

**ST BENEDICT'S
PARISH
Khandallah**



**Pastoral Plan
2007**

(Printed August 09)

Document Purpose

The purpose of this document is to record the results of the St Benedict's Parish planning process completed in 2007. It specifies the actions the Parish Council plan to take during the year and the reasons for those actions.

Planning Approach

This plan is the first produced by the St Benedict's Parish Council since 2002. Since then, in 2006, the Diocese has held a Synod. The consultation with parishioners undertaken in preparation for the Synod, and the actual Synod process and outcomes, have provided us with valuable input into this planning process.

To prepare the plan, the Council:

- Reviewed the Synod consultation material and documentation of Synod outcomes
- Convened a planning meeting in November 2006, where the needs of the parish were identified and prioritised and actions planned
- Drafted this plan for presentation prior to and discussion at the 2007 Annual General Meeting

Following discussion at the AGM, and other feedback provided by parishioners, the Council will finalise the plan and work to implement the actions within in. The intention is to conduct an annual review of the plan, in consultation with parishioners, to ensure that all actions undertaken by the council in developing the parish are aligned with the will of the parish.

The delay in preparing the plan is due to two factors:

- The initial attempt to document the full scope of discussions at the planning day.
- The lack of capacity on the Council to undertake such an activity. Addressing this lack of capacity is a theme in this plan.

This document is an abridged version of that initially attempted.

Planning Inputs

The following were considered in the development of this plan:

Input	Description
Pre-Synod consultation outputs	<p>The pre-Synod consultation was conducted in two phases.</p> <p>In the first phase "conversations" were conducted to elicit parishioners concerns. These were summarised into 5 themes, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enrich the experience of being part of the parish for everyone, and, in particular, the youth• Reach out to non-attending parishioners/school goers• Having drawn in new and existing parishioners, educate them on faith and churches teachings on current issues• Reach out and help the disadvantaged• Address the insufficient numbers of those seeking ordination <p>A description of each of these themes is included as Appendix A.</p>

Input	Description
	<p>These were submitted to the Diocesan team running the Synod, who synthesised them with input from all the other parishes and arrived at the following 6 Synod themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community • Young People • Liturgy and Spirituality • Leadership and Ministry • Social Justice • Education <p>The second round of pre-Synod consultation involved interviewing parishioners on these Synod themes using an “appreciative enquiry” process. The output of each interview was summarised into lists, for each theme, of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning points • Vision statements, representing where we wanted to be as a parish in terms of that theme in 5 years time • Actions required to achieve the vision <p>The summarised output is included as Appendix B.</p>
The output from the 2006 Synod	The parish sent representatives to the Synod to participate in discussions on the 6 themes. The diocesan Synod team summarised the output of those discussions into a planning document, to guide parishes in planning for the next 5 to 10 years.
The 2002 Parish Plan and update	In 2002 the Parish Council of the time developed a plan including a number of actions they planned to undertake. A progress review was conducted in 2003, which noted that some activities had been successfully implemented while others had not.
Finance Committee update on the maintenance costs of the parish properties	The Finance Committee had advised the Council, and the parish via the 2006 AGM, that the parish properties required maintenance, and would continue to require maintenance, that could not be sustained by the current level of funding for the parish. All but the urgent maintenance was being deferred pending a decision on the future of the parish properties.
A directive from Archbishop John Dew to establish Pastoral Areas.	<p>Archbishop John Dew distributed a letter to all parishes calling for a Pastoral Area Council to be established in each of the Pastoral Areas of the diocese. By the time this planning process was complete we had already worked with Johnsonville and Newlands parishes to establish a Pastoral Area Council.</p> <p>The requirement and opportunity to continue to engage with those parishes as a Pastoral Area needed to be considered in the planning process.</p>

Planning Outcomes

The 2002 Plan listed a number of actions, some of which were operational, ie. easily implemented via the existing operational activities of the parish, and others were developmental, requiring resource to complete a one off task or establish a new operational activity or change to an existing activity. Several such developmental actions had not been implemented at the 2003 review stage or indeed at the commencement of the current planning process. Those that had been implemented were often liturgical in nature and thus presumably resourced by the Liturgy Committee.

Looking at the actions that were outstanding from the 2002 plan and potential actions arising from the Synod consultation, it was obvious to the Council that these actions required resource that was not readily accessible in the parish. The Council therefore decided that, rather than generate a list of things we wished to see implemented, things that would require resource that was not readily available; we would instead work to develop the resource and supporting infrastructure for such development work in the future.

There were some exceptions to this approach: things that opportunity or need meant that they should be done immediately.

The exceptions are:

1. Deciding the future of the parish properties so that we are in a position of:
 - Having the facilities we need
 - Being able to sustain the maintenance on those properties we do have
2. Establishing a parish web site
3. Replacing the sign in front of St Benedict's church
4. Assisting the establishment of the Onslow/Newlands/Johnsonville Pastoral Area

The rest of this document covers these three tasks and the establishment of resource and supporting infrastructure in more detail.

Development of Resource and Supporting Infrastructure

The Council has decided to establish the following teams within the parish:

- A Social Justice Team
- A Community Care Team
- A Parish Life Team
- A Faith Education Team
- A Youth Team

We see these teams filling gaps in our capabilities to get things done as follows:

Pre-Synod Consultation 5 Areas	Synod Themes	Resourcing
<p>Enrich the experience of being part of the parish for everyone, and, in particular, the youth</p>	<p>Community</p>	<p>The Parish already has a number of activities that promote the sense of belong to the parish community, notably the morning teas after Masses, the Passionist Family Groups and the Catholic Woman’s League.</p> <p>The revived Parish Life Team will incorporate the role of Passionist Family Group Coordinator, but take a broader role to ensure all parishioners feel they are part of the community, including those for whom Family Groups or the Catholic Women’s League are not a feasible or desirable option.</p> <p>The team will also coordinate the Welcoming Ministry, a Ministry that is functioning, but is currently overly reliant on the efforts of one or two people.</p> <p>In terms of caring for those within our community, the Community Care Team will formalise and make more explicit the work currently being done by many generous souls within the parish, including members of the Catholic Women’s League and St Vincent de Paul. By making the process more explicit we mean more obvious to all in the parish so that, while care is still delivered with discretion, where to turn to in times of need is more obvious and there is less chance of people slipping through the cracks. It should also ensure are broader base is established of those able to help, in many different ways.</p>

Pre-Synod Consultation 5 Areas	Synod Themes	Resourcing
	Young People	<p>After several years of seeking a young, charismatic leader for our youth, the Council has decided to take a different tack, developing a format and set of resources for our college aged youth so they can resource their youth programme themselves, including arranging adult supervision of their activities.</p> <p>We've also recognised the need for an intermediate aged youth programme and the need for a team to take responsibility for that.</p> <p>These programmes are seen as a priority as there is a "bubble" of church-going children reaching the tale end of Children's Liturgy years and there needs to be something established to maintain their involvement in the parish.</p>
	Liturgy and Spirituality	<p>Resourced by the current Liturgy Committee and Fr Tony, including the current faith sharing programme and recent parish mission.</p>
	Social Justice	<p>The parish has a number of individuals and groups, such as the Catholic Women's League, who work on social justice issues. Again, this activity is not explicit. There is no proactive mechanism to raise awareness of social justice issues within the parish and no obvious means of parishioners not currently engaged in social justice activities to become engaged.</p> <p>The new Social Justice Team will be a contact point for parishioners and the diocesan Social Justice staff to help mobilise the parish to engage in Social Justice issues.</p>
	Education	<p>The promotion of faith education is currently limited to advertisement of Catholic Education Centre and other courses through the newsletter and noticeboard. The new Faith Education Team will coordinate a programme of Faith Education targeted at parishioner needs and interests.</p>
	Leadership and Ministry	<p>The establishment of Pastoral Areas included the concept of lay pastoral leaders. The Onslow/Newlands/Johnsonville Pastoral Area has agreed that we prefer a model of spreading the load of leadership and ministry across the parishes through the sort of structure we are attempting to implement here, rather than expecting a few trained leaders to bear the load.</p> <p>We will develop leadership and ministry within the parish via the establishment of the teams.</p>

Pre-Synod Consultation 5 Areas	Synod Themes	Resourcing
Reach out to non-attending parishioners/school goers	Community	There are no specific plans to more fully engage non-attending Catholics in the parish, although the establishment of teams to resource social and community events will enable any future plans to be implemented. Of particular importance will be the liaison between the teams so that when non-attending parishioners do experience parish life, e.g. through their children attending sacramental programmes, they can experience more than just the liturgical aspect of the parish, e.g. can we align parish social events with the sacramental programme.
Having drawn in new and existing parishioners, educate them on faith and churches teachings on current issues	Education Social Justice	The Faith Education Team will develop a programme and the Social Justice Team will raise awareness of issues and Catholic teaching on them.
Reach out and help the disadvantaged	Social Justice Community	The Community Care and Social Justice Teams will provide an opportunity for parishioners to reach out and help.
Address the insufficient numbers of those seeking ordination	Leadership and Ministry	The Council has no specific initiatives for encouraging ordination other than providing programmes to keep the youth in the parish and enhancing the education, spirituality, sense of community and care for others that may lead people to see a calling to ordination.

Sharing the Load

These teams are not meant to carry the load of each of their areas of responsibility. They are not there to replace the excellent work currently being done by individuals and groups within the parish. They are there to be coordinators, conduits of information and guardians of the processes by which these things will happen in our parish.

If a significant amount of resource is required for an initiative in their area, the idea is not that the team members that will resource it, but that they will mobilise the parish, through liaison with existing groups and/or appeals to the wider parish to resource it.

All parishioners have competing priorities for their time, but we hope that this approach can be seen as a way of getting these development activities done, without placing the burden for doing them on a few individuals.

Succession

The approach is also seen as a means of ensuring continuity, as the teams, and the process knowledge and resources they gather, represent a structure that will continue even if a key member moves on. The role of team member sharing some of the load will hopefully be appealing enough to encourage new people to step forward and the accumulated knowledge and resources should mean they are not starting from scratch.

Culture of participation

To help ensure initial population of the teams and their continued resourcing we need to create a culture of participation in the parish. To that end the Council has expanded the Mission statement of the 2002 plan as follows:

St Benedict's Parish is a Christian community whose members live the Catholic faith.

'Christian' means we continually seek opportunities to live out Christ's mission.

'Community' means we belong, we participate, we welcome, we include and we know and care about each other.

Obviously further action is required.

Deciding the future of the Parish properties

The properties managed and used by the parish are St Benedict's Church, the presbytery and St John's Church and Hall. The parish is responsible for funding the maintenance of these properties. As reported by the Finance Committee at the 2006 Annual General Meeting, the combined maintenance costs of St Benedict's Church and St John's Church and Hall exceed the current revenue of the parish.

The situation is complicated somewhat by an engineer's report stating that St Benedict's Church is not compliant with current earthquake standards and that a significant cost would be associated with upgrading it to meet the standards expected of buildings being built now. The building is not unique in this regard, however. There are many buildings in Wellington in the same position and there is debate about whether there is an obligation to bring the building up to the current standards.

All non-urgent maintenance on the properties is being deferred until a decision is made as to how the situation will be resolved.

The feasible options are:

- Increase the level of funding available for maintenance on all properties.
- Sell St Benedict's, and possibly the presbytery, to fund development and repair of St John's
- Sell St John's to fund the development and repair of St Benedict's. The possibility of relocating the hall has been raised.

In the case of either property being sold, the remaining properties would need to be brought up to a standard to minimise the ongoing maintenance costs and may have to be developed further to ensure the Parish has sufficient facilities to continue operating.

The Parish Council considers the following facilities are sufficient for the ongoing operation of the parish:

- A place of worship that can hold up to 300 people (200 people are regularly attending 9:00am Mass on Sunday)
- Regular, ie. 3-4 times a month, access to a room able to host a 30 strong youth group, including room for them to play active games
- Access as required to a smaller meeting room for Children's Liturgy, Parish meetings, etc.
- Ad hoc access to a hall with a kitchen for one off parish events
- A presbytery for 1 priest
- A Parish office

Note: it is not necessarily a requirement that the Parish own these facilities.

Forming a decision on this issue, in consultation with the Finance Committee and the Parish, is a priority for the Council this year.

Establishing a parish web site

Opportunity coincided with need to drive the development of the parish web site. During the period of the pre-Synod consultation and the Synod itself, the problem arose of how to make the outputs available to the parish without producing masses of printed documents. A web site is a useful tool in the convenient and environmentally friendly dissemination of information to a larger number of people. Coincidentally Denise Wilkes, a Parish Council member, was undertaking training on the design of web sites and had taken over the maintenance of the school web site. Vera Sullivan, another Council member, had a son, James, who was being trained in the development of web sites.

Thus it was decided to make the most of the resource available and develop a Parish web site. The Parish Council is grateful to St Benedict's School for hosting the site.

During discussions on the site, the need for a web site banner lead to discussions on a parish logo. As a consequence the council called for ideas from the parish for a logo and subsequently presented four options to the parish. The feedback pointed to one logo in particular, that including the rose window and that was duly incorporated as the web site logo.

Replacing the sign in front of St Benedict's church

The School has asked if they could erect a sign in front of St Benedict's church directing people to the school and offered to contribute to the funding of such a sign. The Parish Council has decided to take this opportunity of school funding to improve the signage in front of the church.

The debate over the design of the sign, including the incorporation of the parish logo on it, lead to a discussion on the appropriateness of the title: 'Onslow Parish'. Concerns were raised that the Parish should be referred to as St Benedict's parish and also that the title should reflect the Catholic nature of the parish.

Assisting the establishment of the Pastoral Area

The call to establish Pastoral Areas is not simply an obligation that must be meet, but an opportunity to develop a broader sense of community and pool resources for doing Christ's work.

The Parish Council will work to realise the concept of the Pastoral Area and leverage the Pastoral Area for the betterment of our parish.

Actions

The Parish Council will therefore work on the following this year:

Action	Progress to Date	Work Still to Do
Establish a Social Justice Team	Team responsibilities documented and disseminated to the parish. The proposed responsibilities of the team are attached as Appendix C. Scheduled meeting to establish team	Establish team and confirm responsibilities
Establish a Faith Education Team	Team responsibilities documented. A description of the proposed responsibilities of the team is attached as Appendix D.	Disseminate draft responsibilities to parish Establish team and confirm responsibilities
Establish a Community Care Team	Team responsibilities documented. A description of the proposed responsibilities of the team is attached as Appendix E.	Disseminate draft responsibilities to parish Establish team and confirm responsibilities
Establish a Parish Life Team	Team responsibilities documented. A description of the proposed responsibilities of the team is attached as Appendix F.	Disseminate draft responsibilities to parish Establish team and confirm responsibilities
Establish Youth Programmes	Team for intermediate youth programme found and intermediate youth group started Framework for college youth programme established and college youth group started	Ensure programmes are developed processes and resources that will survive the leaders moving on
Create a culture of participation	Draft parish mission statement	No actions are specified yet, but the council needs to try and create a culture of participation to even maintain the current level of activity, let alone develop more.

Action	Progress to Date	Work Still to Do
Decide the future of the parish properties, in consultation with the Finance Committee and the parish	<p>Estimates are being prepared of the amount of additional funding required from parishioners to keep all properties.</p> <p>Valuations of all properties have been obtained to determine the funding that would become available should one of the properties be sold.</p> <p>The list of facility requirements for the parish has been provided to the Finance Committee.</p>	<p>Analysis leading to a decision on what work, if any, would be required to bring St Benedict's church to 100% compliance with current earthquake standards.</p> <p>Estimates of the additional funding required to keep both properties made available to parishioners, including a per-family cost, to see if the parish is willing to fund the maintenance of both properties.</p> <p>Analysis of the work required to develop either property to meet the facility requirements of the parish, should the other be sold, including cost estimates.</p> <p>Analysis of each option in terms of funds raised, costs required and end result in terms of facilities provided.</p>
Establishing a parish web site	<p>A Parish logo has been developed and consulted on for use as a web site banner</p> <p>The web site has been established and launched (see http://www.st-benedicts.school.nz/onslow-parish)</p>	<p>Continue to develop content, e.g. for the youth groups</p> <p>Register the site so that it appears on search engine lists</p>
Replacing the sign in front of St Benedict's church	A design for the sign has been developed	Reconsider the parish logo, confirming whether the parish wishes to be known as 'Onslow Parish, a Catholic Community' or 'St Benedict's Onslow'
Assisting the establishment of the Pastoral Area	<p>Represented the Parish in several Pastoral Area Council meetings</p> <p>Drafted the Terms of Reference for the Pastoral Area Council</p>	<p>Continue the formation of the Pastoral Area Council until is an effective tool for governing inter-parish issues and opportunities</p> <p>Promote the interaction of parish teams with their counterparts in the other parishes in the Pastoral Area.</p>

Appendix A: St Benedict's Parish 5 Areas for Synod 2006

<p>Enrich the experience of being part of the parish for everyone, and, in particular, the youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop parish activities targeted to meet parishioner needs, e.g. youth programmes, parish prayer groups, young adult support groups such as pre-marriage education, engaged encounter, social activities for those less educated (i.e. not just the Parish quiz) • Enhance the experience of going to Mass, e.g. occasional Charismatic Masses, music • View and sell participation in parish life as a range of different packages with different appeals without compromising the basic principles of our faith: participation is not solely about personal faith but also about belonging to a vibrant community that can meet a range of needs • Where required, combine efforts and resources across parishes to deliver these programmes, without undermining sense of parish community • Use technology, in particular the web, to support parish activities and Parish/Archdiocese communication • Measure, monitor and manage parish effectiveness, e.g. survey parishioners to measure satisfaction and identify needs. Clarify and manage accountabilities for effective operation and development of the parish. • Provide training/mentoring for parish leaders, including priests, to enable them to create a more vibrant, abundant parish life, • Promote greater commitment from parishioners to fund financial needs of the parish • Review the Archdiocese's assets and rationalize them where appropriate to ensure they are best meeting the needs of the parishes
<p>Reach out to non-attending parishioners/school goers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern over: the insufficient numbers of those taking sacraments attending Catholic schools, those Catholics in the parish that do not attend Mass, particularly those that do attend the Catholic school • Developing a richer experience of parish life, meeting a variety of needs increases the likelihood of drawing non-attending Catholics into parish life • Enhance the interaction between parish and school • More evangelisation, with passion, energy, building on the interest created by the election of a new Pope • Reach out with more tolerance to older parishioners, who feel excluded due to the personal circumstances of their life

<p>Having drawn in new and existing parishioners, educate them on faith and churches teachings on current issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern over less adherence to the "rules" of the Church • We need to give parishioners greater understanding of the “rules” and our faith generally and the rationale for them and Church teaching vis a vis current issues • Make available an accessible “dummies” guide to being Catholic
<p>Reach out and help the disadvantaged</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop or enhance existing practical Christianity programmes where parishioners can participate in helping the unemployed & other disadvantaged • This will add to the richness of parish life
<p>Address the insufficient numbers of those seeking ordination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage vocational training • Reconsider married deacons operating in parishes

Appendix B: Pre-Synod “Appreciative Enquiry” Results

Community

Learning

- It is very rewarding to participate in parish affairs. You get back what you give by feeling valued and developing relationships with others.
- Respect between clergy and laity is important.
- In creating community it is important to be non-judgmental, to accept people at the stage they are at. Treat people as you would like to be treated yourself.
- It takes more work than people think for a self-sufficient community to work. Relationships are the glue that binds the community together. People who get involved are willing to stay involved and undertake the work because of the rewards they find from the relationships they build.
- People don't realise how much need there is within their community, e.g. elderly and sick who need help. New Zealand has a culture that assumes that everyone can look after themselves. Need to change so everyone expects to help each other and receive that help in turn.
- Christianity in action feeds upon itself. The witnessing of it inspires others to do the same.
- Increasing immigrations mean we need to understand and accept cultural diversity. People need to be made to feel welcome despite the cultural differences.
- Christian love must be at the core of a well functioning Christian community. Everything starts from that.
- There have been many attempts to build community but most have faltered as those driving them move on. Need to make such activities self-sustaining.
- Some in the community for valid reasons are difficult to deal with. There needs to be an understanding of people with special needs and how to deal with them.
- The community must be fully inclusive, e.g. if a parish's activities focus around the parish school, those without children at the school can feel isolated.
- People need to feel emotionally secure in their parish, so they feel they can open up to others.
- Relationships are based on trust and support. Have to be able to trust one another to be able to open up and offer or accept help.
- You can't please all of the people all of the time, so you shouldn't try to.
- People will respond when there is a need for something to be done, just have to convince them of the need – “sell the vision”.
- You get a better response from people by influencing them rather than telling them what to do.
- Relationship building is easiest amongst people in similar situations or stages in life, e.g. Passionist Family Groups with people in similar situations work best.

- It's important to have structures in place to respond in challenging times, rather than leaving to ad hoc organisation.

Vision

- New parishioners greeted by existing parishioners as they enter the Church. Parish is proactive in reaching out to new parishioners, through a representative, and inviting them to participate in the type of parish group or activity that best suits them. The information about these groups and activities is in a parish "welcome pack". The initial contact should be a social one, perhaps even with a small group.
- There isn't just one person responsible for welcoming and introducing new parishioners to others. The responsibility is shared, but organised so no-one falls through the cracks, e.g. via roster.
- New parishioners are not just visited as a "one off". There needs to be follow ups as sometimes new parishioners are overwhelmed or not in a position to engage fully initially.
- Weekday masses an opportunity to get to know other parishioners by becoming part of a small group sharing Eucharist on regular basis
- Homilies include messages that affirm people's feeling of belonging.
- There is a culture of shared responsibility. Everyone understands that the community only works if everyone helps.
- There is space in the Church for gathering socially after mass, including an area for children.
- Young people understand need to and value of participating in community and are given opportunities to do so. They should see Christianity in action so they can learn the importance of it.
- No-one assumes that the people in their community can look after themselves, they look for opportunities to help, especially helping new parishioners.
- Approaches to welcome and offer help to new parishioners are culturally sensitive and the special needs of parishioners settling from other countries are understood and met.
- Parish activities include a real focus on practical Christianity to meet the needs of parishioners and to build an inspiring example of Christian love for the parish.
- When looking to meet the needs of those in the community, all needs are considered, i.e. not just the sick and elderly, but those with more subtle needs, e.g. the lonely, the unemployed, those in financial difficulties or with varying degrees of mental disability. The parish community can therefore offer help in other ways, eg. financial advice, mentoring and guidance.
- The parish has a Welfare Committee, which works to identify parishioners with needs and match them with those groups or individuals willing and able to meet those needs, including a roster of those with professional expertise. Where there is sufficient ongoing demand, ongoing activities, e.g. support groups which meet at regular advertised times, are set up.
- Those responsible for ensuring parishioners' needs are met understand there may be personality clashes or other factors that mean its not working. They don't give up, they try another way. People don't shy away from those difficult to deal with or with traditional

stigma attached to them. Rather they reach out to them, knowing it's even more important to break down those barriers.

- There are a wide range of parish, Pastoral Area and archdiocesan groups and activities, not a narrow focus on academic exercises.
- Concept of community is extended to Pastoral Areas and Archdiocese so we have more chance of the community being able to meet the special needs of parishioners.
- Decisions to change things are communicated beforehand so people know what's happening and why and can challenge if want to. Ensures buy in and ownership.
- The priest is involved in parish community events and welcomes new parishioners. As does the school Principal, e.g. rings parents to see if child has settled in.
- There is a network that ensures when a parishioner's need is identified, it is passed on to those who can help.
- There is a programme to reach out to those in parish that have drifted away from mass and parish life.
- There is a registration form to formally engage with parish, including background information on new parishioners, e.g. nationality, to inform that engagement.
- The community accepts that there are different stages on the journey to full participation and people are able to move on that journey at their own pace, but from the outset new parishioners get the message that we are a community of involvement and participation.
- The parish and school work together to build community.
- There are one or more annual big parish events that bring the community together.
- The parish is organised into geographical areas for community activities, so people in the same neighbourhoods can get to know and support each other.
- There is a wider involvement in liturgy to increase ownership of and participation in the community centred on the mass.
- The parish has a suitable venue for large scale parish events.
- All parishioners involved in a group (different groups to suit different people in different situations) which can support them when they need it.
- There are special masses, e.g. multicultural, youth, Passionist Family Group, and all Masses feel inclusive. The Mass is the beating heart of the community'. It includes personal aspects that remind people that they're part of a community, e.g. significant news of parishioners, celebrate events in parishioners' lives, e.g. renewing of marriage vows, at Mass.

How to Get There

- Increase access to existing parish groups, e.g. communicate what exists and what is going on and make it easy to join/participate.
- Roster jobs
- Build culture where everyone is committed to being part of the community and is willing to participate – there is no opting out.

- Look at other churches and how they run things. Build from others' best practice. Archdiocese could help here.
- Change culture so parishioners are focused on living their Christianity through practical, community building acts of Christian love.
- Start with ways of getting parishioners to really know one another, e.g. retreats.
- Implement youth programme focussed on acts of practical Christianity.
- Grow awareness of needs within the community and the need to put aside prejudices and reach out regardless and change attitudes so people reach out rather than shy away, e.g. education sessions on things that parishioners may need to deal with, e.g. working with people with mental disability
- Get outside people with expertise and ideas to come in and help get us started.
- To get people involved in making things happen, you have to shoulder tap them. You won't get what you need by general appeals in the newsletter, but will be surprised who responds when asked.
- The Archdiocese can help by taking paperwork off priests so they can participate more fully in the community.
- The Parish Council needs to be proactive in organising events for the community.
- Develop a plan and appoint a champion.

Leadership and Ministry

Learning

- People are capable of extraordinary things if given the right balance of empowerment and support. And when they succeed once they develop the confidence and experience to succeed again.
- Everyone has a talent that can be harnessed for the betterment of the parish and the fulfilment of themselves.
- It can be inspirational when ministry is devolved and lay people are able to minister to each other.
- Strong charismatic, leaders make a huge difference in a parish.
- Sense of community must come from priest and Parish Council, but will in turn lead to greater involvement of parishioners.

Vision

- The priest, the Parish Council and the people work together to provide leadership and ministry. As a consequence the parish has become more vibrant with larger attendances at mass, including young families.
- Everyone who is involved is made to feel appreciated and valued for their efforts. Everyone wants to make a difference. Nobody is “shot down” when they speak up.
- The parish really feels led and want to follow. Everyone knows what’s going on in the parish without having to rely on gossip and want to be part of it.
- There are many different types of opportunities to get involved, either on an ongoing or ad hoc basis.
- There are increased vocations.
- Parish community is involved in parish planning.

How to Get There

- Increase access to existing parish groups, e.g. communicate what exists and what is going on and make it easy to join/participate.
- Create a good Parish Council structure with subcommittees for all areas of parish life that need tending. Grow this slowly, one area at a time.
- Need to create a culture change. Send messages subtly to reinforce desired values, e.g. participation and valuing each other’s input.
- Develop performance measures for the parish so we know how well we are progressing towards our objectives, e.g. attendance at Mass and other devotional events, participation in education/practical Christianity. Archdiocese should have measures too, e.g. vocations, especially following Synod, otherwise how will we know if anything changed as a consequence of the Synod?
- Archdiocese actively pursuing vocations, e.g. visiting schools to “sell” vocation, allowing orders to establish seminaries in diocese, prayers for vocations.

Liturgy and Spirituality

Learning

- An objective for the liturgy should be to bring people closer to God. This can be done a variety of ways, without making it a performance, but giving people the opportunity to be involved in it.
- Liturgy must be meaningful as it is at the heart of everything. We need to bring the liturgy to life. A vibrant liturgy will create a vibrant community.
- Sometimes we “fudge” the idea of transubstantiation with children. We should give them more credit and explain it properly so they have the opportunity to develop a “hunger for the Eucharist”.
- We can no longer rely on society or the Government to provide moral leadership and within the Church we can no longer rely on the priest to do everything. The laity need to fight for their faith. If they want their faith to grow they need to put something into it.
- Need to make liturgy and people’s spirituality personal: not that Christ died for us, Christ died for me.
- The fervour of the individual in their spirituality facilitates the fervour of the community and vice versa.
- The homily needs to have a “take home” message.

Vision

- Liturgies are well prepared to serve their purpose, including making all feel welcome, provide time for prayer and reflection and a homily that provokes thought and suggests ways of acting on it during the following week. The liturgy is special and meaningful.
- Mass has an impact on parishioners. They really want to be at Mass. They leave it with a strong desire to come back next week. The liturgy is alive for them. One way of achieving this is through variety, e.g. having dramatisation of the gospels or spending time during Mass emphasising and clarifying different parts of the liturgy (so that it grabs people and also educates them) or adding extra elements to the usual liturgies (such as the time a cat o’ nine tails and crown of thorns were laid out for the passion – things that make people stop and think rather than going through the motions). These variations are targeted at the majority of the congregation, not a minority who want that sort of thing.
- The liturgy is inclusive. Not a barrier to participation by those struggling with their faith or whose lives have not worked out how they wished.
- The laity are heavily involved in the liturgy.
- Parishioners have the opportunity to participate in prayer groups and contemplative prayer sessions, including those struggling with their faith as it would help prepare them for full participation in the liturgy.
- Parishioners prepare for liturgy via daily reflections on the readings, e.g. like those in the Marist Messenger, and prayer groups, scripture readings.
- People really understand the Mass. They have been prepared for it through exercises that educate them and thus getting something from Mass is not dependent on a charismatic priest and his homilies. This is especially true of the young people. There need to be a

range of different exercises would to meet the needs of all parishioners, from young to old, creating and sustaining a love of the Mass.

- The liturgy is an experience that promotes and reinforces for parishioners the understanding the Christ died for them personally, e.g. with signs in the foyer, homilies that reflect this message, occasional Charismatic Masses. All parishioners are in the process of accepting this message and it is changing their lives. It's not pushed down everyone's throat. Parishioners are involved in prayer groups to help receive and contemplate this message and what it means for them personally.
- The 3rd Rite of Reconciliation is performed in the parish. It is well attended and generates huge enthusiasm within the parish, inspiring people on their faith journey.

How to Get There

- Pray
- Build acceptance and understanding. Communicate to congregation in advance that something different will be happening with liturgy and why it's important to participate to grow your faith.
- We don't make enough use of the resources in our midst. There are parishioners with wonderful professional skills who could help bring liturgies to life. Also, there are people from outside the parish who are experts in creative liturgies who we could be using.

Young People

Learning

- It is critical to give young people a challenge to overcome, preferably that they can only overcome by working together. That, and enough downtime to socialise and reflect on what they have achieved, will bind a group of young people together. And we must tell them they have done well, as they will gain in confidence and be more likely to take on greater responsibility.
- Any youth programme cannot be isolated from the parish and must include activities that have relevance to Church.
- It requires hard work to make a youth programme effective. There are lots of resources, but they need to be filtered and adapted to be useful.
- The Church must listen to young people as they are its future.
- There are too many man-made rules that young people of today cannot relate to. We cannot afford to drive them away.
- Young people are sometimes struggling with who they are and what they want. Any youth programme needs to have an open, non-judgmental and accepting culture so that all feel welcome.
- Word of mouth will make a successful youth programme grow.
- 16 is the critical age when young people cease to be willing to participate in other parish activities, e.g. Passionist Family Group events with their parents.
- It must be fun and fulfilling. There are many more things competing with young people's time these days, so we have to make it worthwhile. We have to build activities around their interests.

Vision

The young people of the parish are involved in parish life, including participating in and helping to organise liturgies. They are confident in the role in the parish and the activities they undertake to contribute to parish life. Their participation outside liturgies is based on the Passionist Family Group model, with regular events that provide young people with an opportunity to meet and get to know one another, but to also interact and work with older parishioners and with more than just a social focus, e.g. practical Christianity activities, inter-parish and regional events, projects to help the parish (such as organising school holiday programmes).

There is a pathway for youth, extending from participation in Children's Liturgy. There is no gap.

Participation in the youth programme grows their faith.

The parish appreciates and encourages the involvement of young people in the parish through positive feedback, e.g. letter in newsletter thanking young people for their involvement and enthusiasm, thank you party from parish for youth.

Young people have the opportunities to ask questions and seek guidance, not just about their faith but about their role in the parish. The youth are mentored.

The young people of the parish take ownership of their place in the parish. The youth programme is producing leaders, who are meeting with other youth leaders to discuss what's happening across the archdiocese.

There are different levels of youth activities for the different ages and stages of youth in the parish. What a 16 year old needs is different from what a 12 year old needs.

The youth have a facility to use for their activities.

The programme provides the youth with role models.

Utilise mediums that youth use to communicate/get messages to them, e.g. text, TV, web, and activities they are interested to get them to participate

How to Get There

- Communicate to parish need for youth to be involved and need for parish to accept and appreciate and to verbalise that appreciation so youth feel valued.
- Listen to the young people and work with them to implement their ideas so they take ownership and feel part of the parish.
- Determine whether the parish has sufficient resources to sustain its own youth programme.
- Use adults with young people to help organise activities. Spread the load. Use experienced people from outside the parish to get started if necessary.
- Parish has to be prepared to spend money on the youth.
- Identify a model for making it happen and sustaining it, whether it be shared responsibility operating within a framework or a young adult leader supported by an adult.
- Be flexible with the liturgy to allow and encourage youth involvement, including doing things in ways that appeal to them so they can make some liturgies their own, e.g. drama and music.

Education

Learning

Involving young people in parish activities, particularly through the sacraments, creates a need for more answers. The more you learn the more you realise there is to learn. We need to have some way to give young people the opportunity to ask questions and find answers.

The parish priest can be responsible for educating everyone. Parishioners need to educate each other.

The Archdiocese has a good programme, but the courses are often cancelled due to low attendance.

Education activities also have a positive effect on parish community. Another opportunity for people to get to know one another and to get to know one another in a deeper way.

Vision

- Parish based education programmes based on the Renew, small group format, i.e. not just listening but with opportunities for discussion and to ask questions as well.
- The programme is kept interesting with changes in format and topic, guest teachers from outside the parish.
- The programme teaches parishioners about the Church and its history, the reasons for its teachings. Knowing more about the Church, the Mass and other sacraments, the parishioners are inspired to become involved in the liturgy and spirituality of the parish and are better informed and more confident to talk to those within the Church about their faith and those outside the Church about social issues from a Catholic perspective.
- Parishioners are all well aware of the education opportunities available to them and it is easy for them to respond. It doesn't rely on people seeking out information and proactively registering, e.g. email notification with link to website to register. The programme is mapped out so you can see what's going to be on during the year.
- There are education activities focussed on youth also.
- Lay people are heavily involved in the parish based programme. They aren't experts, but know enough to use the structure and resources given to them and lead discussion.

How to Get There

- Start with topics that will attract interest and speakers who will entertain as well as educate and build from there. Once started need to keep momentum.
- Keep the topics grounded and practical, not too esoteric. And with a broad base, e.g. understanding other religions, and with relevance to current issues, e.g. Church's stand on Civil Union Bill – what and why, encyclicals from Rome explained.
- Survey parish to find out the formats that best suit, e.g. is there enough interest for daytime sessions. If there's enough interest, and enough resources, offer a range of formats to meet a range of needs.
- Incorporate activities with social aspect, e.g. supper, morning tea, to make more attractive.
- Occasionally have sermons that are more instructive – less messages, more facts.

Social Justice

Learning

- Christian love means never judging people, but accepting them and offering them our love in spite of their circumstances, especially when their circumstances are contrary to Catholic teaching. People forced out of relationships through physical and emotional violence or who as a consequence of those circumstances have had an abortion or who are lesbian or homosexual – not enough is done to make them feel accepted by the Church, whereas, as Christians, we should be offering acceptance of them and love for them.
- There is insufficient support at Archdiocesan and parish level for initiatives aimed at influencing social and government thinking on social justice issues, e.g. the Justice, Peace and Development Commission is not well supported and neither was the attempts to create an “animator” network in the parishes. Any such initiatives in parishes, e.g. lobbying government on social issues, are sporadic and ad hoc and are usually the work of an enthusiastic and inspirational individual within the parish. We can’t expect to sustain effort in this area over long stretches
- Parishioner’s consciousness of social justice issues need to be raised, whether it is regarding the needs within their own parish or issues in wider society.
- The power and process of prayer is essential in coping when things are difficult.
- Helping others is not an entirely selfless task; there is tremendous satisfaction to be gained from it that will keep people involved once they have got involved.
- Many hands make light work.

Vision

- People in these different circumstances are accepted members of the parish community, even receiving the sacraments. The community accepts and loves. They are embraced and their talents and perspectives enrich parish life and the liturgy.
- Involvement in and support of Project Rachel and other such initiatives are an accepted part of parish life. Everyone takes responsibility for social justice.
- There are lectures in parishes to raise awareness of social issues and the parish has a culture of actively responding to those issues. There is a core group of people able to: educate the parish and raise awareness of issues and facilitate parish responses to social issues or direct people to mechanisms or groups through which they can respond, e.g. making submissions on Acts being considered, letter writing campaigns, protests, marches, petitions. These people know what is happening and where. They are not perceived to be political or radical, or driven by one person’s agenda, just responsible Christians. Their activities aren’t just focussed on the negative. They also work to praise, raise awareness of and encourage the actions of those in society doing good work.
- The youth are involved in the parish’s social justice activities.
- The Archdioceses supports parish initiatives, including supporting central groups that can then support the parish. The resources of the Archdiocese are focussed on what the parishes have said they need to help them run their initiatives. The Archdiocese is there to help the parishes, not the other way around.

- Parish “sponsorship” of the needy, including international/national charities. Guest speakers after Mass to raise awareness and encourage people to get involved.

How to Get There

- Find and use role models: people who have strong faith and are active in parishes despite dealing with adverse circumstances.
- Create culture of awareness and participation through messages from the priest and parish council. Key message – we have a responsibility and we can make a difference, even if there aren’t immediate significant impacts from our actions. Regular Renew programmes or other initiatives to enthuse people to live their Christian faith.
- In terms of influencing wider social issues. We have to work in short burst of targeted enthusiasm, responding to a particular issue and preferably with a low commitment/high achievement approach to sustain interest for next time. Form a core group of interested people, get support from Archdiocese to form network with connections to other parishes and other groups active in social justice issues.

Appendix C: Social Justice Team Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every Christian to respond to injustices in our society, both local and global.

"If someone who has the riches of this world sees his brother in need and closes his heart to him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (1 Jn 3:17).

"In the work of evangelization we cannot and must not disregard the immense importance of those questions which are so much at issue today: questions concerning justice, liberation, progress and world peace. If we disregard these we are likewise disregarding the teachings of the Gospel about the love of our neighbour who is suffering and is in want."

Pope Paul VI, *Evangelization in the Modern World (Evangelii Nuntiandi)*, 1975

"It is to all Christians that we address a fresh and insistent call to action ... Let each one examine himself, to see what he has done up to now, and what he ought to do. It is not enough to recall principles, state intentions, point to crying injustices and utter prophetic denunciations; these words will lack real weight unless they are accompanied for each individual by a livelier awareness of personal responsibility and by effective actions."

Pope Paul VI, *A Call to Action (Octogesima Adveniens)*, 1971

To help provide opportunities for our Parishioners to respond to social injustice, St Benedict's Parish will include a Social Justice Team. The Social Justice Team will, so far as their time commitment allows:

- Provide a point of contact for parishioners who want to act for social justice, in general or on a particular issue, or who have a query about the parish, Diocese or Church's stance on or response to a particular issue
- Maintain a register of all those in the parish interested in acting for Social Justice
- Liaise with the Archdiocesan Social Justice Coordinator to help answer queries from parishioners, call on Archdiocesan resources to assist a parish social justice initiative or mobilize parish resources to participate in an Archdiocesan initiative
- Coordinate, or find a coordinator for, individual parish initiatives on social justice issues or parish involvement in Archdiocesan or Pastoral Area initiatives, e.g. submission writing, letter writing, petition organizing, protest participation.
- Liaise with parish groups interested in social justice, e.g. Catholic Women's League, the youth group, not to manage their social justice activities, but to provide support and ensure the parish's social justice work is well integrated
- Liaise with the other parishes in the Pastoral Area to coordinate social justice activity across the Pastoral Area, where appropriate
- Raise parish awareness of social justice issues by:
 - Reviewing information on social justice issues received by the parish, and information from other sources, and coordinating publication of it via the newsletter, notice board and parish web site
 - Coordinating of Social Justice week in the parish, including organizing speakers and involvement in liturgy planning
- Provide a brief report, either in writing or in person, to the Parish Council on progress and plans for social justice initiatives and awareness raising

- Participate in the Parish's annual planning process to continually improve the Parish's efforts in terms of social justice

Appendix D: Faith Education Team Responsibilities

"In a society and a culture that too often make relativism their creed, the light of truth slowly disappears and people end up doubting the goodness of life and the validity of the relationships and responsibilities that constitute it."

"This is the decisive challenge for the future of the faith, the Church and Christianity, and it is, therefore, an essential priority of our pastoral work: bring to Christ and the Father this new generation, which in large part, lives in the world far from God."

Pope Benedict XVI, in the inauguration of the 2007 Ecclesial Congress of the Diocese of Rome, the theme of which is "Jesus Is Lord, Educating in the Faith, in Discipleship and in Witness."

To help rekindle the light of truth, St Benedict's Parish will include a Faith Education team. The Faith Education team will:

- Review the literature received from, and liaise with, the various providers of faith education in the Diocese and further afield to identify faith education opportunities
- Canvass the parish's interests and needs in terms of faith education, including those of the youth, and develop from available opportunities a programme of faith education opportunities targeted at those interests and needs
- As time allows, work proactively with faith education providers to develop courses or events targeted at our parish and arrange delivery of those courses or events in our parish
- Liaise with the other parishes in the Pastoral Area to identify opportunities for and organize faith education activities across the Pastoral Area
- Provide a brief monthly report, either in writing or in person, to the Parish Council on progress and plans for faith education initiatives
- Participate in the Parish's annual planning process to continually improve the opportunities for faith education provided to parishioners

Appendix E: Community Care Team Responsibilities

We have a Christian responsibility to help our brothers and sisters in need, and charity starts at home.

“It is imperative that no one, out of indifference to the course of events or because of inertia, would indulge in a merely individualistic morality. The best way to fulfil one's obligations of justice and love is to contribute to the common good according to one's means and the needs of others, and also to promote and help public and private organizations devoted to bettering the conditions of life.”

Gaudium et Spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,
Second Vatican Council, 1965

To help our brothers and sisters in need, St Benedict's Parish will include a Community Care team. The Community Care team will:

- Establish and publicise a process or mechanism by which those parishioners who need assistance of any kind, whether it be due to illness, age, grief, disability, stress, financial pressure or any other circumstance, are identified and continue to be identified
- Maintain a list of those parishioners requiring care and how and when that care is provided
- Call for parishioners who have time and skills that can be of assistance to others in the parish to identify themselves
- Maintain a list of those parishioners able and willing to provide care and any special skills they may have
- Maintain a list of groups within the parish, e.g. Catholic Women's League and St Vincent de Paul, and outside the parish, e.g. government agencies, who are able to provide care
- Be a contact point for parishioners who require care or who know others who require care and a means of connecting those that require care with those able to provide it
- Act with discretion at all times and ensure those whose receiving and providing care maintain their privacy
- Liaise with other parishes in the Pastoral Area to identify opportunities for and organize provision of care across the Pastoral Area
- Provide a brief monthly report, either in writing or in person, to the Parish Council on progress and plans for Community Care initiatives
- Participate in the Parish's annual planning process to continually improve the provision of care to those in our community

Appendix F: Parish Life Team Responsibilities

To help us live our Christian faith we must be bound together in community as the early Christians were.

“It is therefore indispensable - and this is the task entrusted to Christian families, priests, catechists and educators, to young people themselves among their peers and to our parishes, associations and movements, and lastly to the entire diocesan community - that the new generations experience the Church as a company of friends who are truly dependable and close in all life's moments and circumstances, whether joyful and gratifying or arduous and obscure; as a company that will never fail us, not even in death, for it carries within it the promise of eternity.”

Pope Benedict XVI, Address To The Participants At The Ecclesial Convention

To help bind us together in “a company that will never fail”, St Benedict’s Parish will include a Parish Life team. The Parish Life team will:

- Oversee the process by which new or returning parishioners are welcomed and integrated into the parish community and ensure that process is resourced, e.g. maintaining a roster of welcomers
- Oversee the activities of the Passionist Family Groups within the Parish, including liaising with the Regional Passionist Family Group Coordinators
- Maintaining a program and calendar of parish events or activities to help the parish bond as a community, e.g. Parish Quiz, Parish Dance, Parish Camp, parish chat groups, fundraising events. The team does not necessarily need to resource the organization of these events themselves, but needs to find people to do so. The extent and nature of this program depends on the number of organizers who can be found.
- Liaise with parish groups who run community events, e.g. Catholic Women’s League, the youth group, not to manage their events, but to provide support and ensure they are well integrated with the overall parish program
- Liaise with the other parishes in the Pastoral Area to identify opportunities for and organize Pastoral Area community events or activities
- Be a contact point for parishioners who have left the parish but want to stay in touch
- Provide a brief monthly report, either in writing or in person, to the Parish Council on progress and plans for Parish Life initiatives
- Participate in the Parish’s annual planning process to continually improve the bonding of the parish as a community

Appendix G: Update to May 2009

Summary of Action on implementation of the Pastoral Plan. See previous document for details of projects

Action	Progress to Date	Work Still to Do
Establish a Social Justice Team	Complete – Pastoral Area Social Justice Committee operational	
Establish a Faith Education Team	Team responsibilities documented. A description of the proposed responsibilities of the team is attached as Appendix D.	Disseminate draft responsibilities to parish Establish team and confirm responsibilities
Establish a Community Care Team	Team responsibilities documented. A description of the proposed responsibilities of the team is attached as Appendix E.	Disseminate draft responsibilities to parish Establish team and confirm responsibilities
Establish a Parish Life Team	Team responsibilities documented. A description of the proposed responsibilities of the team is attached as Appendix F.	Disseminate draft responsibilities to parish Establish team and confirm responsibilities
Establish Youth Programmes	Currently have 3 Youth groups operating in St Benedict's Parish	Provide ongoing support and resources
Create a culture of participation	Draft parish mission statement	No actions are specified yet, but the council needs to try and create a culture of participation to even maintain the current level of activity, let alone develop more.
Decide the future of the parish properties, in consultation with the Finance Committee and the parish	Process is underway and about 50% complete.	
Establishing a parish web site	Complete	

Action	Progress to Date	Work Still to Do
Replacing the sign in front of St Benedict's church	To be undertaken in conjunction with renovations to St Benedict's Church as part of Future of Parish Properties above	
Assisting the establishment of the Pastoral Area	Pastoral Area Council established and currently undertaking Strategic Review of itself.	