

Foundation of the Vision – Three Legs of the Stool

The foundation for our vision is based on the Bishop's three key priorities. These have often been described metaphorically as the three legs of the stool that will support our vision.

1. Catholic Identity and Catholic Pride – By confidently promoting and integrating Catholicism into all we do; we will provide a living witness to our faith that is the bedrock of our Church.
2. Catholic Formation – Strong, consistent, and lifelong faith formation is a key underpinning for building our lives in Christ. Strong formation in the faith encourages and deepens evangelization and contributes toward an improved appreciation and experience of:
 - a. A personal encounter and relationship with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior
 - b. The Eucharist as the source and summit of our Christian lives
 - c. The intimate connection between faith and life
 - d. The dignity of the human person and the gift of human relationships
 - e. The social teachings of the Church
 - f. The role of the Church in continuing the ministry of Jesus

All of which leads us to missionary discipleship marked by a deep radiant spiritual joy that naturally attracts others to our faith.

3. Catholic Development – it is critical that we have sufficient financial resources to carry out the mission of the Church. This priority is especially important given that many of our parishes, schools, and other organizations are struggling financially or lack adequate funds to achieve their full potential.

Vision

Our vision is a declaration of our aspirations and our guide for the future of the Catholic Church in New Hampshire. It is built on the Bishop's three key priorities discussed above and is composed of our mission, guiding principles, and picture of the future. Additionally, we have established five strategic priorities to address key issues and support the implementation of the vision.

Mission

***To bring a New Hope and the Good News of Jesus Christ
through our Catholic faith
to all in New Hampshire***

Our mission is the purpose, the goal, and the essential reason for our existence and serves to focus our efforts. All our actions should contribute toward this mission.

At its very core, our mission is one of evangelization: to bring the Good News of Jesus into every human situation.

The “*New Hope*” reflects our desire to help everyone, regardless of their status or situation, to realize that Jesus Christ is the only true way to peace and that His love for them is without limit – no matter their circumstances. This “*Hope*” is Christ, and heaven is our ultimate goal for all! The term “*New*” reflects the Bishop's desire to rededicate ourselves and renew our energies on this essential work.

With this “*Hope*,” we will be able to understand and digest “*the Good News of Jesus Christ*” and all that this encompasses. We know that “the Paschal mystery of Christ's cross and Resurrection stands at the center of the Good News...” (CCC 571).

“*Through our Catholic Faith*” demonstrates that our mission will always be directed by the one true Church as founded by Jesus Christ – by Holy Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium.

Lastly, our audience is “*all in New Hampshire*.” We are called to evangelize and make disciples of all people. Accordingly, our emphasis is to invite and encourage every person within our state to be transformed by the saving power of Jesus Christ, irrespective of their socio-economic situation, wealth, cultural background, religion, or status – everyone! We accomplish this through formation, sharing our faith, invitation, service, and promoting Gospel values.

Guiding Principles

Our five guiding principles represent the standards and values that dictate how we will operate throughout the Catholic Church in New Hampshire. These principles apply to all individuals and organizations, including the Chancery, parishes, schools, and other Catholic organizations. They are the unwavering and unchanging norms meant to guide our behaviors, actions, and decisions.

1. *We will be guided by the Gospel values and the teachings of the Catholic Church*

To be successful, we must be authentically Catholic. Accordingly, it stands to reason that everything we do will be based on Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church without deviation.

2. *We will instill a strong sense of Catholic identity and Catholic pride in all our work*

We know that our most successful parishes, schools, and other organizations have a strong Catholic identity woven into the fabric of how they function. They provide an excellent example for us all.

3. *We will create an atmosphere where authentic communion can develop and flourish under the guidance of the Holy Spirit*

The Church as Communion is our loving fellowship and union with Jesus and other baptized Christians in the Church, the Body of Christ, which has its source and summit in the celebration of the Eucharist by which we are joined in divine love to the communion of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (cf. CCC, Glossary). In this communion we are joined to each other (Romans 12:4-5) as brothers and sisters in Christ and as fellow citizens of the household of God (Ephesians 2:19-20).

This communion brings all people to the fullness of a life of grace and ultimately leads us to eternal life. It not only creates a sense of community and spiritual union within a parish, but connects our people to the Diocese and the broader Universal Church. As such, it is central to our mission.

4. *We will deliver our mission with a spirit of love, compassion, respect, joy, and collaboration*

The love of Christ is at the heart of this guiding principle as we are called to love each other as He has loved us. With His life as our example, we can truly have the love and respect for one another that will allow us to deliver our mission together, as a team, with collaboration and joy.

5. *We will operate with uncompromising integrity and the highest moral, ethical, and professional standards*

As followers of Jesus Christ, this is expected from everyone. Furthermore, living these principles on a daily basis will go a long way toward building the trust, confidence, and support of the people of New Hampshire – both Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Picture of the Future

A thriving, vibrant Catholic Community in New Hampshire

This picture of the future is characterized by:

- Our diocese and parishes are places of joyful, reverent, holy worship of God in communion with one another.
- There is a strong sacramental life throughout the diocese, centered in The Eucharist.
- Faith is nurtured with lifelong formation.
- We are welcoming to all people and cultures.
- We are engaged in the communities where we live and work.
- There is evident and lived discipleship and evangelization.
- Young people and children are involved in the life of the Church.
- We are a witness to hope in a secular world.

Strategic Priorities and Action Teams

We have established five strategic priorities designed to help deliver the mission over the coming years as we build toward our picture of the future.

1. Develop strong and consistent Catholic lifelong formation in our parishes, schools, and home schools

As discussed above, one of the Bishop's key priorities is strong, consistent, and lifelong formation. Strong faith formation, **centered in the Kyergma (the foundational proclamation of Jesus Christ as our Savior – see [USCCB Kerygmatic Proclamation with associated Biblical references](#)), is a necessary underpinning to achieve our mission.** It gives us the background, knowledge, and grace to bring the *New Hope and the Good News of Jesus Christ through our Catholic Faith to all in New Hampshire.*

This priority was bolstered in 2017 with the “*Restore•Renew•Proclaim the Hope that is Christ*” initiative to strengthen lifelong faith formation, renew sacramental preparation, and restore the sacraments of Christian initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and The Eucharist) to the order designed by God

2. Support our parishes and schools in establishing a stable financial foundation

Consistent with our Bishop's key priorities, it is critical that we have sufficient financial resources to carry out the mission of the Church in New Hampshire.

To deliver this goal, the Finance Success Action Team has been formed, led by Mac Bryant, our Finance Officer and Cabinet Secretary for Temporalities and Bevin Kennedy, our Cabinet Secretary for Development and Communication. As part of this priority, numerous initiatives have been launched including:

- The New Hampshire Catholic Appeal designed to support the many ministries in our Diocese, parishes, schools, and Catholic Charities.
- The St. John Neumann Education Trust dedicated to the advancement of Catholic education in our state.
- Development services including appeal implementation, event planning, database implementation, and advancement staff networking.
- Development services for parishes including increased offertory, stewardship, capital campaign support, and planned giving programs.
- Parish Bookkeeping Services
- Renewed focus on growth and efficiencies in our parish cemeteries

3. Strengthen and encourage our priests in their presbyteral mission

The priesthood has been established by God and “shares in the authority by which Christ himself builds up and sanctifies and rules his Body” (CCC 1563). Our priests have been called by God to be conformed to the crucified Christ. By virtue of ordination, their very being is changed so they might continue the sacramental work of Jesus in the world. Thus, our priests are vitally important to the mission of our diocese.

To support this priority, we will provide for their continuing formation, facilitate presbyteral unity and fraternity, and help them achieve a joyous and fruitful priestly life.

Additionally, as a strong priesthood is essential to the future of the Church, we will focus on nurturing priestly vocations and properly forming those who have heeded the Call.

Strategic Priorities and Action Teams (continued)

4. Develop leaders and build capacity in our parishes, schools, and administration

We know that great parishes, schools, and all great organizations have great leaders. In support of this priority, an action team has been established to provide the infrastructure to help form strong leaders and expand our leadership capabilities.

5. Renew and reinvigorate our Catholic schools

Our schools are vital to the mission of the Church and our community and have always been places of hope, inspiration, and success. Catholic education is an investment with a lifelong payoff that promotes commitment to faith, prayer and virtue, a strong understanding of social justice, and a greater numbers of religious vocations. They develop our future Catholic leaders through strong formation, a robust academic foundation, service to others, and a solid infusion of joy and the good news of Jesus Christ!

In line with this priority, Dave Thibault, superintendent, and our Catholic Schools Office has developed a new strategic plan. Their mission is

To live out the Bishop's mission of bringing a new hope and the good news of Jesus Christ to all by making Catholic schools accessible, available, and affordable to any family that desires it.

Actions underway include:

- Increased emphasis on Catholic identity
- Expanded enrollment initiatives
- Streamlined and seamless matriculation from PreK to high school graduation
- New schools in underserved areas (e.g. the North country)
- Leadership training and support for our school principals and other leaders (working with our Leadership Development Action Team)
- Manchester area initiatives that include the formation of Cardinal Lacroix Academy and expansion of Trinity High School
- New advancement models and other actions to deliver financial viability for our schools (working with the Financial Success Action Team)
- New curriculums that emphasize strong academics grounded in our faith
- Investments in and development of our teachers
- Updating and investing in our school buildings, infrastructure, and athletics.
- Creation of an online academy

It is imperative that we all work together, across the diocese, to renew and reinvigorate Catholic education in New Hampshire – in so many ways, it is our future!

We entrust our vision to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and pray that through His grace and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit we will achieve our goal of building a thriving, vibrant Catholic Community in New Hampshire according to His will.