

Parish Vision / Mission / Goals Communication June 2022

Good morning, everyone.

It is fair to say the last 4 – 5 years have been a turbulent time for Te Whetu O Te Moana Star of the Sea Marlborough Parish. We have had as many parish priests during this time; we have come through the 2017 Archdiocesan Synod, and the subsequent Review of our Churches and Presbyteries in 2019 and 2020; and we have had a global pandemic to navigate for the last two years.

All of this has had an impact on us as a parish, and our ability to effectively live our Mission. We could have easily lost our way, had it not been for the collective efforts of everyone in making the most of the circumstances. When Fr Michael joined us in February, it provided us with a perfect opportunity to stop and reflect on where we've been and discern where we are going, and why. The senior leadership team has spent the last 4 months essentially asking ourselves these questions: **{Challenge slide}**

- As a parish, are we making a measurable difference in our community, or simply serving our members?
- Are we mobilising for mission, or insisting on business as usual?
- Are we here to preserve our current systems, or willing to go where God is blessing?

We have followed a detailed and collaborative process which has culminated in us establishing a Vision, Mission and Goals for the parish, and this is what we would like to communicate to you today. This might seem a little “corporate”, but we believe it is important that we have a “big picture” to guide the parish for the next 10 + years, and in turn, have a parish structure which supports this.

{Vision slide} The Vision is a picture of what we believe God wants our parish to become. “Where there is no vision, the people perish” Proverbs 29:19. Our vision is to become “A welcoming, thriving, inclusive community of Christian faith, hope and love”. This is not a big stretch from our current reality, but it is an aspirational statement of where we want to be in the future.

{Mission slide} The Mission articulates our purpose for being now, and expresses what each of us is called to do so that the Vision can be achieved. Our Mission is: “We are joy-filled missionary disciples: walking in Christ’s light, growing in faith together, and taking the Gospel and the love of Jesus to the people of Marlborough, and beyond”. Much discernment went into this updated statement; to make it more succinct, to strengthen the connection between the schools and the parish, and to show our faith in action.

{Goals slide} The Goals are the priorities we will concentrate on, as a means to achieve the Vision. In many respects, the goals reflect the discernment process we have followed with

the Synod and the review of our properties, but articulates them in a way which is more accessible and measurable. These are:

- To unite the whole parish to the Mission, including our schools and youth.
- To set up property, structures and systems that sustain our Values and Mission.
- Develop a community of shepherds becoming missionary disciples of Christ.
- Full cultural participation, partnership, and protection in Christ.
- An effective outreach programme which takes responsibility for all people and for creation.

Immediate and medium-term actions have been created for each of these goals, and the parish council will regularly measure how we are going with these goals, so we are clear that the Vision is being achieved.

The glue that pulls this all altogether, are our Values. We commit to Worship, Grow, Attract, Connect, and Give back. These simple concepts could be substituted for the words "Prayer", "Formation", "Evangelisation", "Fellowship" and "Service".

{Graphic slide} The graphic on the screen and also in this week's bulletin, pictorially reflects how all this comes together, with the symbolism of the star being our guiding light towards our Vision.

This provides us with a strong foundation to work from. However, just as important, has been reviewing the parish structure, to ensure we are set up to deliver the Goals we have set.

{Parish structure slide} Each group has as its primary purpose, delivering one or more of the Goals. The Steering Group, led by Greg Stretch, will continue to implement the building review recommendations, and will co-op appropriate members as required to this complex and technical portfolio. Work is already underway here, and we are in discussions with a local provider around improving our digital offering, including allowing our masses to be livestreamed.

Vicky Raw will lead the Discipleship Group, focusing on the "Grow" aspects of our parish, including wider cultural participation. The Liturgy and Sacramental Group led by Belinda Vavasour, reflects its title, and will create a unified approach to these important parts of our parish life. Finance and Administration led by Tom Harrison, and the Youth Group led by Maurice and Mieke Davies, round out the parish structure. Each links back to the Parish Council, which has oversight of the pastoral plan, and will be led by Blair McLean, who takes over from Greg Stretch so Greg can focus on the Steering Group.

Members of these groups will be representative of all parts of the parish, whilst recognising the talents we have within our community in particular focus areas. We are also looking to refresh and bring new talent into these groups, and welcome expressions of interest through Fr Michael. This may or may not include those affected by the disestablishment of some

groups, such as the Stewardship groups. We want to take this opportunity to sincerely thank those who have given generous service to these groups, and waited patiently these last few months while we have gone through this process.

On this great feast of Pentecost, the birth of the church, let us all learn from the disciples of Jesus. Much of what they had relied on in the old order of their religion and their lives had been passed away, but now a new passion for working together with the Spirit of Jesus was motivating them to live in new ways. Let us also see the opportunity for us to experience again the newness, the beauty and the adventure that is relationship with Jesus Christ lived within the Catholic Church, in this Te Whetu O Te Moana Star of the Sea Parish Marlborough.

The full Vision / Mission / Goals document is available to view on the parish website, and a copy of today's announcement will be published with next weekend's parish bulletin. Please continue to keep the parish in your prayers; that we may stay focused on our Vision as we bring our Mission alive in new ways.

Thank you.