gmail.com)

17



**WHAT IS OUR  
MISSION?**





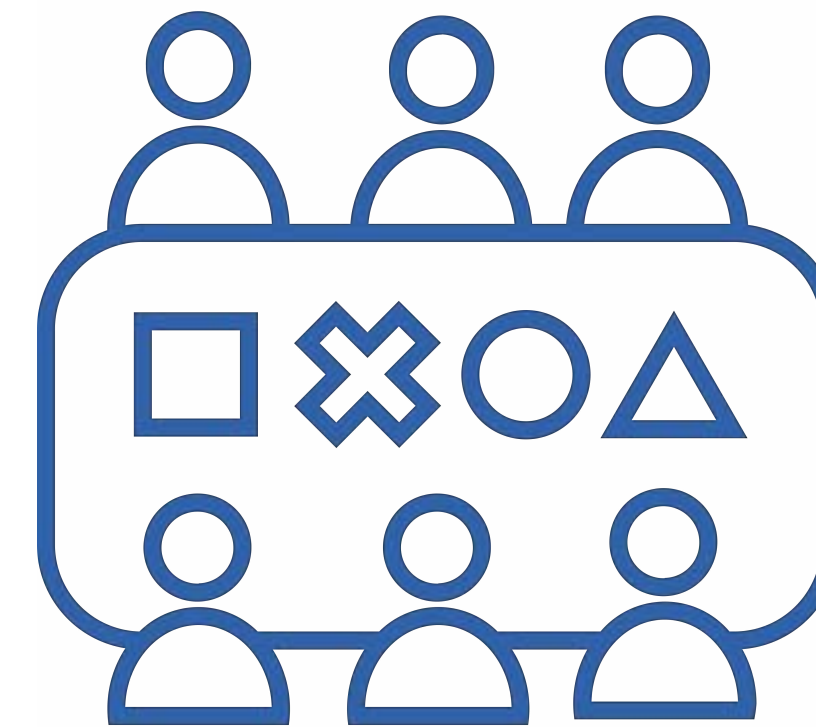
# OUR DISCERNMENT PROCESS



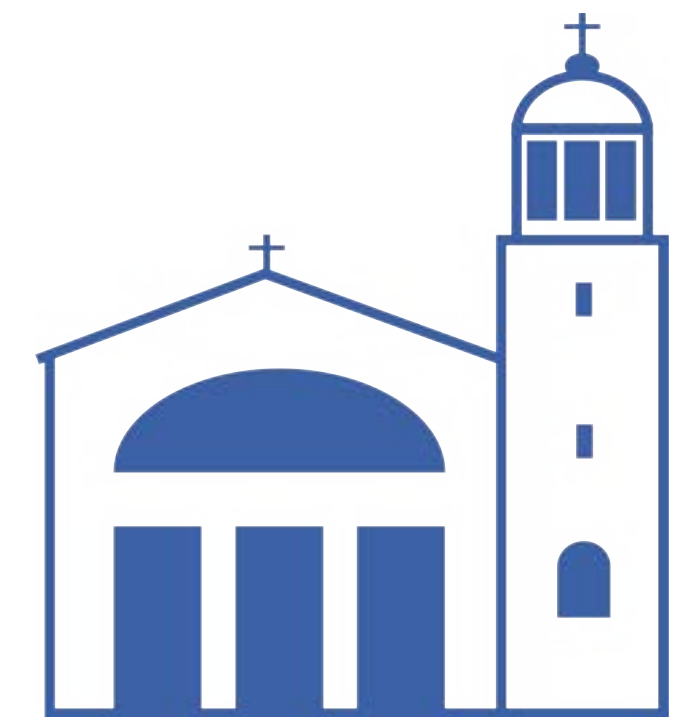
**Presentations to  
Ministry Groups**



**Parish Staff  
Workshop**



**Parish Mission  
Workshops**



**Discernment in  
Masses**







# DISCERNMENT IN MASSES

Discerning our parish  
**MISSION** 

Q. For me, the **most important** reason why our Chatswood parish **exists** is...


Q. What is the **primary thing** God is calling us to focus on as a parish purpose, our **mission**?




# 239

## Parishioner responses



# DISCERNMENT IN MASSES

Discerning our parish  
**MISSION** 

Please write in CAPITAL LETTERS in the boxes below...

Q. Why does our Chatswood Parish exist?

It exists firstly because it is God's will. Chatswood Parish exists for the people in this City whether they are Catholics or belong to other denominations. It is a Parish that is concerned for all people; rich or poor; young & old; citizens or migrants & refugees as well. It is also a place to adore God and increase our spirituality.

Q. What would be lost if our parish ever ceased to exist?

The feeling & sense of belonging would be lost if the parish ceased to exist. It is also the pride to belong to a Church that is forever growing and always looking to the welfare not only of its parishioners but also the people of Chatswood. The friendships that were built & the relationship not only with the clergy but the community would be lost.

Discerning our parish  
**MISSION** 

Q. For me, the most important reason why our Chatswood parish exists is...

The most important reason is to bring our parishioners (and the wider public) close together as a community, get involved in one or more parish activities, use their talents and resources (including contributions to the 1st and second collections) to enhance parish life and experience and grow together in the love of God and love of each other. I wish that our parishioners (particularly the youth) enjoy participating in our parish activities and entice others to join and increase mass attendance.

Q. What is the primary thing God is calling us to focus on as a parish purpose, our mission?

God is calling us to increase our faith and ~~draw~~ <sup>invite</sup> those who have fallen away to come back to the faith, actively participate in church activities and grow in love and service of each other.

Discerning our parish  
**MISSION** 

Q. For me, the most important reason why our Chatswood parish exists is...

To support and provide education of the ~~community~~ <sup>parishioners</sup> to the community - to know the bible and church and good Christian moral behaviour.

Q. What is the primary thing God is calling us to focus on as a parish purpose, our mission?

To do apostolate: bringing people (souls) back to God; spread the news of bible; teach the children and bring them up living a good Christian life.

Discerning our parish  
**MISSION** 

Q. For me, the most important reason why our Chatswood parish exists is...

To provide a focal point for Catholics in Chatswood to come together to deepen their Catholic faith, maintain and

Q. What is the primary thing God is calling us to focus on as a parish purpose, our mission?

Our mission is to reach out to the broader community in Chatswood, to spread the Word, and, help the community to live Christianly by way of example, help the community to live by Christian values.

Discerning our parish  
**MISSION** 

Q. For me, the most important reason why our Chatswood parish exists is...

To form a community that worships God and who are proactive in doing his work of ~~bringing~~ <sup>bringing</sup> care of the earth and spreading his word.

Q. What is the primary thing God is calling us to focus on as a parish purpose, our mission?

To gather together ~~as~~ and as one to do Jesus work ~~as~~ of spreading the word of God ~~to~~ and to help those who need it the most.



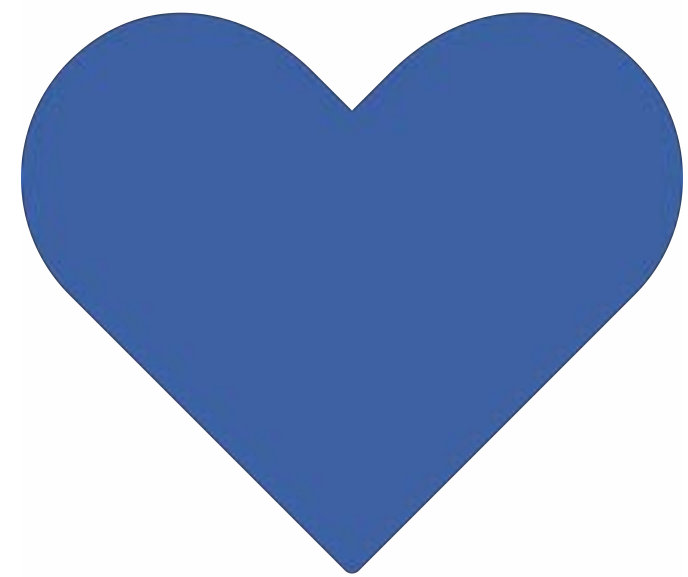




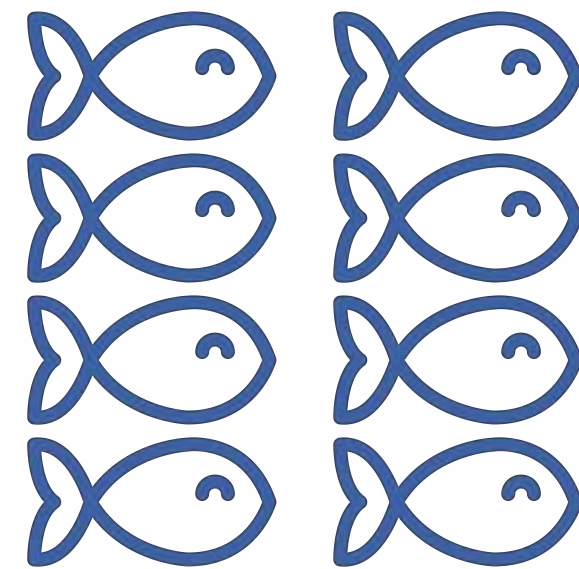




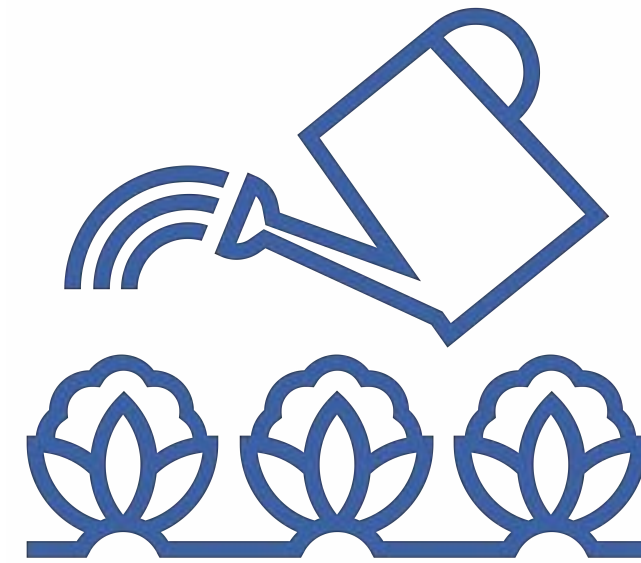
# OUR FIVE KEY PURPOSES



**Love, kindness  
and compassion  
towards others**



**Evangelisation,  
spreading God's  
Word and love**



**Growing  
together in  
Faith**



**Helping those in  
need and serving  
others**



**Community  
building and  
supporting  
each other**



# WHAT SHOULD WE MOST FOCUS ON?



# 590

## Parishioner responses

Discerning our parish  
**MISSION**

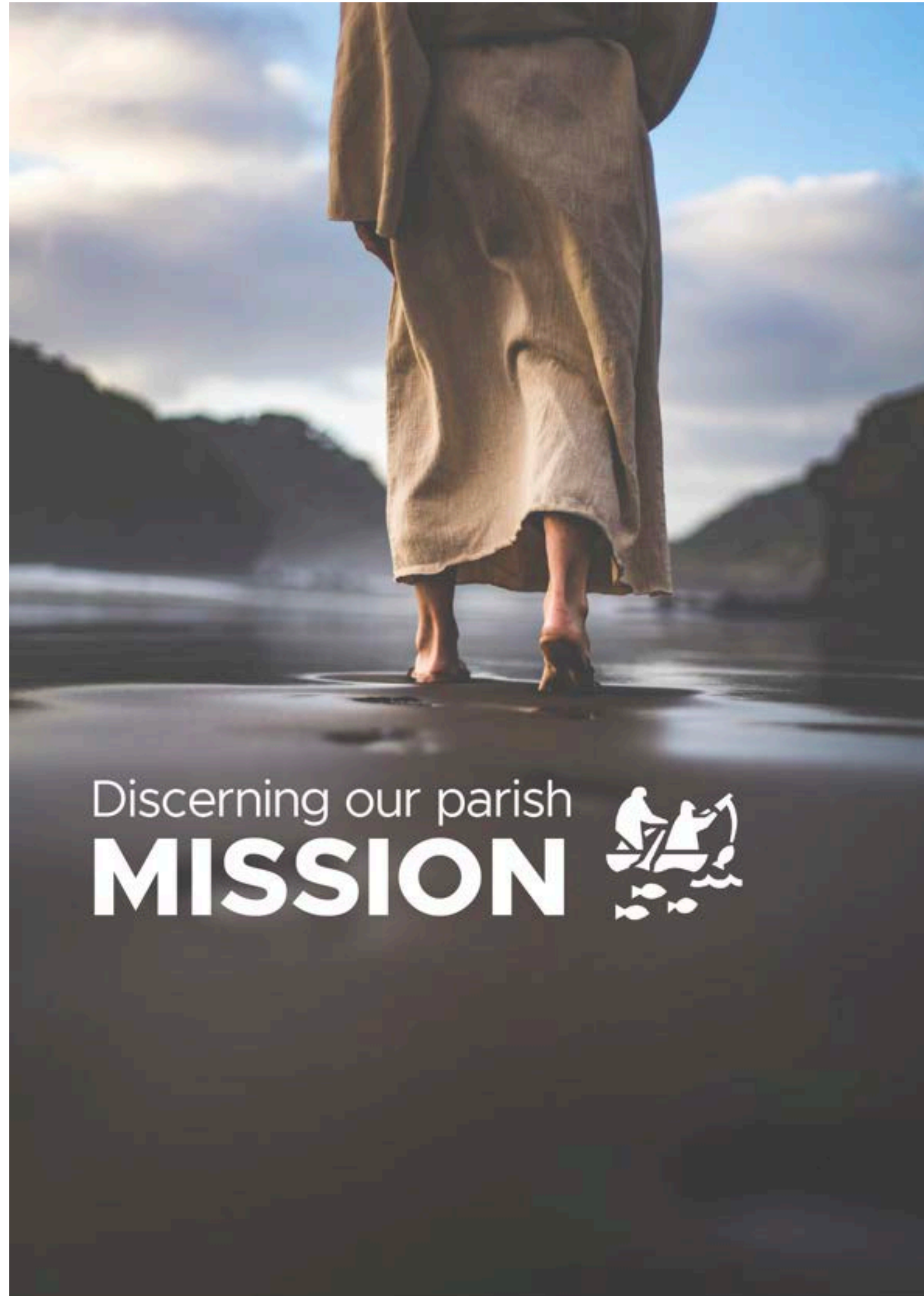


Thinking about what God is calling us to focus on as our parish mission, please **rank** the following things we should focus on as our parish mission, in order of importance **from 1 to 5** where 1 is the most important and 5 is the least important...

- 2** Evangelisation, spreading God's Word and love
- 1** Love, kindness and compassion towards others
- 4** Community building and supporting one other
- 3** Growing together in Faith
- 5** Helping those in need and serving others



# SHORTLISTING THE MISSION



Discerning our parish  
**MISSION**

## MISSION STATEMENT CHECKLIST

- Short and specific?
- Memorable?
- Inspire change?
- Active tense and action orientated?
- Results focused?
- Clear and plain language?
- Reflects our uniqueness?
- Emphasises the role of parishioners?

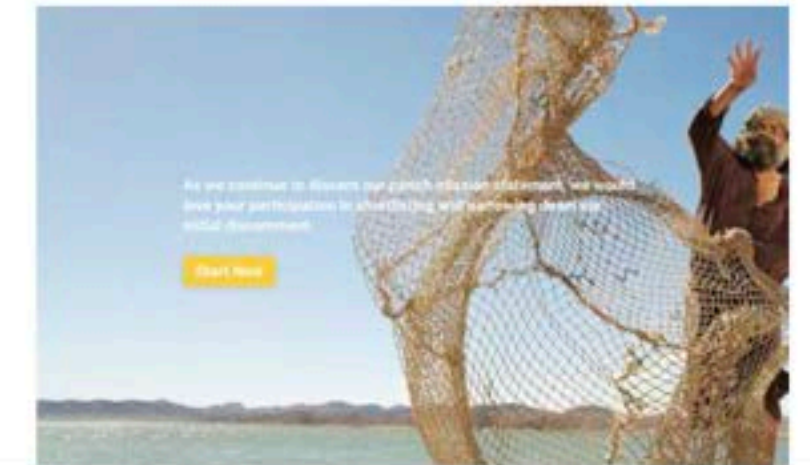
Discerning our parish  
**MISSION**

## ACTIVITY QUESTIONS

To help complete the online activity at <https://cbgja62m2x4.typeform.com/shortlist> here is a step by step guide...

The opening page from the link welcomes you to the online activity.

To start the online activity simply click the yellow 'Start Now' button.



The second page asks for your first name. By adding your name, we will be able to reach out to you if needed, to clarify or expand on your responses.

Once you have typed your name, click 'OK'.



Questions 2 to 8 each ask you to either...

- Choose the statement you most prefer by clicking on that statement.

- If you discern that none of the statements are suitable, select 'None of the above'.

- If you discern that a revised statement may be better e.g., different words, reworded, rearranged etc, type your revised statement in the 'Other' box.





# DISCERNING OUR PARISH MISSION



545

Parishioner  
responses

Discerning our parish  
**MISSION**



Discerning what God is calling us to focus on as our parish mission, please **rank** the following potential parish mission statements from **1 to 3**, where 1 is your discerned first choice, 2 your second choice, and 3 your third choice...

1

Bringing the light of Christ to the city  
We love, we grow, we serve

3

Bringing the light of Christ to the city  
We love God, we love others, we form disciples

2

Bringing the light of Christ to the city  
We seek God, we serve with love, we make disciples





**Bringing the light of  
Christ to the city  
we Love  
we Grow  
we Serve**

**BEING  
CHURCH  
IN THE  
CITY**  
OUR JOURNEY  
TOGETHER



# Pastoral Letter to the people of Chatswood Parish

## Pentecost 2023

My dear friends,

There is a perspective in theology that regards the event of Pentecost as the birth of the Church.

On this day, the Spirit is poured out on the disciples.

They are released from their disillusionments and their fears; they are enSpirit-ed and emboldened to go out and to preach the good news that the life of Christ is more powerful than death, that the self-sacrifice of his love has overpowered the forces of selfishness and suspicion, that the future stretches out beyond us a constant invitation full of possibility. Our dead-ends have become new beginnings; our sunsets have been changed into dawns.

Yes, on this day the Spirit overwhelms our timidity, our doubt, our anxiety and sends us forth to become a living sign of the power of God manifest in lives of faith, hope, and love.

This is a remarkable acclamation. It is made even more so given that many around us are proclaiming not the birth of the Church but its death. Many are the occasions where we have to endure the public commentary about the decline of the Church.

The question is constantly put forward, particularly by the media, about the future of the Church. How can the Church ever recover from the challenges that threaten to engulf it, people ask.

**But the Church is not dead. It lives, and what is more, it will keep on living. It will keep on being birthed in new ways, in new places and at new times. This is our bold and proud affirmation on this day of Pentecost.**

Yes, its form may not necessarily stay the same. It may look quite different in ten, twenty, fifty years' time. However, I have no doubt at all that it will remain present.

It will be present, alive, and active, because we are not dealing here with a mere human institution that is dependent on the idiosyncrasies and failure of its members.



We are dealing here with a community of people enlivened by the very Spirit of God, brought into being by their shared experience of the life of Jesus Christ which keeps irrupting in the hearts of people and calling them into lives of discipleship.

Whenever I may have my own fears about the future of the Church, I look around me here in our parish.

Here I see extraordinary sanctity. Here I see people who in undramatic ways give of themselves with such love and generosity. Here I see people who in the quietness of their hearts keep entrusting themselves into the power of God's life.

Here, everyday, I see people whose faith, hope, and love cast light across the shadows that creep across the horizons of their lives.

And in that light, I say to myself, "Here is the Church, and it is not dying. It breathes and lives with such strength and vigour." And yes, the message of Jesus Christ will keep calling forth people to see their lives and their struggles through the meaning and the hope that it offers.

No, the Church is not dying. It is living and constantly coming to birth. This is because before it is a noun, the Church is a verb. It is people coming together, using the words of the theologian Chauvet, "re-reading the Scriptures with the memory of Jesus, repeating his gestures in memory of him, and living the fellowship with one another in his name."

We cannot believe in the Resurrection of Jesus, without believing in the Church. The life of the Risen Christ is made present precisely in the community of those who find their future in his memory, the community which is the Body of the living Christ. And this Body will keep sparking because of the divine life that it bears, albeit in such earthen vessels.

We open our hearts to the Spirit of God poured out on us. It is the Spirit that renews and re-creates. It is the Spirit that keeps giving birth to the Church.

In that Spirit we celebrate what God is doing in us, and what God will always do in us, through us, and for us. In the Spirit, it is never the time for despair. It is always the time to celebrate possibility.

I spoke of such an opportunity first at Pentecost 2021, shortly after I had come to Chatswood.

From my earliest days in the community, I could perceive the enormous potential that resided in our community, our church, and our church and educational precinct.

At that time, I invited us to dream about all manner of creative and constructive possibilities. And for this, I encouraged us to go on a journey together over the time ahead.

**And so, in March 2022 we set out on a journey together, guided by the Holy Spirit, to discover what it means to truly be Church in the City.**

Since then, with the tremendous leadership and creativity of our Parish Pastoral & Missionary Council, we have shared our hopes and dreams for our church, our parish community and our precinct.

We have undertaken a number of parishioner surveys to assist us develop a clear understanding of where we are today.

And most importantly, out of all the many and diverse ministries and associations in our parish, we have developed ten **Ministry Circles**, each offering opportunities for people of every age...



Towards the end of 2022 and over the last weeks since Easter we began focussing intently on discerning our Parish Mission, a short statement that defines our reason for being and what we sense the call of God to be in this time and in this place.

Amazingly, we had 1,447 parishioner responses through a variety of shared discernment activities. To inform our Mission, we firstly discerned together our five most important purposes as a parish:

**Love, kindness and compassion towards others:** The importance of loving God, loving one another, being a good example and serving others with kindness and humility.

**Evangelisation, spreading God's Word and love:** Parishioners discerned that we should focus on spreading the word of God and evangelising to those who may have lapsed or who are not yet familiar with the teachings of Jesus - making disciples by helping others in their individual faith journey.

**Growing together in Faith:** The need for us all to grow together in faith, deepen our relationship with God and find greater meaning and purpose in our lives.

**Helping those in need and serving others:** The importance of serving others in the community and helping those in need - acts of compassion and action - a strong charitable presence in our community.

**Community building and supporting each other:** The need for us all to come together as a parish community to support and nurture one another spiritually, act as a source of good in the community, and help those in need.

Drawing upon these purposes which God is calling us to focus on, we discerned a number of potential mission statements, narrowed down and shortlisted the potential statements, and then coming together as a parish community on the weekend of 13/14 May, discerned our adopted Parish Mission.



And so, on this great Festival of Pentecost, I am pleased to share with you the Parish Mission we have discerned together to be:

## “Bringing the light of Christ to the city. We love, we grow, we serve.”

This is given to us through the Spirit as not only a celebration but also as a responsibility. The question arises how might we take this forward so that it can permeate every aspect of our life together as a Christian community?

To this end, through much reflection and discussion, I wish to propose a new framework for us being Church in the City – a structure of ongoing pastoral discernment in line with the call of Pope Francis to the universal Church.

This means walking together, guided by the Holy Spirit, faithful to our encounter with the Risen Lord, and faithful to the Catholic Tradition through which God has continued to reveal himself through the authority of the Magisterium.

Such a way of being Church is one that emerges from our source, the Triune God, which St John Paul II defined so creatively as “a community in missionary tension” and which he taught must inform the identity of every Christian entity and vocation.

It is a synodal Church that listens, queries, discerns, and acts, assisted by the service of authority which ensures our communion with the entire Church, current and past.

At the service of assuming responsibility for the Parish Mission we have now discerned, how might we become such a parish? For it is my conviction that a parish characterised this way will ensure we remain accountable to our Mission such that it becomes enSpirited and living.

To this end, I propose a new opportunity for us to transition from having a Parish Pastoral & Missionary Council, in which few participate, to being a **Parish-in-Council** which might draw many more together in ongoing pastoral discernment.

This initiative will build on what we have achieved to date in the formation of Circles of Ministry.

Not only will it bring the leadership of the Circles together, but also our parish staff and canonically mandated committees such as our Parish Finance Committee, and, indeed, all those who wish to participate in the pastoral considerations before us.

Thus, our Parish will come together in Council three to four times a year, commencing in August 2023.

Each session will be for an extended period of a day. The day will be of prayer, reflection, discussion, discernment, and fellowship. It will be open to all those who contribute to the life of our parish community through their many generousities.

These times together ‘in Council’ will be served by our Animating our Future Circle which, with my leadership as Parish Priest, will act as its executive.



At each session we will deepen the implications of our Parish Mission and together take our journey of Being Church in the City forward, considering now where we need to develop and how.

This, then, will have a critical role in developing our parish vision, priorities and areas for focus for our parish over the coming three years.

My friends, this is an innovative and bold step. This is not envisaging a one off or occasional 'parish assembly', but a new way of being a Catholic Parish, a way of Being Church in the City, now animated by our Mission.

It is, I believe, a sign of the life of the Spirit whom we celebrate at Pentecost, a sign of the Spirit continuing to give birth to the Church, the living body of the Resurrected Christ.

May this Spirit renew us in ways beyond what we imagined. "See I am doing something new in your midst, can you not see it." (Isaiah 43:9)

Come Holy Spirit  
Enkindle the hearts of the Faithful  
Renew the face of the earth!

With you on this very exciting, grace-filled journey,

Fr. David Ranson PP VG  
Our Lady of Dolours Chatswood Catholic Parish

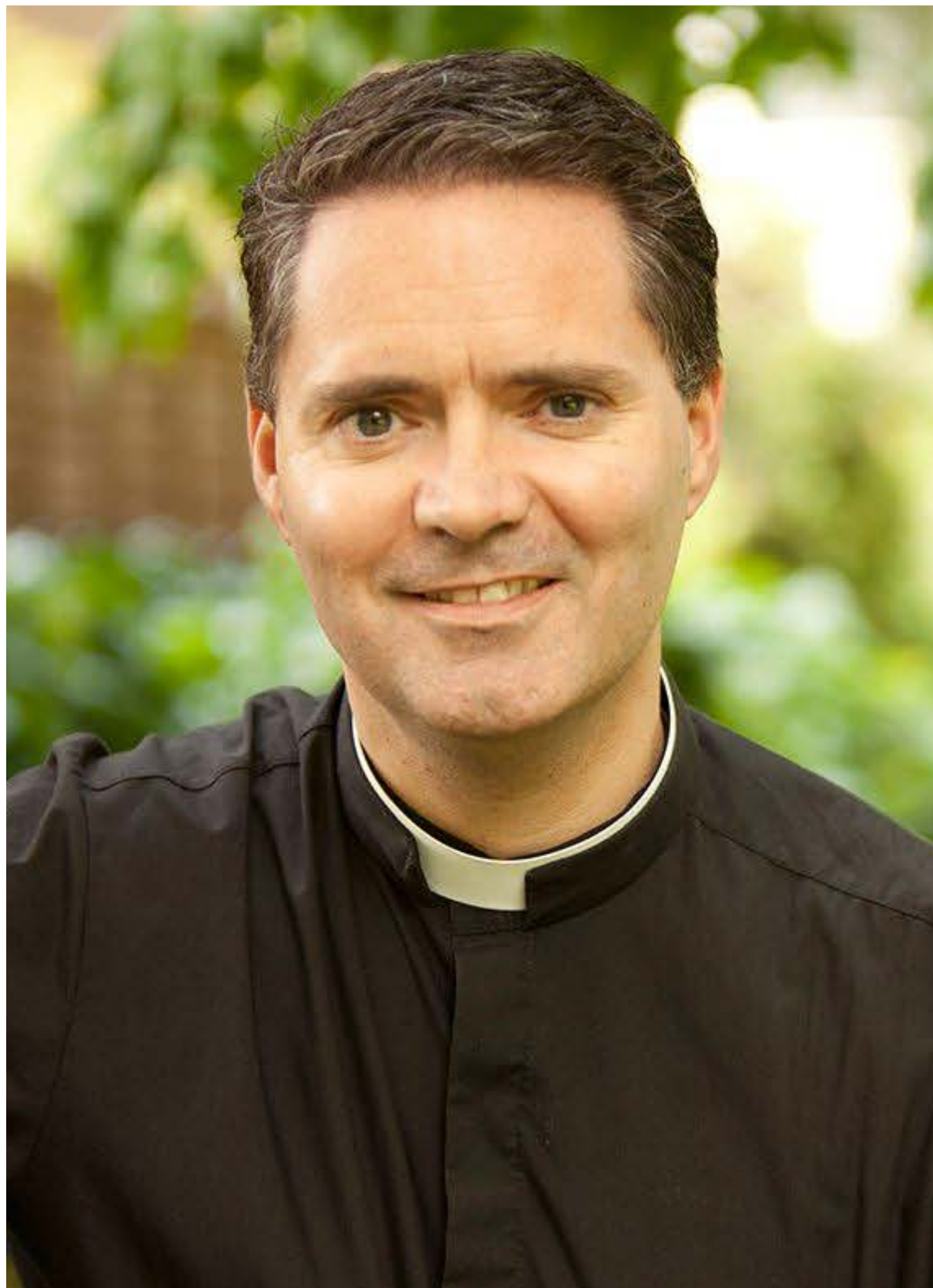






**A PARISH-IN-COUNCIL**





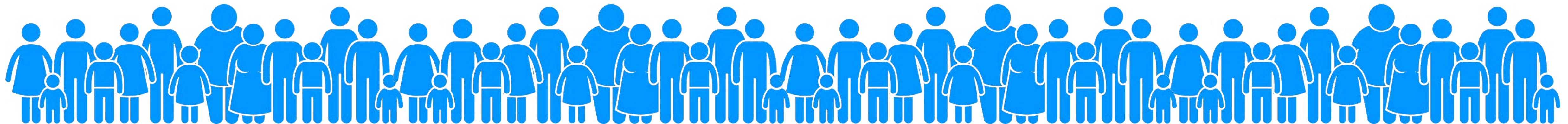
 **DIVINE**  
RENOVATION

 **rebuilt**†

**PURPOSE DRIVEN**  
CHURCH

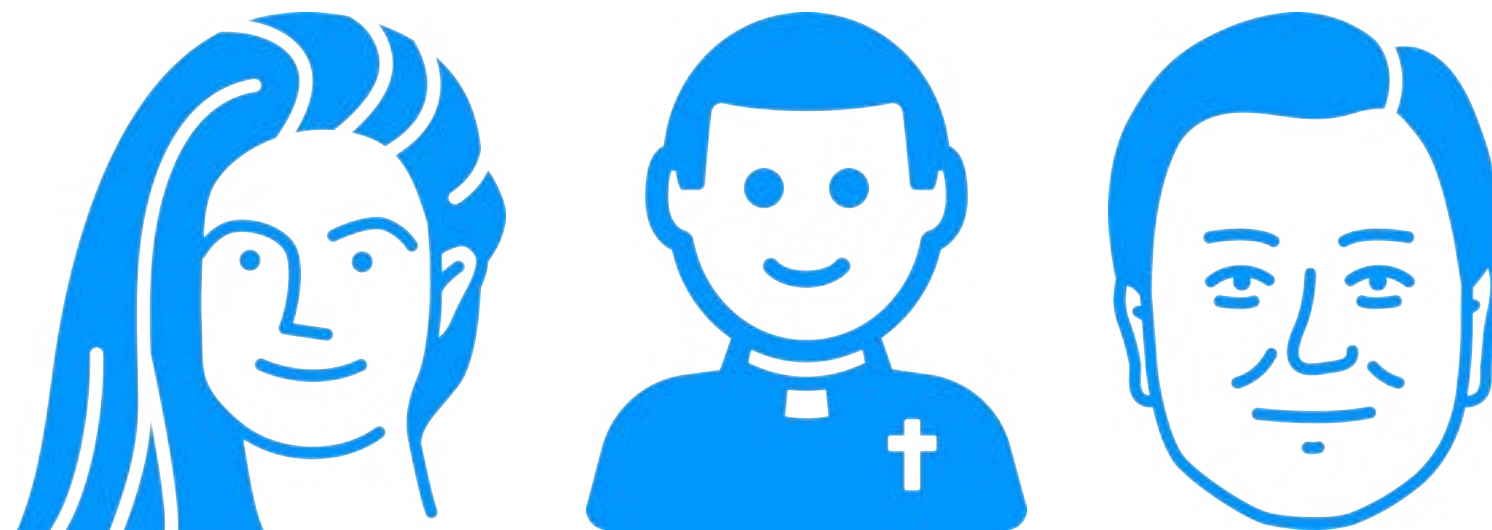
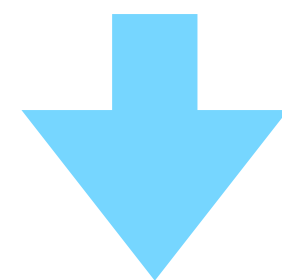


# CLERGY APPROACH



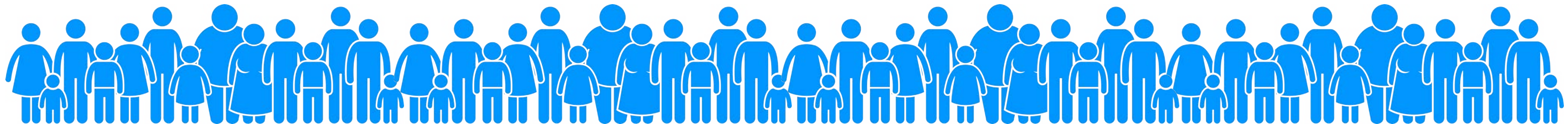
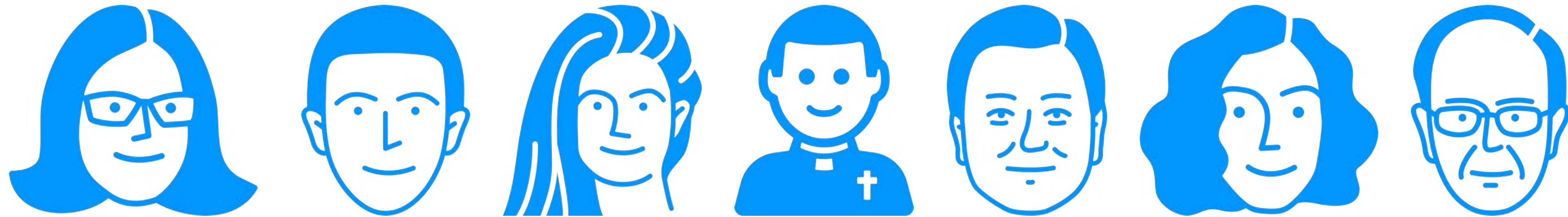


# EXECUTIVE APPROACH





# PASTORAL COUNCIL APPROACH





# PARISH-IN-COUNCIL APPROACH







**SAY  
WHAT?**



A large, diverse crowd of people, likely at a church service, with many individuals raising their hands in prayer or praise. The scene is filled with people of various ages and ethnicities, creating a sense of a large, active congregation. The lighting is warm, and the overall atmosphere is one of spiritual engagement.

**Being Parish-in-Council is  
NOT CONGREGATIONALISM**



# BEING PARISH-IN-COUNCIL IS...



- ✔ Leads the parish into council
- ✔ Listens to emerging discernments
- ✔ Provides a response that enables a decision and actions
- ✔ Determines the priority, timing and resources allocated for actions



- ✔ All are called by the Pastor into council and active discernment
- ✔ All are invited and empowered to use their charisms and actively contribute to the life and vitality of the parish
- ✔ All are encouraged to take a shared ownership of, and investment in the future of the parish






# **RATIONALE FOR BEING PARISH-IN-COUNCIL**



A collection of rolled-up fabrics in various colors and patterns, including red, beige, green, and blue, with decorative borders. The fabrics are stacked and partially unrolled, showing intricate patterns and textures. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**Retains and enhances the  
service of leadership**





**Emphasises the Holy Spirit  
for the Parish (and Clergy)**





**Widens, deepens and  
enriches discernment**



A group of five people, three men and two women, are seated around a white rectangular table in what appears to be a community center or meeting room. They are all looking towards the camera. There are three white mugs on the table. The background shows a wall with several lockers. The text "Creates a greater sense of belonging - I am heard" is overlaid in large white font across the center of the image.

**Creates a greater sense of  
belonging - I am heard**



A dirt path winds through a lush green field under a sunset sky. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the scene. The path starts in the foreground and curves into the distance. The text "Greater transparency and accountability" is overlaid in the center of the image.

**Greater transparency and  
accountability**



A close-up photograph of a man's hands and face as he works on a wooden wall. He is using a hammer with a blue handle to drive a nail into a piece of light-colored wood. The background is a wall of vertical wooden studs, slightly out of focus. The lighting is warm and natural.

**Builds personal investment  
and ownership**



A wide-angle photograph of a lush, golden wheat field stretching to the horizon. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue with a few wispy white clouds. The wheat stalks are tall and full, with their heads clearly visible. The overall scene is bright and sunny, suggesting a clear day during the harvest season.

**Adds greater workers  
to help with the harvest**



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a glowing keyhole in a dark, textured surface. The keyhole is illuminated from within, casting a bright, warm light. The background is dark and out of focus, showing the contours of a hand and a textured surface, possibly a book cover or a piece of wood. The overall mood is mysterious and hopeful.

**Unlocks often hidden talents within the parish**



A group of people are gathered at an outdoor community event. In the foreground, a woman wearing a white baseball cap with 'Jerusalem' written on it and a white t-shirt with colorful patterns is smiling as she serves food from a large glass dish. To her right, another woman in a blue and white striped shirt and a black hat is also smiling. In the background, there are colorful balloons (pink, blue, yellow) and streamers. A man in a pink shirt and a black cap is visible on the left, and another woman in a polka-dot shirt is also present. The scene is bright and festive.

**Builds a stronger, resilient  
foundation to last**





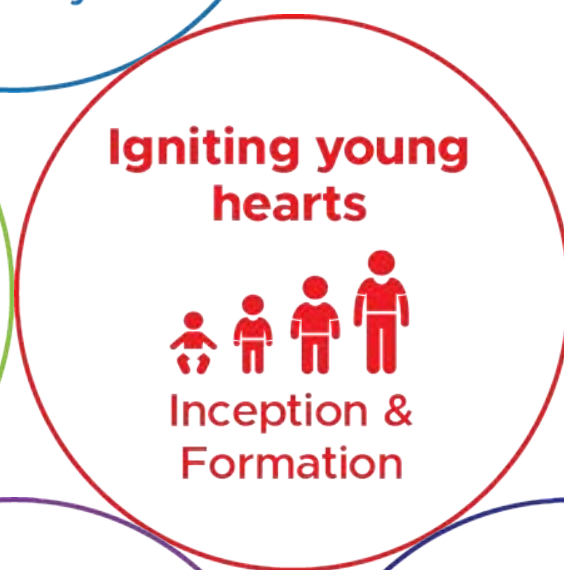
**ANIMATING OUR FUTURE**



# ANIMATING OUR FUTURE

## We seek God

Mark 12:30



## We serve with love

John 13:34



## We make disciples

Matthew 28:18-20



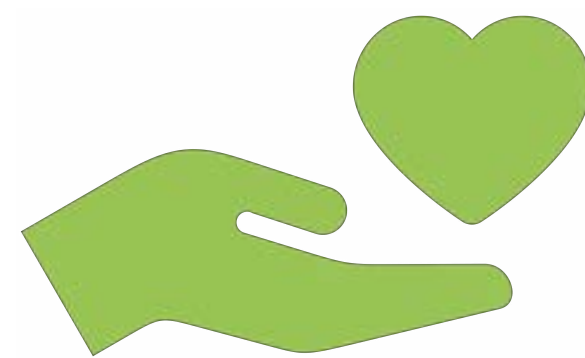
# ANIMATING OUR FUTURE



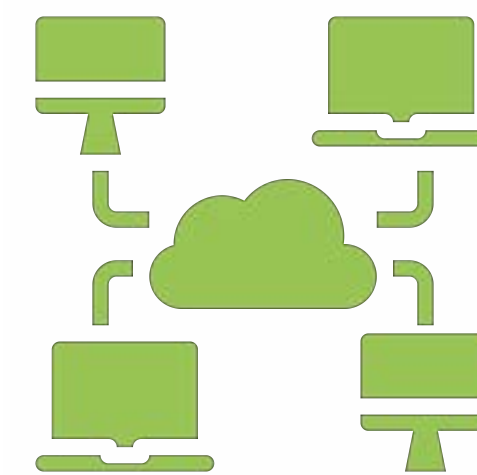
**Executive  
Advisors**



**Parish Finance  
Committee**



**Giving  
Advisory Group**



**Technology  
Advisory Group**



**Communications  
Advisory Group**



# PARISH-IN-COUNCIL APPROACH

