



RESOURCES FOR THE PARISH MISSION AND PASTORAL PLAN

Implementing the Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals





Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst | Office of Mission and Pastoral Life

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Sandhurst Parishes are encouraged to photocopy these resources or any page therein for use in the parish, e.g., information meetings, discussions, planning sessions.

Note also: There is a Resources File containing copies of individual pages that can be used by planning groups without having to copy the full resource.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Diocese of Sandhurst recognises the traditional owners of the lands upon which we live, serve and worship. We acknowledge the people of the Northeastern regions of our Diocese, Djilmathang, Minjambuta, Duduroa and Waywurru. We acknowledge the people of the Southern regions of our Diocese, the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Taungerung. We acknowledge the people of the Northern regions of our Diocese, the Yorta Yorta and Bangerang. We acknowledge the people of the Western regions of our Diocese, the Baraparapa and Wemba Wemba peoples.

We respectfully honour and acknowledge their ongoing custodianship and their connections to the land, waters and animals. We pay our respects to their culture, their Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of their peoples. We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and commit ourselves to actively working alongside First Nations people for healing, reconciliation and justice.

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45. **Scenario 4** Starting Point – we have a plan and need to review it in light of the SMPGoals.

53. **Implementation and Review** of the Parish Mission and Pastoral Plan

OVERVIEW

Resources
supporting
parishes to
implement the
Strategic Mission
and
Pastoral Goals



Introduction

Parish Planning Resources in light of the Sandhurst Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals 2024 - 2028

These Parish Planning Resources provide information and processes to help parishes turn ideas about the Sandhurst Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals into a Mission and Pastoral Plan that can be implemented.

These Resources are part of **Project 2** in the **Diocesan Formation Support Plan**.

While working with the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council on the implementation of the *Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals*, Bishop Shane Mackinlay highlighted the need for a planning process for parish use.

This planning process incorporates an approach to **Synodal Decision-Making** and a guide for **Conversations in the Spirit (Project 3)**, both of which are priorities in the Catholic Church globally. These Resources are also a companion to the **Parish Visitation Program**, providing parishes with tools to plan action in light of the Bishop's visit and his subsequent Response.

The hope for parishes is that these Resources provide practical help, guided by the Holy Spirit, to implement the SMPGoals.

The expectation is that parishes activate 'on purpose' planning and action, enlivening parishioners to go deeper into discipleship and wider beyond the parish community to where the Holy Spirit sends them — deeper and wider.

Parishes are asked to have a progress report on their Mission and Pastoral Plan within 12 months of these Resources being released.



The Planning Resources are presented in six parts in light of the SMPGoals:

Overview

- the SMPGoals,
- possible parish starting points
- steps in the journey
- the planning team model
- synodal decision-making
- Conversations in the Spirit.



Steps to take from a **Scenario 1** Starting Point



Steps to take from a **Scenario 2** Starting Point



OVERVIEW

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Steps to take from a
Scenario 3 Starting Point
Scenario 3 leads to a
Parish Mission and Pastoral Plan

SCENARIO

3

STARTING POINT




We don't have a parish plan, but have already prayed, discussed and discerned the key SMP Goals to focus on in our first plan

Steps to take from a
Scenario 4 Starting Point -
revisiting plans/
planning already in
operation

SCENARIO

4


STARTING POINT



we have a parish plan or have been working on one - we can revisit, review, develop it in light of the SMP Goals

Steps to note
for **Implementing
and Reviewing** the
Mission and Pastoral Plan

**IMPLEMENTATION
AND REVIEW**



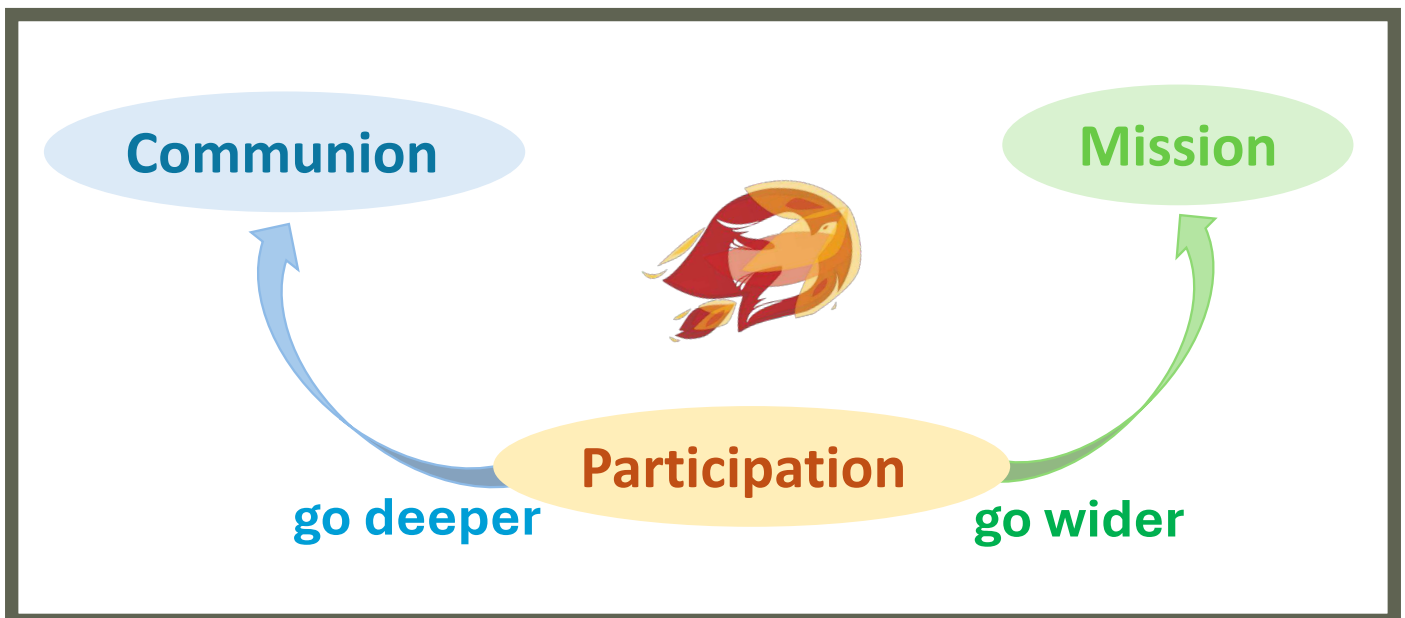
of the
Parish Mission
and
Pastoral Plan

Understanding the Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals

For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission

The recent XVIth Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops was based on three core pillars of the nature of the Church and its members:

- COMMUNION** – as disciples growing in deeper relationship with God and others
- MISSION** – as disciples sent by Jesus, going wider in mission with him through the Holy Spirit to others in the world around us
- PARTICIPATION** – each baptised person is called as a disciple to actively participate in this two-fold deeper and wider movement.



Understanding the Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals

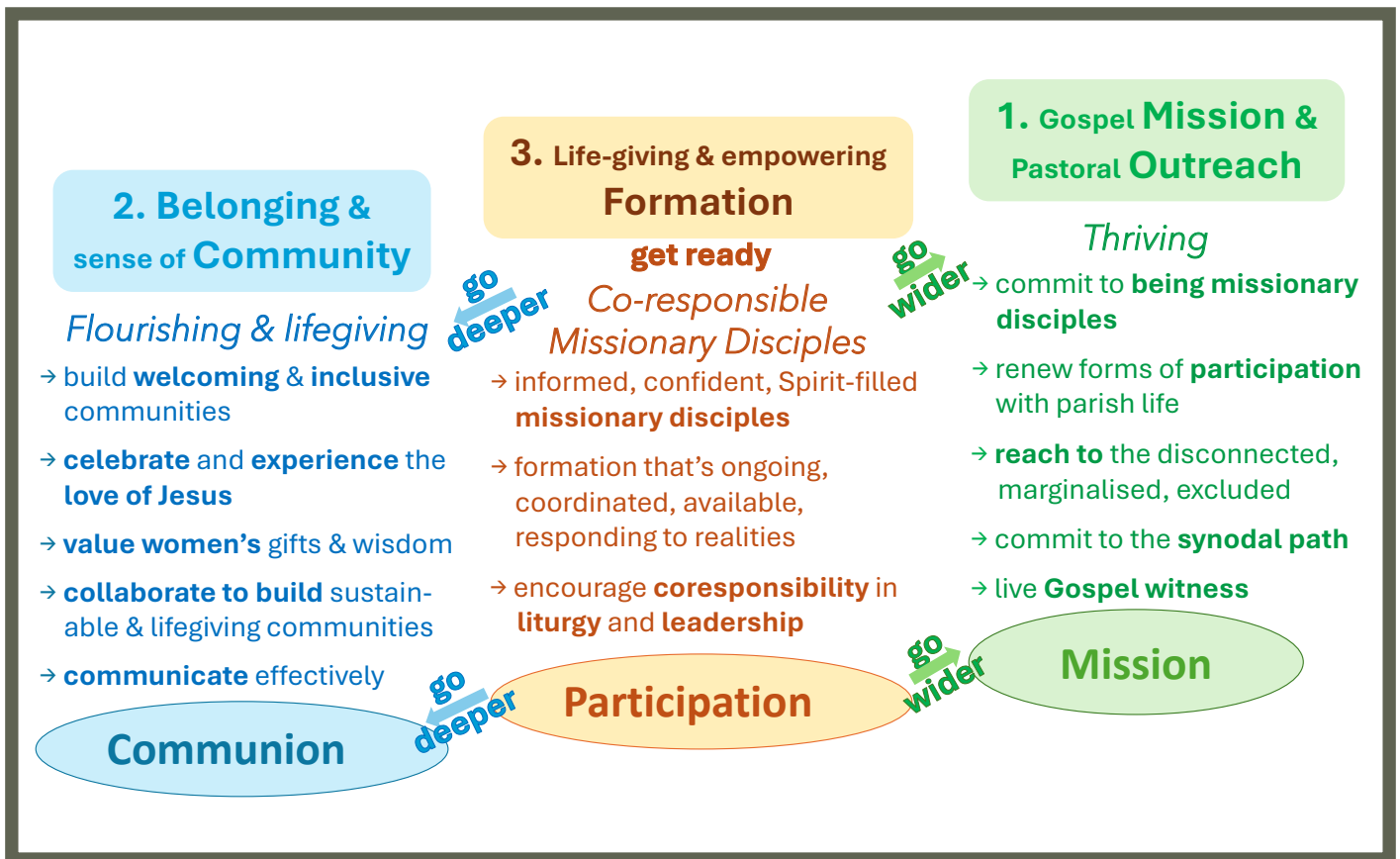
Sandhurst's Three Strategic Directions

Our Three Directions, under which the Goals are gathered, match the three pillars of the Synod, with Formation preparing, enriching and strengthening us, getting us ready to participate in going deeper and going wider.



Understanding the Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals

Here are Sandhurst's **Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals** grouped under our three **Strategic Directions** and linked to **COMMUNION**, **PARTICIPATION** and **MISSION**



Our task is ...

- ... to walk the three Strategic Directions
- ... by incorporating the Sandhurst Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals
- ... into a Mission and Pastoral Plan for our parish.



Taking the journey from where we are now to developing and implementing a Parish Mission and Pastoral Plan

The Journey ahead

- Identify our **Starting Point**
 - Path from Starting Point to **Parish Plan**
 - **Implement** the Parish Plan
 - **Review & Develop** the Parish Plan
-

Parish Workshop available: The Mission and Pastoral Plan Resources

A time to unpack and understand ...

for priests, other parish leaders including PPC/PFC, planning teams, ministry co-ordinators

Contact the Mission and Pastoral Life Team

Mission and Pastoral Life Team

Contacts: Dr Chris Cotter (Director) 0427 269 016

Geoff Gowdie (Assistant Director) 0418 759 416

Leslie Cooper (Executive Assistant to the Director) 0474 542 363

Email: mpl@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

What is our STARTING POINT in relation to the SMPGoals?

Suggestion: Choose a **Scenario** that broadly matches your parish now and read what that Scenario’s leaflet outlines as steps forward, and resources to assist.

Does this sound like your starting point? If not, look at another. Perhaps you could be somewhere in between or a mixture.

A conversation could help you decide – you are welcome to contact the MPL Team.

Scenario 1

We feel the need to deepen our understanding of some SMPGoals

Go to the **SCENARIO 1**

Scenario 2

We understand the SMPGoals but not sure where to start with implementation

Go to the **SCENARIO 2**



Scenario 4

We have a parish plan or have been working on one – we can revisit, review, develop it in light of the SMPGoals

Go to the **SCENARIO 4**

Scenario 3

We don’t have a parish plan, but have already prayed, discussed and discerned the key SMPGoals to focus on in our first Plan

Go to the **SCENARIO 3**

Some matters to be decided

Who is our lead planning team?

The parish will need a planning team to lead the development of a Parish Mission and Pastoral Plan in light of the SMPGoals. There are generally three main options, all of which include the Pastor as president:

1. The Parish Pastoral Council
2. The Parish Pastoral Council with seconded skilled people from beyond the PPC, including a Parish Finance Council member or two, and often a facilitation role
3. A separate dedicated planning group, including a couple of PPC/PFC members, as well as other people with relevant experience and expertise.

[**Note:** Process accompaniment, guidance and facilitation can be provided to Planning Teams through arrangement with the Mission and Pastoral Life Team in the Chancery.]

Pros and cons of each option:

Re. Option 1: The PPC is the obvious body to take on this task – mission and pastoral planning is already meant to be a key PPC responsibility. Also, overseeing the later implementation stage of a Plan would be a PPC responsibility so it makes sense for the PPC to be engaged in the Plan development.

The **challenge** for a PPC is that planning is a time-intensive task when all the other activities of the parish still require attention and organisation. This planning process cannot be done effectively as an agenda item within a normal PPC meeting. The process will require separate dedicated time. How much time will depend on the parish starting point (see p.13). On the other hand, a substantial project like this may invigorate a PPC which feels ‘stuck’ or ‘lacking in purpose’.

Creative time scenarios for this PPC model include: Quarantine dedicated planning time, e.g., have every second PPC meeting addressing only the Mission and Pastoral Plan (*this will make for a long process if meeting times remain monthly*) OR longer dedicated planning meetings between regular PPC meetings, say, on a Saturday morning or another time OR restricting usual PPC business to an hour at another time, e.g., a breakfast meeting, while planning takes the usual PPC slot OR increase the number of meetings for duration of the Plan’s development.

Re. Option 2: This is similar to Option 1 above in terms separate dedicated time, in which the other non-PPC people would participate, but only in these separate dedicated meetings. The **challenge** is still committing the PPC as a group to engaging in

two meeting patterns: the normal PPC meetings and the dedicated Planning Team meetings with the seconded Planning Team members. The time variation scenarios canvassed in Option 1 above could also apply here.

Re. Option 3: The Planning Team is more distinct as a project group, even though comprising some PPC/PFC members along with others brought in for their particular capacities. The Planning Team sets its own pattern of project-focused meetings. This model gives more scope to assemble a team of people who have interest, passion and capacities for the planning task and strategic thinking, and allows the PPC as a group to support ongoing parish life through its normal meetings.

The challenge in this model is for the Planning Team to stay well connected with the PPC via communication during the unfolding planning process. Participating PPC/PFC members would also have their normal meetings. The last two time scenarios for Option 1 could apply here as well.

STRONG RECOMMENDATION: Use **facilitation** either from local/network capacity or via the MPL team.

TO PONDER: Where our parishes are at today (and this is the case for most parishes in the western world) has taken about 500 years to bring about. Utilising the SMPGoals to change that situation will require something much more than business as usual.

Discuss and decide the planning team model that will work best for us

Planning Team capacities and skills to be discerned:

Do we have people ...

- with an active Catholic faith and practice?
- committed to growing as disciples of Jesus?
- with commitment to the parish community as a whole, not just a particular focus?
- with capacities that make them suitable for a strategic planning project?
- who can communicate well with others in the parish?
- who will commit time to the project?

Facilitator briefing and training sessions are available through arrangement with the Mission and Pastoral Life Team: could be for the PPC chair or Pastor or Planning Team leader or other person/s who have the capacity to lead the planning group through the planning process.

Formation Support from the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Life Team

Formation Workshops on:

- Understanding the SMPGoals
- Selecting SMPGoals to focus on
- Spirituality that animates the SMPGoals

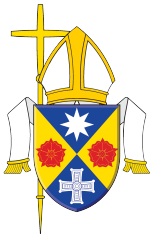
Facilitation for:

- developing parish plans
- conducting Conversations in the Spirit
- using synodal decision-making processes

Accompaniment on:

- parish plan development, implementation and review

COMPANION STRATEGY
Enhancing local parish capacity to lead these processes



MISSION AND PASTORAL LIFE TEAM

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Communication, community engagement and consultation with parishioners and key parish bodies/personnel is going to be vital through the whole process. Various processes are recommended through the Resources.

Progress Report

It was the expectation of Bishop Shane and is the continuing expectation of Fr Brian Boyle, Diocesan Administrator, that parishes get moving on planning and implementation, and provide a progress report within twelve months of the release date of this Resource.

While incorporating Conversations in the Spirit as an important discernment tool, **discernment and decision-making in the Church** is a broader synodal process for decision-making about important issues. These resources outline processes for using both appropriately.

Discernment and Decision-Making in a Synodal Church

What is discernment and why it is important?

Discernment is the prayerful practice of listening for God’s guidance in our daily lives and in the life of our parish. It means paying attention to what brings us closer to Christ—peace, love and hope—and recognising what leads us away. Through prayer, reflection and listening to one another, we seek the direction of the Holy Spirit so that our choices and ministries reflect God’s will. Discernment helps us become a community that acts not out of habit or preference, but out of faithful attentiveness to our baptismal call and the mission entrusted to us by Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

The steps below outline the framework for discernment and decision-making presented in the Final Document of XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, promulgated by Pope Francis on 24 November 2024. Within the framework, Steps 4 and 5 are where Conversation in the Spirit is most appropriately used within the process of discernment. See pp. 18, 19 for insights into conducting Conversations in the Spirit.

The key steps in Church discernment and decision-making

1. Define the object of the deliberation.
2. Identify those who ought be consulted, including those who have a specific competency or are affected by the matter.
3. Relevant information provided for participants.
4. Those consulted offer input honestly, sincerely and with informed conscience.
5. Discernment undertaken, consensus sought. Steps 4 and 5 involve participants as active contributors to the decision-making.
6. The decision is formulated by appointed authority (priest or bishop), with reasons, including how consultation was taken account of. In Church law, the appointed authority is the **‘decision-taker’**.
7. The decision is implemented.
8. Implementation is monitored and evaluated.

Here is the place for Conversation in the Spirit

Drawing on extracts from the Final Document of ‘For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission’ (#87-94) and ‘Pathways to the Implementation Phase of the Synod, 2025–2028’ issued by the General Secretariat of the Synod.

Conversation in the Spirit

Conversation in the Spirit can be used for a simple shared prayer/scripture reflection encounter or within a more complex Discernment/Decision-Making Process as outlined on p.17.

Focus: Could be a piece of scripture if the purpose is to share prayer or reflect on the Sunday Gospel; or it could be a significant Communion, Participation, Mission issue that needs Spirit-filled discernment – see the Scenario 1 Leaflet p.3, or Scenario 2 Leaflet p.7.

Focus Question: Formulate a question which focuses on the journey of discernment to be taken.

Commence with a period of silence to allow for pondering the question in light of Steps 1–3 on p.17.

First Round of Conversation: Moving clockwise around the group, each person has a chance to speak (up to 2-3 min.) in response to the Question, after which there is a time of silence for reflection before the next person speaks. There is no discussion in this Round.

Second Round of Conversation: We each share (up to 1-2 min.) what struck us most from what we heard in the First Round and/or what moved in us during the times of silence. A pause for reflection follows after each person has spoken. There is no discussion in this Round.

Third Round of Conversation: Finally, as moved to speak, we each share what has emerged as significant for us from the preceding two rounds. What new insights have arisen, what common themes and fruits were evident. We can speak in any order and respond to one another.

If the Conversation Focus is an important issue that needs discernment and decision:

Is there consensus or disagreement? What is the way forward?

The leader helps summarise the discussion and points to the next steps.

This approach to Conversation in the Spirit was used in Australia's Plenary Council and then adopted by the 2023 and 2024 Assemblies in Rome of the XVI Ordinary Synod of Bishops 'For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission.'



Conversation in the Spirit

Conversation in the Spirit can be used for faith sharing, difficult conversations, or when lots of creativity or ideas are needed. It has been used to discuss best practice in youth ministry, synodal leadership across Catholic Social Action Network, an academic conference and formation sessions for a diocesan Assembly. It has also been used for conversations about finance, mission, working conditions, and responding to clergy sex abuse. It is an excellent tool to ground any conversation in the Spirit; to open us to new voices and possibilities, and move us to action when appropriate.

Conversation in the Spirit is a discernment tool

In the Catholic tradition, discernment refers to the prayerful process of seeking God's will in one's life and the life of a Catholic community, like a parish. It is both a spiritual practice and a habit of mind and heart that helps distinguish between what leads toward God (the "good spirit") and what leads away from God (the "false spirit"). Discernment is not just decision-making; it is decision-making intentionally with God, with the Holy Spirit. Conversation in the Spirit is a way, a method to do that intentionally as a community of persons each uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit through the graces of baptism.

Although this method feels slow, giving people time to think before they speak can make for very effective conversations. All voices are heard and, with each round, the wisdom of the group is built on. People start to see new connections and possibilities. It is amazing how transformative it is to listen and be listened to!

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STARTING POINT



We feel the
need to
deepen our
understanding
of some
SMPGoals

SCENARIO

1

STARTING POINT:

We feel the need to deepen our understanding of some SMPGoals

It's difficult to plan together effectively for what we don't understand well together.

Let the Holy Spirit in to prompt and lead...



SUGGESTED STEPS

1. **Initial Conversation in the Spirit** (See p.23) identifying the SMPGoals we need to understand more deeply.

2. **When the Goals for deeper exploration** are identified, seek Formation for them.

Possibilities:

- Source the Formation ourselves: in person or online
- Access relevant Diocesan Workshops
- A combination of both

Formation Sessions p.24

- Exploring SMPGoals
- Conversations in the Spirit

3. **Do the Formation**

4. After the Formation hold a **2nd Conversation in the Spirit** about our understanding of the SMPGoals.

5. **Decide** on readiness to move to the next step.



✓ **Achievement:** We have a deeper understanding of the SMPGoals, especially ...

- ...
- ...
- ...



Looking ahead: We are ready to move to the next step → discerning which SMPGoals to focus on first. **See the SCENARIO 2 p.29**

RESOURCES for Scenario 1

Conversation in the Spirit

This particular Conversation is seeking to identify the SMPGoals we want to better understand, so have a copy of the SMPGoals for each person, and a copy of this page as well so participants know the process and can see the brief Gospel snippets that are foundational to the Christian life.

Scripture: *Love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and love your neighbour as yourself* (Luke 10:28).

Whatever you do to the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you do to me (Matt 25:40).

For the Son of Man came to seek and save what was lost (Luke 9:10).

Go therefore and make disciples ... and I will be with you (Matt 28: 19-20).

Scenario 1 Question: About which SMPGoals am I/are we seeking deeper understanding?

We commence with reading aloud (individually around the group) the Gospel lines, followed by a period of silence to allow us to ponder the words of Jesus hand in hand with the above Scenario 1 Question. (see Overview pp.4, 5 for the Goals)

First Round of Conversation: Moving clockwise around the group, each person has a chance to speak (up to 2 min.) in response to the Scenario 1 Question, after which there is a time of silence for reflection before the next person has spoken. There is no discussion in this Round.

Second Round of Conversation: We each share what struck us most from the First Round and/or what moved in us during the times of silence. A pause for reflection follows after each person speaks. There is no discussion in this Round.

Third Round of Conversation: Finally, as moved to speak, we each share what has emerged as significant for us from the preceding two rounds. What new insights have arisen, what common themes and fruits were evident. We can speak in any order and respond to one another.

Is it becoming clearer which SMPGoals we seek to better understand?

All may not be identifying the same goals. That's OK. What is needed is a way to follow up on the Goals identified. (see Steps 2 & 3, p.22 and some Workshops from MPL Team p.24)

Can we identify the SMPGoals we want to better understand?

Parish Formation Session going deeper into the SMPGoals

Contact the **MISSION & PASTORAL LIFE TEAM** to discuss and/or schedule a Workshop Phone: 0474 542 363 or 0418 759 416
Email: mpl@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

EXPLORING SMPGOALS

... this Workshop can cover the SMPGoals as a whole or it can focus on **specific goals** that your group wants to better understand

The MPL Team is also offering a *Conversation in the Spirit* experience.



CONVERSATIONS IN THE SPIRIT

... a method of grounding conversations in openness to the Holy Spirit and listening to one another

Experience and understand how to engage in Conversations in the Spirit.

Do we have **Other Formation Sources** for understanding SMPGoals?

...
...
...

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STARTING POINT



We understand
the SMPGoals
but are not
sure where
to start with
implementation

SCENARIO

STARTING POINT:

We understand the SMPGoals but are not sure where to start with Implementation

We give God space in our thinking, searching and conversation, allowing the Holy Spirit to prompt and lead us to select the SMPGoals to focus on. For that to happen we need to ... **slow down**.



SUGGESTED STEPS

1. **Initial Conversation in the Spirit** (See p.35) about:
Which SMPGoals should we focus on at this time?
Refer to the SMPGoals on p.33 and Factors to Consider on p.32
2. **In light of what was heard above, group members then work individually or in pairs** on proposing up to three SMPGoals they consider to be important to work on first, and WHY. We can use p.34 as a Worksheet or develop our own.
3. **A 2nd Conversation in the Spirit** shares what each person/pair has come up with: **Identify the standout SMPGoals** to take into planning mode: synodal decision-making process, if needed.



✓ **Achievement:** The SMPGoals to focus on in our first Plan are ...

- ...
- ...
- ...



Looking ahead: We are ready for the next step → moving into planning. See the **SCENARIO 3 p.37**

RESOURCES for Scenario 2

SCENARIO

2

Where possible, separate these sessions

A week apart works well – not too far apart and not too close. Also, these could be done in one longer block of time, a day or half-day or 3-hour session.

Across Segments 1 to 3 the focus moves from:

1. **All in a Conversation in the Spirit to** see what SMPGoals initially come to the fore ...
Use the Conversation in the Spirit process on p.35.

to

2. **Individuals/pairs** doing further work ...
As individuals or in pairs, take what SMPGoals emerged from the group Conversation in the Spirit, and propose up to three SMPGoals to focus on in the first implementation plan. Outline reasons for the proposal.
See p.34 for worksheets to stimulate thinking.

back to

3. **All in a 2nd Group Conversation in the Spirit,** to hear the further wisdom that emerges from the work as individuals or pairs.
Use the same process from p.35 but allow one person to speak on behalf of any pair.

What SMPGoals are standing out in the discernment?

In light of the **synodal decision-making process** (Overview Leaflet p.17) recommend to the Pastor the SMPGoals to focus on in the first plan.

The Pastor takes the decision in light of the consultation

He outlines the SMPGoals to be the focus of the first plan and the reasons.

The Parish is given the WHAT and WHY about the SMPGoals selected for initial planning and action, with pointers to broader parish engagement in the planning and implementation steps.

Factors to consider when discerning Goals to act on first ...

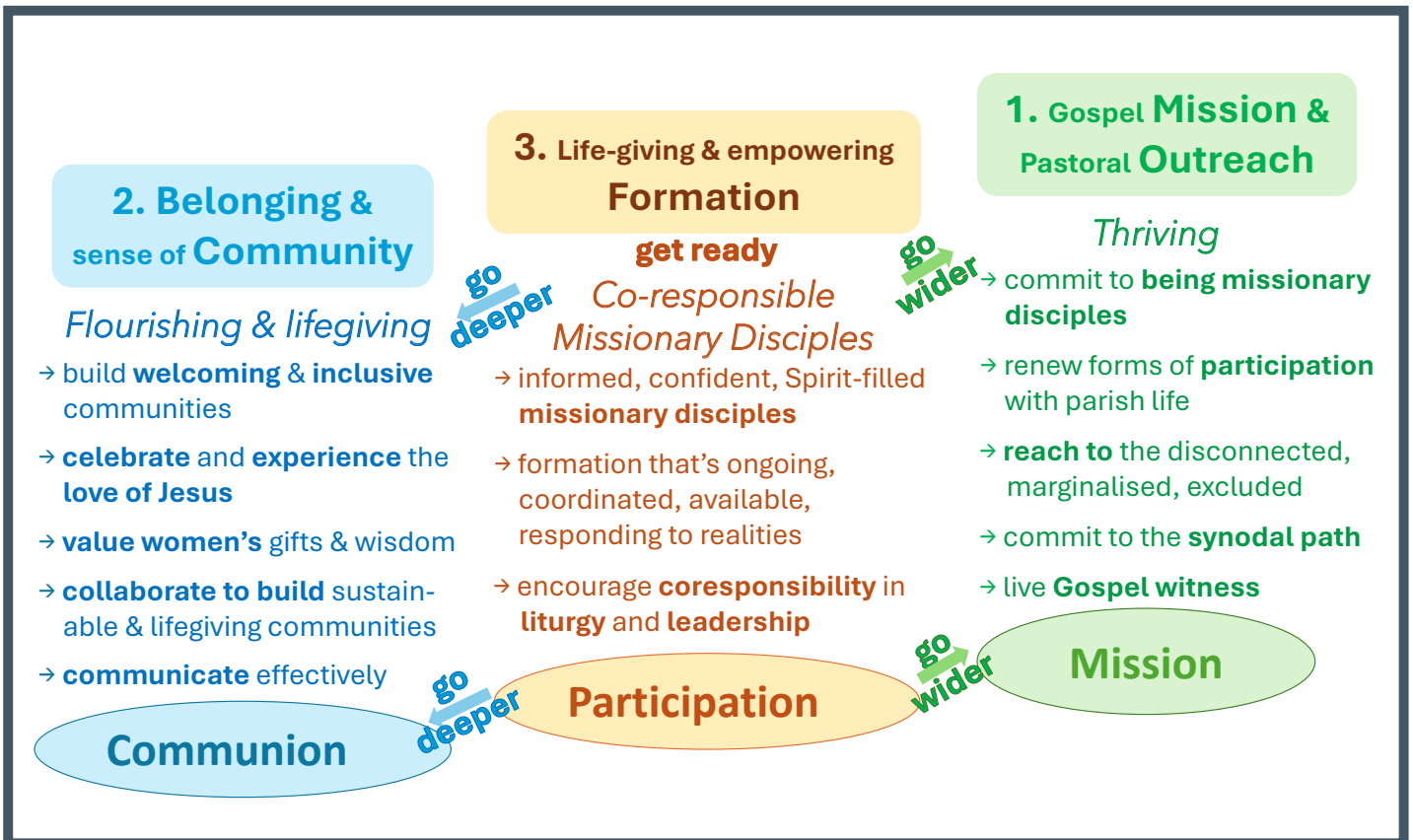
- **Jesus' call** into Co-mission with him here and the **Holy Spirit's prompting**; what are we being called to do?
- **Strengths/Passion/Energy/Opportunities** in the parish now.
- **Leadership and knowledge** required to move in the direction identified; leader + group – we can implement as much as we have leaders for.
- **Means:** What \$ costs, resources and people are needed?
- **Strategic move** which opens the way for other things (like a flotilla of boats with one leading others; or one cog linked to and turning others).
- Option: Look to a **'quick win'** and a **more involved strategy**, each an **intentional** part of a bigger vision.
- Is there a Goal for which **planning needs to be held** until something else is in place first?



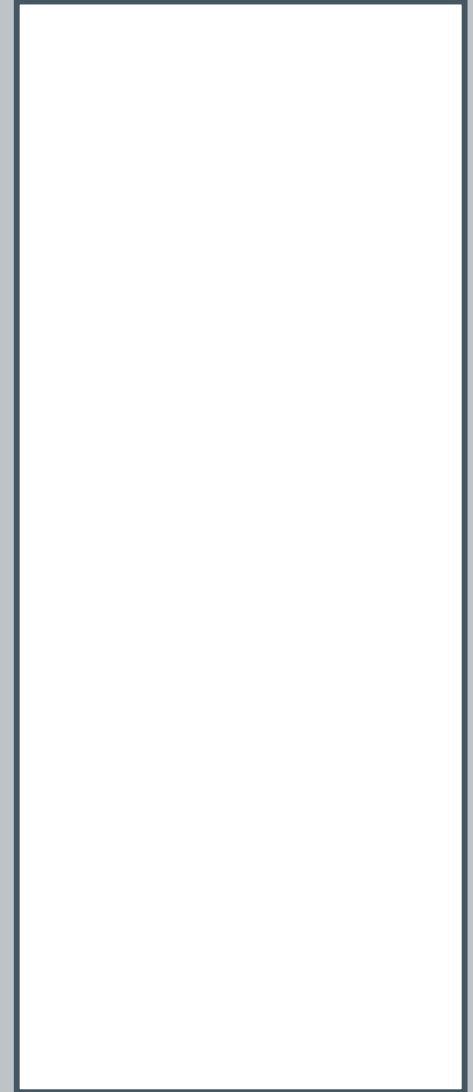
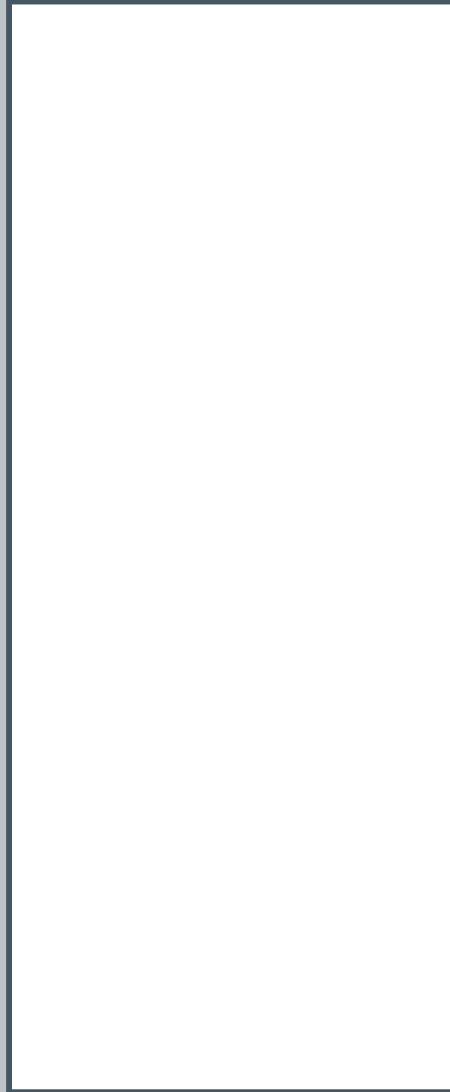
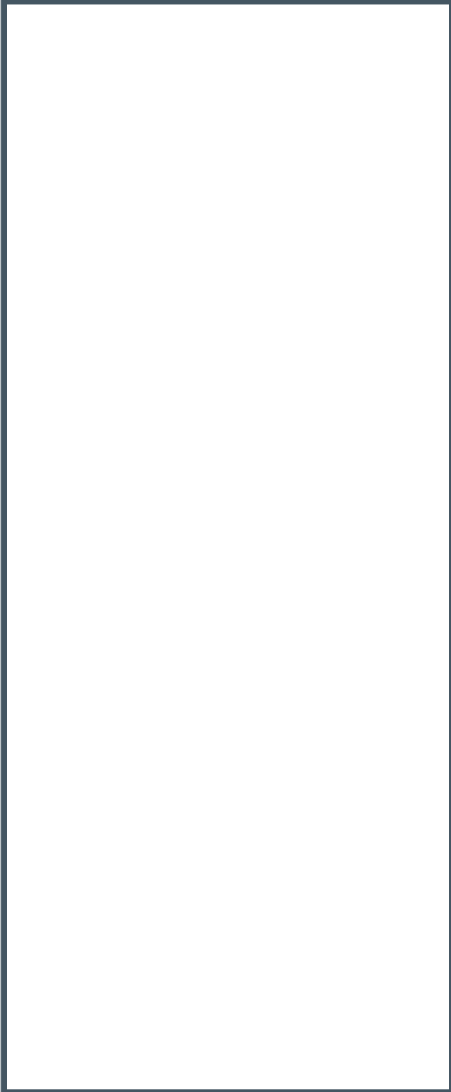
Sandhurst Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals in Strategic Directions

SCENARIO

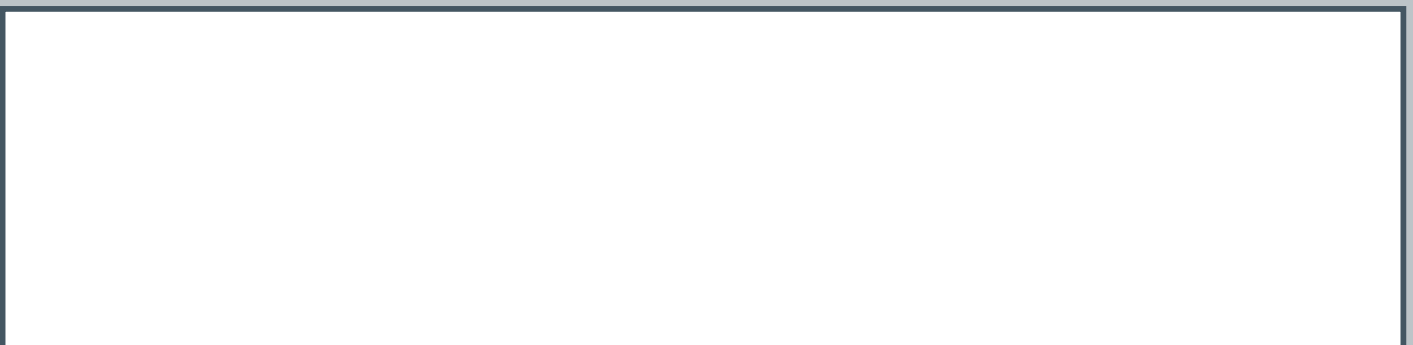
2



WHAT Goals
(up to three) do I see as
best to work on first,
and WHY?



Are there some of the other SMPGoals that will also be engaged if we focus on the Goals above? Which one/s?



Conversation in the Spirit

Scripture: Acts of the Apostles Ch. 15 tells the story of much debate amongst the apostles and church elders in Jerusalem, meeting in Council about whether or not the Jewish Law (of Moses) applied to non-Jewish converts. Some Christians, who were Pharisees, said an emphatic 'yes'. Others disagreed just as strongly: Peter spoke, Paul and Barnabas spoke, and James 'brother of the Lord', spoke. *'The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles'*(Acts 15:12). The decision reached was: no, the Gentiles were not required to keep the Mosaic Law because they were saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ just as they themselves were (Acts 15:11). A letter was sent by the Council to Gentile Christians. It said: *'For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden ...'*(Acts 15:28).

Note in this passage the dynamic interplay between speaking, listening, the Holy Spirit and making a decision. These are the ingredients and fruits of a Conversation in the Spirit within a larger discernment and decision-making process.

Undertake the following Conversation in light of the above passage from Acts 15.

Scenario 2 Question:

Which SMPGoals should we focus on at this time?

Commence with a period of silence for pondering on both how the early Church grappled with complex questions and what SMPGoals we might act on first (see Goals on p.33).

First Round of Conversation: Moving clockwise around the group, each person (or pair in the 2nd Conversation) has a chance to speak (up to 3 min.) about the SMPGoals to focus on at this time, after which there is a time of silence for reflection before the next person speaks. There is no discussion in this Round.

Second Round of Conversation: We each share what struck us most from the First Round and/or what moved in us during the times of silence. A pause for reflection follows after each person has spoken. There is no discussion in this Round.

Third Round of Conversation: Finally, as moved to speak, we each share what has emerged as significant for us from the preceding two rounds. What new insights have arisen, what common themes and fruits were evident? We can speak in any order and respond to one another, seek clarification, ask questions ...

Having opened up the Question in the 1st Conversation in the Spirit, and after a period of **working in pairs or individually** on proposing the WHAT and WHY of up to three SMPGoals to act on at this time, the group **returns for the 2nd Conversation in the Spirit to share the fruits** of that work, using the same three round pattern.

Can we now propose up to three SMPGoals to act on at this time?

Can we further assist the Pastor to take the decision?



STARTING POINT



We don't have a parish plan, but have already prayed, discussed and discerned the key SMPGoals to focus on in our first plan

SCENARIO



STARTING POINT: We don't have a parish plan, but have already prayed, discussed and discerned the key SMPGoals to focus on in our first plan.

In response to the Holy Spirit,
we move into action planning for the SMPGoals selected



SUGGESTED STEPS

1. **Confirm which SMPGoals we are focusing on** in the first plan.
2. **Understand the 5P planning process** (*See the 5Ps Resource, pp. 39-41*)
We don't have to use the 5Ps if we have an alternative that works..
3. **Commence planning process for 1st selected Goal**
(*Follow the selected planning process, p. 40*)
4. **Continue planning process for 2nd selected Goal ... and so on.**

At opportune times, a Conversation in the Spirit can be undertaken to focus on discernment about what has been developed to date, e.g., when draft plans have been assembled (*see guide in the Overview p.18*).

5. **Sharing the Draft Plan with the wider parish and inviting input/comment.**
Conversation in the Spirit can be one of the consultation modes used.
(*see guide in the Overview p.18*)
6. **Finalise the Plan, and the Pastor takes the decision to adopt and promulgate it.**
(*Synodal Decision-Making in the Overview p.17*)



✓ **Achievement:** The parish has a Mission and Pastoral Life Plan



Looking ahead: We are ready for the next step →
 implementing our Plan. **See Implementation and Review pp. 53**

RESOURCES for Scenario 3

SCENARIO

3

The FIVE Ps

Prepare (move from our starting point to planning-ready)

This has been the journey to get to Scenario 3 — getting ready to plan.

Picture (what we are wanting to create)

For each of the selected SMPGoals in this first Plan, paint a word picture of what we want to see (and what God wants to see) as a fruit of our pursuing this Goal. This is the Outcome we are pursuing.

Purpose (why we are wanting to create this at this time)

For each of the selected SMPGoals articulate WHY this Goal is important now.

Plan (how we are going about doing this)

For each of the selected SMPGoals, outline an Action Plan to pursue it. See pp. 40–43 for Resources and a template of an Action Plan. There are variations of these plan steps and/or we can use our own.

Part (who — the part that each parishioner has in this plan)

Here is the radical bit: Everyone in the parish has a part to play in the implementation of this Plan, because each parishioner has a responsibility (differentiated co-responsibility) for the life and mission of the parish, each according to capacity and calling (steward and missionary disciple). It's not actually radical, just ordinary Christian life, but it may seem new to some. See p.42 for what this means.

THE PLAN

How we will strive towards the Goals

For each Goal prepare an Action Plan. Here is a sample:

For SMPGoal: (insert Goal)

To move towards the **Picture** for the **Purpose** we outlined, we commit to: ...

Identify some specific **Objectives** needed to move towards the Goal:
Objective A, Objective B, Objective C ... (not too many).
 For each Objective draw up a simple **Action Sub-Plan**, e.g.:

Objective A: (insert Objective)

WHAT'S TO BE DONE? <i>Describe the tasks</i>	LED BY <i>person</i>	LEAD TEAM <i>assistants</i>	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	MILESTONES MONITOR EVALUATE
1.					
2.					
3.					

Objective B: (insert Objective)

WHAT'S TO BE DONE? <i>Describe the tasks</i>	LED BY <i>person</i>	LEAD TEAM <i>assistants</i>	TIME FRAME	RESOURCES	MILESTONES MONITOR EVALUATE
1.					
2.					

The number of Objectives/Tasks will depend on how big the Goal is and the people/resources that can lead/support the actions.

RESOURCES for Scenario 3

Plan aspects to note

Objectives and tasks create a path towards realising the Goal.

To be effective, **objectives and tasks need to be led** – generally by a designated leader with the support of at least one other and preferably a small team.

A core task of the Pastor and PPC is **discerning and calling forward a leader**. The right leader will gather a small team.

A core task of the Pastor and PPC is **discerning and calling forward leaders for the Action Plan for each Goal**.

The **Picture and Purpose**, well-articulated and energetically communicated, is **essential for attracting the energy** of leaders and general parishioners. It stirs up passion and provides an opening for the Holy Spirit to enter.

The **intentionality message** of this activity and its communication to the parish will tell people that **something new is happening**. Ride that wave for all it's worth, and back it up with consistent messages and actions. People also sense when things are just 'going through the motions'.

Leaders stay connected and coordinated **with the Pastor and PPC**. Speak with one voice.

The Pastor has the key role of leading the mission and direction of the parish and therefore articulating the importance of the SMPGoals Implementation Plan, and the participation of parishioners in it — it's not an optional extra but central to the purpose of the parish, which is an "Outpost of Jesus' Great Commission".

The Part we each play in the Plan

Building a WHOLE-OF-PARISH commitment to being an Outpost of the Great Commission

The TEAM delivering these life-uplifting encounters is the PARISH – all of us. It's a WHOLE-OF-PARISH project.

As a parish, we are an “Outpost of Jesus’ Great Commission” in which we each have different roles:

In relation to our SMPGoals Plan:

The **Planning Group** has developed this plan, on behalf of the parish, at the request of the Pastor and PPC. THANK and PRAY FOR THEM.

The **Pastor** is at the forefront as the designated canonical leader and the homilist. PRAY FOR HIM.

The **implementation leaders** lead Action Plans, on behalf of the parish. PRAY FOR THEM.

Some parishioners will be activity organisers. PRAY FOR THEM and HELP THEM.

A **larger group of parishioners** will participate in one or more of the activities and volunteer to help them happen.

Each and all of us think about who else may not be an active part of the parish but might be open to experience some of this. INVITE THEM.

All of us are asked to PRAY for everyone involved trying to be a channel for the Holy Spirit and for all in our community (and beyond) who are ready for something – this could change their lives. PRAY.

A Flexible Template for Presenting the Parish Mission and Pastoral Plan

SCENARIO

3

1. List the SMPGoals that are the focus of this Plan.

2. In relation to each SMPGoal:
 - i) Restate the **Goal**

 - ii) Describe the **Picture** of **what** we want to see in the parish that would reflect this Goal being realised

 - iii) Provide the statement of our **Purpose**, explaining **why** we believe this is important at this time

 - iv) List the **Objectives** that we have selected in order to build a practical path to realising the Goal

 - v) Add the **Action Sub-Plan** for each Objective.





STARTING POINT



We have a parish plan or have been working on one — we can revisit, review, develop it in light of the SMPGoals

SCENARIO

STARTING POINT:

We have a parish plan or have been working on one – we can revisit, review, develop it in light of the SMPGoals.

In response to the Holy Spirit, **we let the SMPGoals shape** our current parish plan, discerning how our current plan incorporates SMPGoals and in what order.

This Scenario may also apply to parishes who have participated in a **Bishop's Parish Visitation Program** where recommendations for planning and action have come to the parish from the Bishop's Response.

**SUGGESTED STEPS**

1. **Initial Spiritual Conversation** about the SMPGoals and our current parish plan/ planning (see p.48-49).

QUESTION: What SMPGoals do we incorporate into our parish planning at this point?

2. **Identify the standout SMPGoal/s** to take into our planning first.
3. **Check the planning process** being used — if needed, adjust in light of the 5P process (see Scenario 3 pp.39-41)
4. **Commence the planning process for 1st selected Goal** and continue for other selected Goals, as applicable.
5. **Invite the key parish groups and general parishioners** to reflect on and contribute to the (revised) draft parish plan.
6. **Update, finalise, decide, communicate, release, explain, promote** the revised Mission and Pastoral Plan.



✓ **Achievement:** The parish has its revised Mission and Pastoral Plan



Looking ahead: We are ready for the next step → implementing our Plan. **See the Implementation and Review Leaflet**

RESOURCES for Scenario 4

SCENARIO

4

Assumes the group understands the SMPGoals well. During the planning process we may see the need to explore a Goal more fully to better understand what it means. **See Scenario 1 for details.**

Make an honest assessment about how our plan/planning process is going. It may be that our current planning is going well or has stalled. It may be that implementation is going well, or is patchy, or has stalled.

The SMPGoals and our Planning Process – the SMPGoals are both new opportunity and new responsibility. This may be a good opportunity for us to review our planning progress and the planning process used by the parish to date – the 5P approach may offer new possibilities.

We can use the process in **Scenario 2** to make this decision about which Goal/s.

Begin planning for one Goal – go through the 5P process or our own planning process for this Goal.

Repeat for the next Goal ... See **Scenario 3** Resources pp. 40-43

Invite the broader parish into the process to provide input, comment and develop a sense of ownership. Provide different options for people to engage: face-to-face Conversation in the Spirit is ideal, but not everyone will come. Provide a written option in hard copy at Mass and/or on online.

Follow the Synodal Decision-Making steps to finalise the Plan so that the **Pastor can take the decision** about it.

*See Synodal Decision-Making, p.17 in the **Overview Leaflet***

Conversation in the Spirit about the SMPGoals and our current parish plan/planning –

Steps 1, 2 & 3 on p.46

Scripture: Acts of the Apostles Ch. 15 tells the story of much debate amongst the apostles and church elders in Jerusalem, meeting in Council about whether or not the Jewish Law (of Moses) applied to Gentile converts. Some Christians, who were Pharisees, said definitely ‘yes’. Others disagreed just as strongly: Peter spoke, Paul and Barnabas spoke, and James ‘brother of the Lord’, spoke. *‘The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles’*(Acts 15:12). The decision reached was: no, the Gentiles were not required to keep the Mosaic Law because they were saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ just as they themselves were (Acts 15:11). A letter was sent by the Council to Gentile Christians. It said: *‘For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden ...’*(Acts 15:28).

Note in this passage the dynamic interplay between speaking, listening, the Holy Spirit and discerning/ making a decision. These are ingredients for a Conversation in the Spirit.

Scenario 4 Questions: Choose one or more to focus on in the Conversation.

What is the ‘state of health’ of our current planning process and/or the implementation of our parish plan?

Which SMPGoals should we focus on at this time?

Are there SMPGoals we need to better understand?

Commence with a period of silence for pondering on both how the early Church grappled with complex questions and the selected Scenario 4 Questions.

First Round of Conversation: Moving clockwise around the group, each person has a chance to speak (up to 2 min.) after which there is a time of silence for reflection before the next person speaks. There is no discussion in this Round.

Second Round of Conversation: We each share what struck us most from the First Round and/or what moved in us during the times of silence. A pause for reflection follows after each person speaks. There is no discussion in this Round.

Third Round of Conversation: Finally, as moved to speak, we each share what has emerged as significant for us from the preceding two rounds. What new insights have arisen, what common themes and fruits were evident. We can speak in any order and respond to one another.

Do we have an answer to Steps 1, 2 & 3 on p. 46 or do we need to engage in more Conversation in the Spirit?









IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW



**of the
Parish Mission
and
Pastoral Plan**

Implementing the Mission and Pastoral Plan

6 THINGS building on the contents of Scenario 3

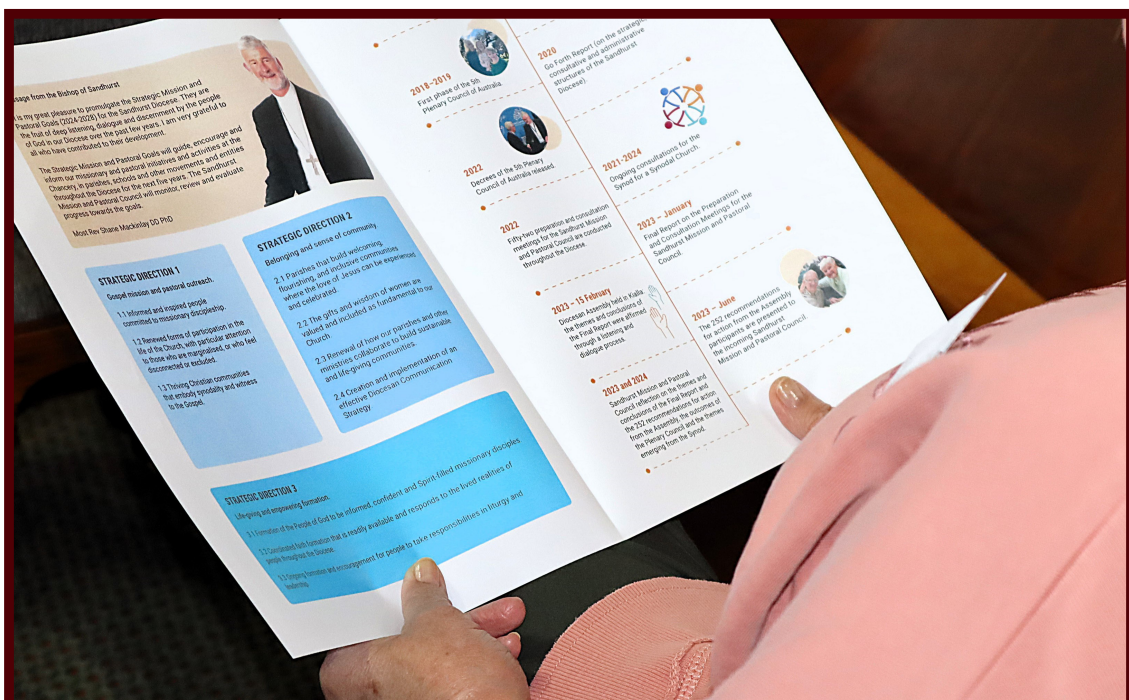
- 1. Leadership** – nothing intentional will happen unless it is led. Leadership is the gift that opens the way for all other gifts in the parish.
 - a. Pastor** is the key canonically designated leader of the whole parish. His visible, consistent and persistent support of the Plan and the parishioners who have an active leading role within it, is vital.

However, the Pastor cannot do everything and does not have all the gifts (or time) needed. A key responsibility for him as overall parish leader is to find and call forth those who have gifts necessary to lead in different aspects of the Plan, then support them.
 - b. Parish Councils:** the Pastoral and Finance Councils have important respective roles in enabling the Plan, and also in identifying and encouraging parishioners to lead according to their gifts. Individual members of the PPC and PFC may take on implementation leadership in particular aspects of the Plan.
 - c. Leader in a Goal/Objective/Task or Project + support:** A parishioner who takes on a leadership role needs not only the support of the Pastor and Parish Councils but the close on-the-ground support of at least one other person, preferably a small group. A good leader will find their own project support person/group. They also need practical support (e.g., funding, materials, parish communication channels ...) to carry out the role.
- 2. Low control, high accountability** for leaders. Give them authorisation to do the job and let them get to it. Don't micro-manage them but require the coordination and communication connections outlined below. It's also the Pastor's role to ensure that a parish or ministry 'gatekeeper' does not block an implementation Plan leader from doing their job and to address it early if it happens.
- 3. Coordination and communication** is the glue that holds a busy parish in balance. The Plan leaders must stay connected with the Pastor, PPC and parish office so that actions can be rolled out in a coordinated and consistently communicated way. Speak with one voice, one vision.



Implementing the Mission and Pastoral Plan

- 4. Pathways for Parishioners:** Make it as easy as possible for general parishioners to participate in Plan implementation by providing a range of opportunities for involvement – from simple ‘entry-level’ tasks to more involved tasks such as coordinating an event or some part of it. Parishioners are more likely to ‘dip their toe in the water’ if the task is organised, makes sense and they ‘buy’ the Picture and Purpose associated with the Goal. See Scenario 3 p.42 for unpacking parish communal identity as an Outpost of the Great Co-mission, wherein everyone has a role in communally discerned mission plans.
- 5. Outcomes:** Keep an eye on the Picture and Purpose outlined for the Plan Goals. These describe the outcome being worked towards over time. It’s easy to get lost in the busyness and details of activities and lose the outcome ‘compass’.
- 6. Celebrate Plan milestones:** It’s important to acknowledge and celebrate successes, people’s efforts, key dates, and personal journeys.



Accountability, Monitoring Review

Accountability

- a. Differentiated co-responsibility:** This foundational principle means that everyone in the parish has an accountability for their part in making the parish an Outpost of Jesus' Great Commission. Pope Benedict XVI taught that every baptised Catholic is 'co-responsible' for the mission of the Church. Pope Francis reiterated this principle many times, and the documentation around the Synod for a Synodal Church used the term 'differentiated co-responsibility' to acknowledge that the responsibility of individuals, though shaped by role, gifts, capacity, circumstances ..., is real co-responsibility nevertheless.
- b. In the parish** this means that everyone has a responsibility and role in implementing the Mission and Pastoral Plan, not just the Pastor or project leaders or interested parishioners or 'overly religious people' ... This is the significance of PART in the 5P planning model. See Scenario 3 p.39 and 42.
- c. Leaders have a particular co-responsibility** for leading implementation of the Parish Mission and Pastoral Plan. The Pastor/s, PPC and Goal/Project leaders provide accountability in two main ways: monitoring progress discussions through the period of implementation, and a summative review at the completion of a designated time period.



Monitoring

- a. **Set up a regular time** for touching base between the Pastor/PPC and the Goal/project implementation leader/s.
- b. **Check on further support and action** that may be needed.
- c. **Discuss difficulties** that may need addressing and decide on action. Opposition does not necessarily mean you are doing the wrong things – it could mean you are attempting the right things; mission-focused action or change will always meet resistance.
- d. **Make course adjustments** as needed in keeping with the thrust of the Plan.



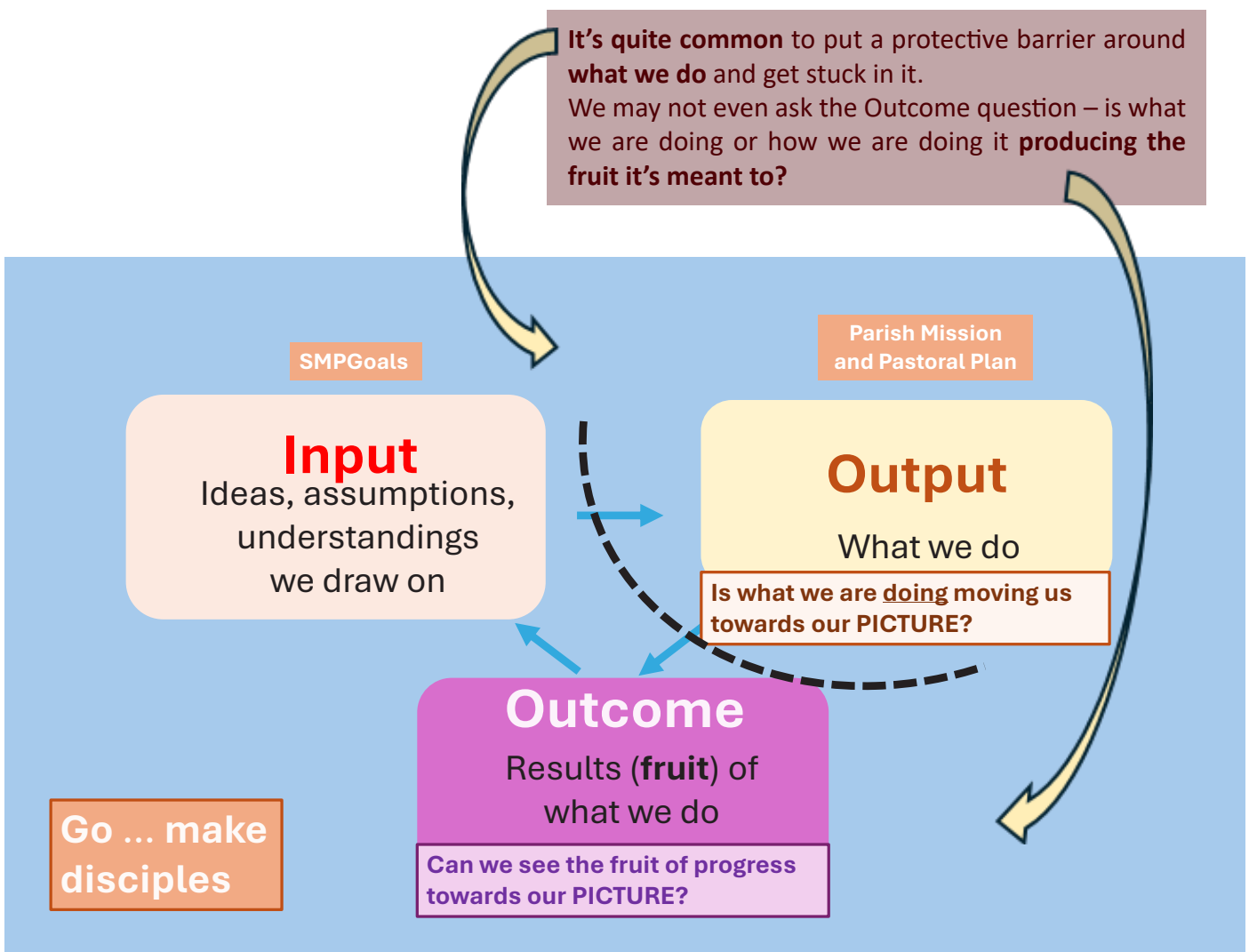
Review

- a. **Hold a Plan implementation review process** according to the timeframe nominated in the Plan.
- b. **Compile a Report on implementation** over the specified timeframe. Include sections about what seemed to work well, what did not work so well, what some of the causal factors for both were, and some recommendations for going forward.
- c. **Share the Report with parish leaders, ministers and parishioners.** Invite all into a Conversation in the Spirit about Plan implementation.
- d. **Develop the Mission and Pastoral Plan** for the next phase of implementation ... look to other SMPGoals that we may be ready to pursue.
- e. **Consult the Parish** about the next version of the Plan and finalise. Pastor takes the decision and promulgates.



Implementation and Review

When considering what did or did not work in Plan implementation the following graphic may assist the reflection.



What might we need to adjust to get a more fruitful Outcome, closer to the PICTURE described in our Plan?
This would be a good Question for a Conversation in the Spirit.





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