

STRATEGIC PLAN

MOTHER OF MERCY
CATHOLIC PARISH



2021 - 2025



FR NEV'S FOREWORD

Welcome to the Mother of Mercy Catholic Parish encompassing the three communities of Our Lady Help of Christians (Hendra), St John's (Northgate) and St Cecilia's (Hamilton). Our ministry teams and co-leaders have been busy trying to create a parish that takes the time to know its members, to create opportunities to encounter God and to be continually formed as missionary followers of Christ.

We are endeavouring to be an inclusive and joy filled family where all can experience belonging and contribute to the parish and wider community through service. We desire to create a culture where all can grow as pastoral leaders and be the best persons possible. We want to be available to both the parish and school communities as a faith led and spirit driven community that knows and draws on the power of prayer in God.

Please take the time to read and reflect on our Parish Strategic Plan. I hope you can share with us your God given passions and gifts so together we may bring about God's kingdom.

May God bless you abundantly on your journey of faith. Peace to you always.

Fr Nev.





CONTENTS

Mission	6
Vision, Values	7
Organisational Chart	8
Children & Families	11
Youth & Young Adults	14
Adult Formation	16
Community Life	18
Liturgy	21

MISSION

To co-create a welcoming community where all can

encounter and be transformed by Christ

realise their call to discipleship

be empowered to serve

and attract new disciples.



VISION & VALUES

Our Values

- Christ-centredness
- Inclusion
- Joy
- Service
- Transparency
- Co-responsibility

Our Vision

We have a dream that Mother of Mercy parish is known as a place where all are welcomed, included and find a home.

We have a dream that our parish is a joyfully connected community where our three churches unite as one, and where parishioners are known by name and are engaged in living our Catholic life together.

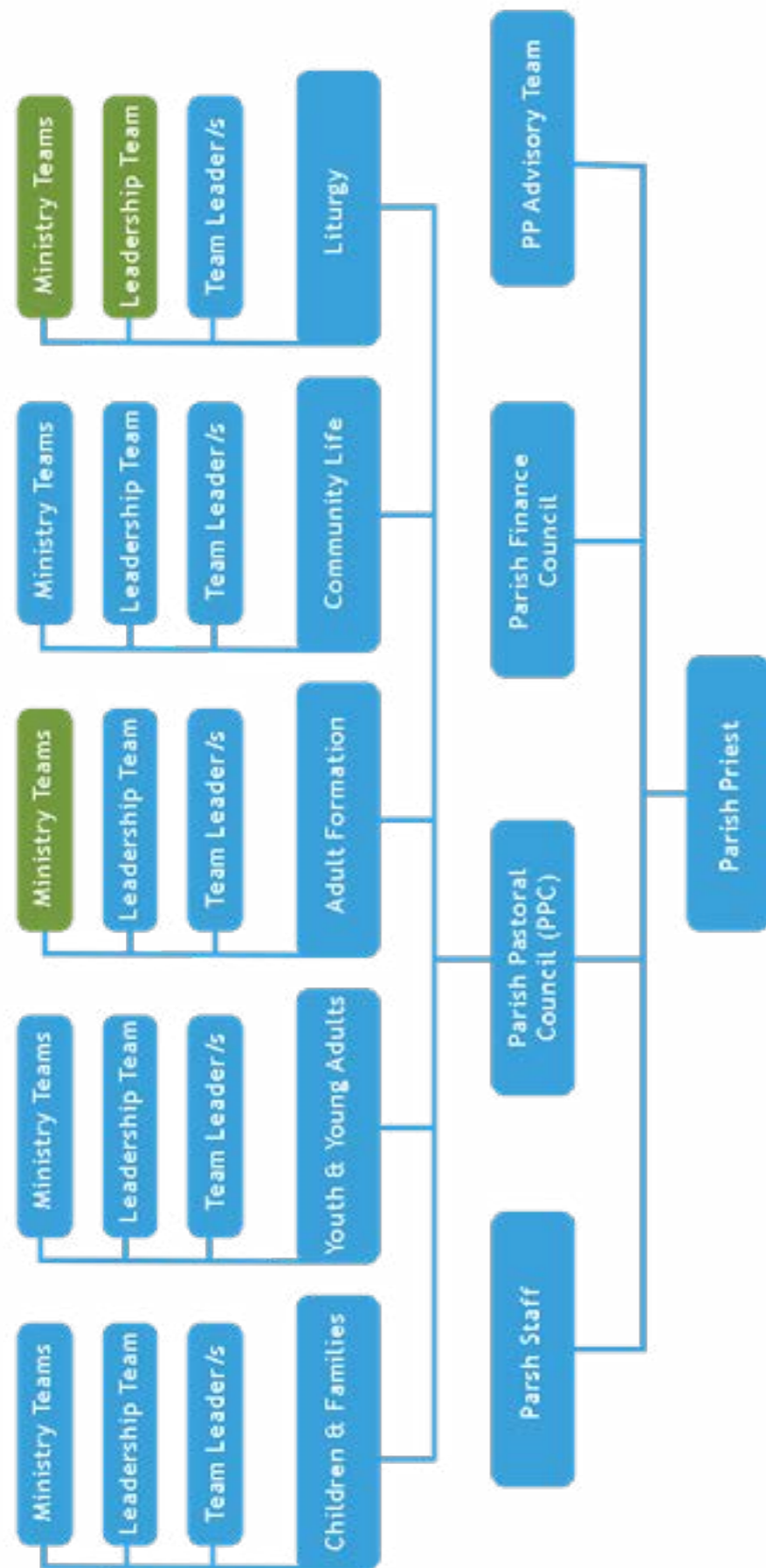
We have a dream that we are a deeply pastoral parish that seeks to reach out to others in a spirit of support and service.

We have a dream that our parish liturgical life leads all who participate to an authentic encounter with Jesus which inspires both personal relationship with the Divine and a spirituality of service.

We have a dream that our doors are always open and our lights are always on as we seek to fulfil our mission under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

We have a dream.

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



Please note:
The teams in green do not yet exist as of April 2022



GLOSSARY

Parish Staff - Paid employees in the parish tasked with specific duties.

Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) - A co-ordinating body of parishioners that are engaged in pastoral care activities in the parish. These parishioners are the guardians of the parish vision and ensure whole of parish initiatives are actioned.

Parish Finance Council - A consultative body in the parish that assists the Parish Priest with the stewardship of the material goods of the parish. Required by canon law.

PP Advisory Team - A small team that gathers as required to act as a 'think tank' for the parish priest to consult for information and advice on issues as they arise.



CHILDREN & FAMILIES

A ministry to Children and Families exists so that the parish can be intentional about welcoming and connecting with families from the moment they make contact for baptismal preparation through to when the children head to high school. This connection involves accompanying and supporting families on a journey to encounter Jesus so that parents, who are the first educators of children, are equipped for this task.

OUTCOME ONE:

Increase number of families who remain actively involved in parish life

Strategies:

- Run a monthly family-led Mass (could be the 9am Sunday Mass - homilies and hymns cater especially to families and children)
- Host seasonal informal events to build relationships with families in the wider community: Christmas Carols, 2 Pot Luck dinners per term on Friday nights etc.
- Continue a Coffee and Chat ministry for parents after school drop off
- Create and enact a communications plan that engages new families (e.g. welcome packs, via email or phone etc.)
- Dialogue with teams in the parish to co-create a strategy where children are involved in the welcoming ministry, as well as within the liturgy
- Help liturgy teams to strategically think through adding at least 1 family-friendly element at every Parish Mass
- Create and enact a strategy to encourage children to participate in music ministry at Parish Masses (include purchasing some simple musical instruments)
- Promote altar server training amongst children who've had their first communion
- Create Mass kits (activities) for pre-school aged children and make these available to families in the parish

OUTCOME TWO:

Develop resources to communicate effectively with families and kids in the wider community

Strategies:

- Create a communications plan to advertise parish events which targets families: fridge magnets, Facebook etc.
- Continue to reach out to day care centres and other schools in the area
- Support and grow the parish's playgroup ministry

OUTCOME THREE:

Build an integrated formation program tailored for families that empowers parents in their role as primary transmitters of the faith

Strategies:

- Host a wine & cheese night or similar for parents twice a year, including a social and formation element to the night
- Set up a Spirituality group for mums during term time
- Create a primary age youth group
- Run at least one Alpha program annually
- Create and advertise a Lenten group that targets young parents
- Run a mini-retreat / family days at least once a year
- Resource and grow the Children's Liturgy program in the parish
- Create a strategy to help connect parents with resources that will help them nourish their children's Catholic spirituality

OUTCOME FOUR:

Continue to nurture strong relationship between parish and school

Strategies:

- Run a parish & school Mass once a term
- Run weekly Wednesday class Masses
- Send the Parish Priest a schedule of the school year and allocate regular times when class visits can occur
- Ensure the school chaplain is engaged in the life of the parish and connects with students in classes and links them to parish family events
- Plan for and provide school formation opportunities to help teachers engage with the parish
- Investigate ways to engage with RI in local public schools

OUTCOME FIVE:

Foster a program of Christian Initiation that is welcoming and invites children and their families to deepen their relationship with Jesus

Strategies:

- Invite children preparing for sacraments to take part in weekend parish Masses
- Hold retreats as part of preparation for Confirmation and First Eucharist
- Organise events for sacramental program families to meet and socialise
- Invite families of children who have been baptised in the same year to Mass
- Regularly email families whose children have been baptised via a mailing list
- Partner families who are preparing for baptism with a Mass-going family to establish a friendly connection to the parish
- Review and improve the sacramental program
- Continue communication with sacramental program families after preparation is complete and invite them to family friendly parish events, children's liturgy etc



YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

Youth and young adults ministry exists so that youth and young adults feel welcomed into a Christ centred community that is authentic, supportive and welcoming that walks with kids, teenagers and young adults on their journey of faith.

OUTCOME ONE:

Build a committed youth and young adults leadership team that is collaborative and supportive

Strategies:

- Create an exciting vision for the youth & young adult ministry and communicate this regularly with relevant stakeholders and wider parish
- Campaign across the parish and schools for new leaders
- Offer biannual training and encounter sessions for existing and new leaders
- Run quarterly team building events that grow relationships across the team
- By 2025, have a leadership team of 10 people, which includes representatives from teenage & young adult ministry

OUTCOME TWO:

Build regular, well attended youth groups with an average of 50+ in attendance

Strategies:

- Allocate 2 hours a week to allow Youth Coordinator to be in local schools building relationships with staff and students
- Run regular weekly primary school youth groups
- Run quarterly outreach programs that are age appropriate (e.g. Vinnies Youth)
- Be intentional about creating a welcoming Youth Mass which is invitational
- Start a high school youth group
- Plan and action a strategy to engage a wider outreach to young people during Christmas and Easter seasons

OUTCOME THREE:

Foster a dynamic and vibrant youth-led Mass, monthly

Strategies:

- Build a team that is empowered to provide relevant, well prepared and engaging music
- Create and implement a communications strategy that intentionally invites youth / young adults to participation in leading roles during the Mass - reading etc.
- Communicate effectively with schools to ensure students and families are regularly invited to the youth-led Mass
- Create a strategy to reach those beyond the parish to invite them to this Mass
- Find the best Mass time to attract more school and post-school aged youth to participate
- Build into the youth-led Mass experience by providing additional activities beyond / around the Mass

OUTCOME FOUR:

Build the youth ministry to become completely financially self-sufficient

Strategies:

- Fundraise through running a regular coffee drive
- Plan and execute an annual community event which fundraises for the youth ministry and where young musicians have an opportunity to perform



ADULT FORMATION

The mission of Adult Formation is to support parishioners' lifelong growth in maturity as followers of Jesus. Such formation is primarily learning more about Jesus so as to internalize his values, attitudes and ways of seeing, and to grow in personal ability to be the face of God for others.

OUTCOME ONE:

To provide opportunities and resources to engage parishioners in adult formation

Strategies:

- Create a user-friendly program that provides formation opportunities (e.g. prayer, coffee group, home rosary, Catholic book club, retreats, bible studies, morality series etc.) and deliver these in diverse ways
- Consult with the EB Adult Formation team to develop strategies
- Celebrate mission Sunday and other feast days particular to the parish
- Promote adult formation within and beyond the parish communities
- Create opportunities for personal testimony
- Encourage active participation in Church ministries (e.g. reading at mass, communion to the sick etc)

OUTCOME TWO:

Develop a simple strategy for communicating with parishioners the importance of ongoing adult formation

Strategies:

- Create a diverse strategy to engage parishioners in ongoing adult formation (include access to relevant articles on the faith that are accessible to all parishioners)
- Consider ways in which more digital links could be included in the newsletter to make it easier for parishioners to access relevant digital content that promotes adult formation
- Include upcoming programs in newsletters
- Promote the details of programs through pamphlets in the Church

OUTCOME THREE:

Support the RCIA process in the parish

Strategies:

- Liaise and support the RCIA team in the parish
- Encourage more parishioners to get involved in the RCIA process



COMMUNITY LIFE

The Mother of Mercy Parish Community Life team exists to ensure that everyone who visits our churches or is in our community feels welcome and included. Our service and outreach should extend to those who are feeling lost, forgotten or marginalised.

OUTCOME ONE:

Coordinate a ministry to transport and visit parishioners who can't get to church

Strategies:

- Create a survey for parishioners to identify whether they / someone they know would like to be on the list to be visited
- Explore whether this survey could be circulated in local residential aged care etc.
- Create and continue to update a database of people who would like to take part in this cross-generational ministry

OUTCOME TWO:

Offer regular home Masses or liturgies

Strategies:

- Assess with parish priest the possibility for home Masses or liturgies to occur and how regular this could be offered
- Host this Mass or liturgy at different homes
- Include a shared meal as a part of this experience
- Create a strategy and a point of contact in the parish that parishioners can access to be able to request a home Mass or liturgy

OUTCOME THREE:

Make sure there is a welcoming ministry happening at all Masses in the parish

Strategies:

- Check in with each Mass community to ensure existence of welcoming team of some kind
- Develop a strategy that explores new ways the parish can acknowledge diverse cultures (could include Multicultural events, social events, NAIDOC week etc.)
- Explore and develop a series of small groups in the parish that exist to target and welcome groups that typically may feel excluded
- Develop and produce a welcome book (that includes information of “what’s on” in the parish)
- Explore what an acknowledgement to country might look like in the parish

OUTCOME FOUR:

Continue to engage in local ecumenical activities

Strategies:

- Ecumenical ministers of the area meet throughout the year
- Create a strategy in the parish that seeks to build ecumenical relationships and involvement in local ecumenical activities
- Extend open invitations to parishioners around upcoming ecumenical activities
- Participate in World Day of Prayer events

COMMUNITY LIFE

OUTCOME FIVE:

Find new ways of connecting with those in need in the community and connect them to internal and external outreach groups

Strategies:

- Relaunch the parish Care and Concern committee and recruit new members
- Create a communications plan that effectively promotes outreach programs at all parish Masses
- Collaborate with the parish's St Vincent de Paul Conference
- Create a strategy to help identify those that need help in the community, and respond to those needs (i.e. pastoral care cards, "R U Ok" initiatives etc.)
- Develop and communicate effectively the support network available in the parish to those in any kind of need

OUTCOME SIX:

Increase collaboration with local charities and social services

Strategies:

- Support the St Vincent de Paul Conference and invite a member to be on the Community Life leadership team
- Create a strategy to help identify all minority groups in the parish (such as refugees) and find ways of supporting these groups



LITURGY

All liturgy is communal worship, prayer and formation. Therefore, the vision and mission for the liturgy team is to help all people participate with attention, reflection and understanding, so as to draw closer to God and to live a life of Christian witness.

OUTCOME ONE:

Continuously work to create inspiring, engaging, moving, faith enhancing and thoughtful liturgies that lead parishioners to be fully nourished and fed

Strategies:

- Explore new ways to engage those involved in liturgical ministries in regular and ongoing formation
- Create an induction process for new volunteers

OUTCOME TWO:

Invite people from throughout the parish to be involved in the planning of liturgy

Strategies:

- Document the process involved in planning a liturgy
- Create a planning group from the volunteers
- Provide training for liturgy planners in the parish

LITURGY

OUTCOME THREE:

Invite new parishioners to become involved in liturgical ministries across the parish, each year

Strategies:

- Create an annual strategy to help recruit new people
- Set up appropriate mentoring relationships for all new volunteers involved in liturgy roles

OUTCOME FOUR:

Offer engaging training sessions in various ministries, each year

Strategies:

- Create a strategy to engage readers, musicians, Eucharistic ministers etc. across different groups in the parish, to participate in training
- Create a program of training and ongoing review
- Invite parishioners to consider the ministry of sacristan





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