



The  
Catholic  
Diocese of  
Nottingham

# “Go, make disciples”

## Parish Summary

Five year Mission Plan for the Diocese of Nottingham  
2026 – 2030





# A message from Bishop Patrick McKinney

From early in my time as your Bishop, I have often been asked for a clear plan or roadmap for our diocese. This request reflects our shared desire to address the challenges we face: declining numbers and finances in some parishes, and fewer and older priests serving a large geographical area. Through parish visits, diocesan roadshows, and other events in 2022, 2024 and 2025, I have listened carefully to the voices of laity, clergy and religious as we worked together to understand how best to respond.

From this listening came a clear conviction that the enduring spiritual themes of the Church—Encounter, Discipleship and Mission—must shape everything we do as a diocese. Rooted in the work of the Holy Spirit and nourished by the Eucharist, these themes form the foundation of our renewal. It also became clear that our aim cannot be simply to manage decline, but rather to reshape our structures for renewal, growth and mission, in faithful response to the Lord's command, "Go, make disciples". Encouragingly, these conversations also revealed a diocese that was already moving forward, with many examples of how the Lord is blessing early efforts.

These wider conversations led to a clearer vision of where the Lord is calling us in the next 5 years, the priorities that will help us get there, and some insights on how practically to move forward. Accompanying this was a profound clarity that renewal must be both spiritual and practical with, a

deep fidelity to the Lord's commission and trust in His unfailing help, at its heart.

All of this is set out in our 5 Year Diocesan Mission Plan entitled "Go, make disciples". It is both a spiritual and a practical mission plan to help us respond to Christ's words to his disciples, and to each of us:

*"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age". (Mt. 28: 19-20)*

This is an invitation to open ourselves to the power of the Holy Spirit, the one who makes mission possible and to seek His guidance. As we do, we grow in trust and confidence that, when we humbly share with others the positive difference that knowing and serving Christ makes to our lives, God blesses the little we feel we have to offer and makes it fruitful in His service.

Recognising the key role of parishes, this booklet offers an overview of the Mission Plan from a parish perspective and outlines practical first steps, timelines and support. The full plan, this summary and supporting resources are available on our diocesan website.

I invite each of you to read this overview of our Diocesan Mission Plan, pray for its implementation, and look for ways to offer your gifts in service of our diocesan renewal.



# What are we being called to?

## The Three Spiritual Themes

### Encounter

Experiencing God's Love

### Discipleship

Supporting Ongoing Conversion

### Mission

Nurturing Witness Of Life

# Encounter

## Experiencing God's Love

We commit to becoming a diocese where people are helped to experience God's love and to grow in an ever-deeper personal relationship with Christ.

### What will this look like?

By 2030:

- our parishes, schools and chaplaincies are offering help and practical resources to enable people to grow in prayer and in their engagement with the Sacraments.
- it is normal for the majority of people across our diocese to have a daily prayer time and routinely speak about the difference this makes.
- many more people have a deep appreciation of the centrality of the Eucharist and of Eucharistic Devotion in expressing our love of God and our love of neighbour in the living out of our faith. This will be nurtured through offering more and more opportunities for Mass and Adoration in our parishes, schools and chaplaincies. Deaneries will work together to facilitate this by aligning times of Adoration across parishes and making this more widely known in each deanery.
- Sunday Mass has become a life-giving central point for more people – they make it a priority to come together with others to worship God and be nourished by Him for their engagement in daily acts of mission.
- we see more and more people coming to weekday Mass in our parishes as part of their regular routine and at times that suit people's busy schedules. In all our schools there are, at the very least, opportunities each half-term for the pupils/students to participate in the celebration of Mass and also in times of Adoration.
- we see people of all ages coming regularly to Adoration and talking about their experience of this with others, even bringing new people along.
- the number of scripture-sharing opportunities in parishes and chaplaincies is bearing fruit in deepening people's relationship with God.
- we offer people clear signposts to where they can receive further spiritual support, such as different ways of praying, Spiritual Direction.

# Discipleship

## Supporting Ongoing Conversion

We commit to becoming a diocese where people are supported in growing daily as Jesus's disciples.

### What will this look like?

By 2030:

- those who have encountered Christ have accepted the gift of the inspiration and guidance of God's Holy Spirit in their daily lives, and are helped to live in right relationship with Christ and one another, and to grow continually as His disciples.
- our celebrations of the Mass, and particularly Sunday Mass, are reverent and transformative, helping people of all ages to encounter and be nourished by God at the table of the Word (scriptures/homily) and at the table of the Eucharist, so as to be sent out again as Christ's disciples to share in His mission.
- we regularly hear stories of healing, new life and freedom through the experience of the Sacrament of Reconciliation celebrated at times that suit a growing number of busy people.
- people are formed, equipped and supported, to live a life of faith. They are offered clear 'next steps to grow in their faith' and are experiencing freedom, purpose, and joy in their relationship with the Lord.
- there are different ways for people to journey together in both large and small faith groups in their parishes, encouraging and supporting each other in living as a disciple of Christ.
- we see many examples of people responding to God's call, including vocations to the single life, priesthood, Christian marriage, religious and consecrated life.



# Mission

## Nurturing Witness Of Life

**We commit to becoming a diocese where people know they are called to witness to Christ in everyday life, and are supported to do this in practical ways, both on their own and together with others.**

### What will this look like?

**By 2030:**

- our parishes, schools and chaplaincies help our people grow in their understanding of Christ's call to both personal holiness and fruitful mission, and how it applies to each one of us.
- through ongoing formation and support, many more people have both the desire and the confidence to speak of Christ to others and make the most of every opportunity in their daily life to share courageously the Gospel (proclamation) and to make space for God to act (demonstration) so that others also might encounter Christ's love for them.
- we have become a Church that is innovative and effective in helping others to come to know Jesus in a world that desperately needs Him. In particular, our parishes, schools and chaplaincies help children, young people, families, young adults, and people of all ages to discover, in accordance with their spiritual maturity, that they are each loved by God, are invited into a personal relationship with the Lord, and are called into His service individually and communally as His missionary disciples.
- in addition, our schools, parishes and chaplaincies are more outward-looking, responding to people's authentic practical needs through outreach to their wider local community, and so are more missionary.
- many in our diocese have responded powerfully to that invitation to deepen their personal relationship with the Lord by choosing to follow Christ and by bearing witness to Him in the way they live their daily lives.
- we actively seek ecumenical opportunities across our diocese, out of our united love for Christ, to pray together and work with local Christian communities in the service of our wider local communities. We also work with people of other faiths to grow in knowledge and respect for each other and to serve those in need.
- our parishes, schools and chaplaincies underpin all our action in mission with unrelenting prayer, recognising that, while we all have a part to play in this, it is the Holy Spirit who truly evangelises (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 75).

# How will we do this?

## The Four Priorities

### PRIORITY 1

Take practical steps to bring to life the vision for Encounter, Discipleship and Mission

### PRIORITY 2

Equip the laity to work alongside clergy in renewing parishes for mission

### PRIORITY 3

Equip and support our clergy as leaders and enablers of mission

### PRIORITY 4

Align diocesan and parish infrastructure and resources to serve mission

# Practical Next Steps in Parishes

The Diocesan Mission Plan has lots more detail on ways to get started on pages 44-53.

## ● Identify and describe where you want to get to

Use the "Describing Our Destination" tool with a small or larger group to help your parish begin to describe where it wants to get to by 2030 (Appendix A in the Diocesan Mission Plan document).



Download the tools

## ● Develop a plan

The "Parish Ideas for Action Tool" (Appendix B) and the "Youth Ministry Ideas for Action Tool" (Appendix C) give parishes two clear road maps with practical steps for bringing the three spiritual themes to life.

Using the picture created by the "Describing Our Destination" tool, parish priests and a small group of parishioners can use these "Ideas for Action" tools. Over a couple of prayerful conversations, the tools help the group identify where they are starting from and develop a roadmap for their unique context. Those parishioners don't have to commit to more than helping think things through, but may also get involved in putting the roadmap into action.

- **Helping leaders appreciate the importance of rooting all they do in prayer and mentor them in ways to do this**

This can take many different forms depending on the individual parish, ministry and leaders. Some simple examples include:

- including specific intentions in bidding prayers at Mass.
- helping leaders understand the importance of ensuring every meeting begins with prayer and mentoring them until they can comfortably and confidently lead that time of prayer themselves and start to help others do so also.
- ensuring leaders consistently think about “where is the prayer support” for whatever they do, and help identify and take practical steps to put this in place (e.g. asking rosary groups and the housebound members to pray for parish intentions, or by having a list of ‘prayer requests’ for times of Adoration).

- **Draw on resources and support as needed**

Draw on diocesan support and access existing resources for developing your parish plan and putting this into action. Consider booking a meeting with:

- the Diocesan Adult Formation for Mission Department to help with developing and refining a parish wide plan.
- the Diocesan Youth Service to help you create a bespoke strategy for youth ministry in your parish
- over time take advantage of formation opportunities from Diocesan Central Support Services (Curia) as they become available.
- join the diocesan online or in person mission sessions to hear what other parishes are doing and get insights and practical help on a range of mission related topics (see “events” section of diocesan website for details).
- access free support from ministries that have a proven track record of helping parishes: e.g., Alpha, Sycamore, Genesis Mission, Divine Renovation.
- consider applying for a grant from the Mission Enabling Fund for specific initiatives that help deliver one or more of the three themes. More details can be accessed here: [www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/mission-enabling-fund](http://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/mission-enabling-fund)

- **Help the laity understand the role they have to play in mission**

- Expand the vision of what is possible by naming and celebrating examples of where laity are already playing a role in the parish and share stories of what is happening across the diocese.
- Over time this can be accompanied with an invitation to reflect on the ways God has uniquely gifted each person to serve in different ways in the parish and even a personal invite to look at getting involved in a specific way.
- Consider gathering a small group of parishioners to pray and reflect on the different communities and gifts in the parish, where the Lord may be inviting them to act and letting the group propose a few things the laity would be willing to lead. Testing ideas out with a “bias towards trying things” and taking measured risks.
- Provide formation and support for leadership as needed.
- Access support, coaching and formation to aid the development of a Parish Mission Leadership Team.

# Some Key Dates



## JANUARY 2026

"Go, Make Disciples" Diocesan Five Mission Plan launched and Roadshows begin.



## FEBRUARY 2026

Roadshows complete.  
Dates for weekend parish visitations by the Bishop and Vicars General announced.



## APRIL 2026

Finance Committee in place in every parish.  
Each parish has a small group working with the parish priest to agree first steps on the Mission Plan.



## MAY 2026

Bishop and Vicars General start a rolling 2 year programme of parish visitations.



## JUNE 2026

By 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026, **every** parish will submit a two-page summary of its first steps to implement the Mission Plan.



## JULY 2026

From Summer 2026, parishes gradually put additional structures in place to deliver the mission plan, drawing on external support as needed.



## NOVEMBER 2026

By Advent 2026 every parish has, or is moving towards having, a more formal Parish Mission Leadership Team (including a young adult where possible).



# A personal invitation

The renewal of our diocese over the next five years (2026–2030) depends on the active involvement and prayerful commitment of all of us. This includes our parishes, chaplaincies, schools and Church organisations reaching out into our local communities, supported by the prayers of the Religious, the housebound and the retired clergy.

Through our baptism, each of us has a unique part to play in God's plan for our diocese. Saint John Henry Newman, recently declared a Doctor of the Church for the depth of his teaching, beautifully described this personal calling:

"God has created me to do Him some definite service; He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission...Somehow I am necessary for His purposes...I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons. He has not created me for naught. I shall do good, I shall do His work".

My personal invitation to each one of you is to read this Diocesan Mission plan, pray for its implementation and actively look for ways you can use your gifts and talents to help bring it to life in your own part of our diocese and in your daily life.

As we begin this five-year journey to "Go, make disciples", let us pray that the Lord will bless and make fruitful our efforts to respond. Let us make our own that humble and trusting prayer of Cardinal Prevost as he came to the realisation that he was about to be elected Pope:

**"Here we go, Lord, you're in charge, you lead the way."**

With prayers and gratitude for all the good work already taking place in our diocese, and in hope and expectation for all that the Lord desires to do in and through each of us over the next five years,



*+Patrick*

+Patrick  
Bishop Patrick McKinney



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**Read the full version of the Diocesan Mission plan  
and download the tools:**

**[www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/missionplan](https://www.dioceseofnottingham.uk/missionplan)**



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Encounter

