



Diocese of Lancaster – 'Fit for Mission?'

Glossary of Terms

This Glossary of Terms will be helpful as the 'Fit for Mission?' exercise progresses.

Baptism – Through this sacrament we become a member of the Church of Christ (Christian Initiation); also being forgiven of one's sins. Through baptism and our baptismal promises we become part of the Mission of Christ and His Church.

Bishop – The Bishop is called by God to be the leader and servant of His people in a Diocese, through teaching, ruling and sanctifying. He is appointed by the Pope and works with the College of Bishops.

Canon Law - The general laws governing the life of the Church.

Catechesis – A process to help people of all ages to an initial and deepening relationship with Jesus Christ through spiritual and educational activities.

Catechumens – People who desire to be part of the Church. They prepare themselves for this by leading a life, with the help of the Holy Spirit, which is rooted in the gospels.

Chapel-of-ease - A church building helping to ease a community's need for sacramental care. Such a community is part of a larger Parish community. The priest visits the Chapel-of-ease for liturgical services but is not resident there.

Chaplaincy – the providing of pastoral and sacramental care for a group of people outside of the usual parish setting, *i.e.* school, hospital and prison.

Children's Liturgy of the Word – A service specially adapted to help children understand and engage with the readings at Mass through simplifying the language used or retelling the story whilst retaining the central theme or message.

The Christian Faithful – All those who have been baptized are called without exception to serve God. While this call to holiness and ministry is common to all there are different ways to serve God.

Clergy – Ordained members of God's people: a deacon, priest, or bishop. (See ordained).

Collaboration (Collaborative) – The process of working together in a joint effort. For parishes, deepening collaboration means working closer together, with the priest, to carry out the mission of Christ. This means sharing ministries, programmes, facilities, personnel or activities.

Communion – Holy Communion, the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. More generally it also means our fellowship and union with Christ and other baptized Christians in the Church.

Consultation – A process of engaging with different groups who have a shared interest in the future of the Diocese to generate ideas, comments and engagement. In a consultation the final decision-making is retained by the person(s) leading it.

Deacon – A celibate or married man ordained to the order of Deacon. He exercises his ministry in the three primary areas: the Word (i.e., proclaim the Gospel, preach), Liturgy (i.e., assist the priest at liturgy, preside at baptisms, funerals, weddings) and Charitable Service (i.e., working with the poor, the housebound, diocesan works for the Bishop).

Deanery – A geographic grouping of parishes working together to enable more effective pastoral action and communication among parishes/Catholic institutions and the Diocese. Presently, there are 12 deaneries in the Diocese of Lancaster

Deanery Pastoral Council – A major consultative group in most Dioceses. The Dean is the president of each council. The council includes lay representatives from the parishes, as well as priests, deacons, religious sisters and brothers, and representatives of youth and other groups of the deanery.

Diocese – Part of the people of God whose pastoral care is the responsibility of a bishop. The Diocese of Lancaster comprises most of Lancashire north of the Ribble and all of Cumbria.

Discernment – The prayerful process of arriving at a decision with God's help. Communal discernment includes: reflection, gathering of evidence, discussion of positive and negative factors of proposed alternative plans of action and making decisions.

Discipleship – Living our baptismal commitment to be a follower of the person, teachings and values of Jesus Christ.

Ecclesial – Part of the Church’s activities or having official sponsorship by the Church.

Ecclesiology – an understanding of the Church.

Ecumenism (Ecumenical) – Promotion of unity among all Christians. This unity is a gift of Christ and a calling by the Holy Spirit to the Church.

Empowered – Authorized by Baptism to carry out the duties, responsibilities and privileges of our Christian faith in our life.

Eucharist – The action of thanksgiving to God, which is the main Catholic Christian liturgical celebration of the Paschal Mystery of Christ (*the Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of the Lord*). The Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, commonly known as the Mass, is at the heart of the Church’s life.

Evangelisation – The bringing of the Good News of Jesus Christ into every situation and proclaiming the message that salvation is offered to every human being. It is the essential mission of the church.

‘Gem’ Church - Larger cities and towns may have a centrally located shrine-church serving the important sacramental needs of visitors, shoppers or office workers. Such churches may be used to provide weekday Mass & Confessions as well as regular Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Objective (or Priority) – A statement of a desired end point or outcome. An objective relates to a major area of concern and is measurable.

Initial Draft Proposals – These are the first set of ideas sent out by the Mission Review Team for discussion and comment on by the people within an area. The proposals will summarise the contents of the Parish Evaluation Form and make suggestions for how parishes may be reorganised. Following the people’s response a set of revised draft proposals will be issued in March (see below).

Interfaith Relations – Relationships among communities of different world religions, promoting increased understanding and respect among people of all religious faiths.

Laity – Those members of the Church who have not received the sacrament of holy orders. The laity have many personal gifts, given them by the Holy Spirit, that help them carry out the mission of the Church.

Lay Ministries - These are ministries within the Church that are carried out by the laity (see above), including, altar servers, Eucharistic ministers, readers, catechists and social justice ministries.

'Lighthouse' Church - A centrally located church providing a centre for mission and evangelisation throughout the whole of the area. It could have staff, possibly part time and unpaid, to undertake administration and facilities such as office space, meeting and social facilities available for Catholic organisations or others engaged in charitable work for the locally deprived.

Linked Parishes – An arrangement when two or more parishes share the same priest. The parishes remain a separate entity and are separate communities of faith. Collaboration and team-work is key to the success of linked parishes.

Liturgy – The sacred work of Christ made present in a service done in the name of or on behalf of the people. Since the Second Vatican Council there has been an emphasis in the Church that people are involved in various ministries associated and flowing from the Liturgy of the Church.

Merged Parishes - When two or more parishes join together to become a single parish congregation. In a merger, the assets and liabilities of the parishes are united and become the responsibility of the merged parish. The merger process allows parishes to form a larger, more vibrant worshipping community with a rich a variety of ministries, reduced overhead and better used resources.

Ministry – The participation and actions of baptized Christians sharing in the mission of the Church through their different service (i.e., lay ecclesial ministers, deacons, priests and bishops).

Mission Statement – A concise statement of a group's purpose and reason for existence. It responds to the questions: "Who are we?", "What is our purpose?" and "What do we value?"

Missionary Church – The Church strives to proclaim the Gospel to all people, to the ends of the earth. By her very nature, the Church is missionary.

Mission Priorities – Ten Mission priorities were set out in the 'Fit for Mission?' A Guide published in Lent 2007 to guide our thinking and journey of Review. These were: Mission with Families, Youth, Schools, Workers, the Poor, Migrants, Older People, the Sick and Housebound, Our World and the New Evangelisation. There is also an acknowledgement here that there are many more.

Mission Review Team - The group of priests, deacons, religious, and mostly lay people drawn from across the diocese (30 members) who meet most months to pilot and facilitate the 'Fit for Mission' Review. This team has a Core Group (10 members) who manage the day-to-day activities of the Review.

Ordained – Men who have received the sacrament of Holy Orders, namely; deacons, priests, and bishops.

Parish - A community of the Christian Faithful, within a diocese, which has its own church building and is under the authority of a Parish Priest or Priest-in-Charge.

Parish Finance Committee – A group of skilled parishioners who assist the priest in the financial running of the parish.

Parish Pastoral Council – A group of people who assists the priest in discerning how the parish can best carry out the mission of the Church.

Parish Evaluation Form – This was the form filled in by all parishes in the Diocese (Spring 2007) - as a 'self-study' to describe their life and mission. This form was then submitted to the Mission Review Team and its Core Group for their consideration.

Parish Summary Form – With the Initial Draft Proposals reflecting what was in the above. The Form aimed to give an accurate snap-shot of strengths and challenges of parish communities.

Participative – Sharing in, taking part in. Participative decision-making means the leader, or those working for him, is in open dialogue during the various consultations so that there is a mutual shaping of each other's thinking in the process.

Parish Priest/Priest-in-Charge – A priest assigned by the diocesan bishop to a particular parish and who is responsible for the full pastoral care of that community.

Pastoral Letter – A letter produced by the Diocesan Bishop or a group of bishops to express Church teaching on some important pastoral matter.

Priest – A man ordained to the order of priesthood.

RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) – A process of conversion. It leads to women and men who have heard the Word of God to become full members of the Church through Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Religious – Members of a religious order consecrated to God. A religious order may include ordained priests and deacons, non-ordained men (brothers) and religious women (sisters/nuns).

Revised Draft Proposals – Following a period of discernment, after an area's response to the initial draft proposals, a second revised set of Draft Proposals will be drawn together

based upon engagement with the Initial Draft Proposals and workable alternatives proposed by parishes and Deaneries. These Proposals will be sent out for further consideration and comment in March 2008.

Sacrament – A sign of an actual and active grace given to us by Christ and entrusted to the Church. The Sacraments are seven in number: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance or Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders and Matrimony.

Sacramental Index – This is a measure that provides a rough approximation of how active a parish is, based on the number receiving the sacraments - Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Marriage and Funerals. A high sacramental index is one, amongst several others, of sign of a parish's health.

Sacramental Preparation – Important programmes that help people understand and prepare for receiving the Sacraments of the Church.

Sacramental Priorities - Six sacramental priorities are listed in the Guide to help us in development of the sacramental life of the Church. These were: Fostering Leadership, Compelling Witnesses, Deepening Leadership, Christian Responsibility, Fostering Vocations, Authentic Liturgy.

Second Vatican Council - The gathering of bishops of the world (at the time 2,450 out of the possible 2,908) called together by Pope John XXIII, in exercise of their collegial authority over the universal Church. Vatican II met from 1962 to 1965 and set the course of renewal affecting the Church around the world.

Single Parish - This is the most familiar form of parish organization. A single parish is one that is separate and independent with its own priest who is not responsible for any other parish. In the future, most single parishes will be possible only where there are significantly large congregations.

Social Justice – Gospel attitudes and actions with respect to caring for and meeting the needs of the Earth and its entire people.

Stewardship – The process by which we meet our responsibilities as Christians to look after whatever is entrusted to us and share them lovingly with others.

Sustainable – The ability to carry out the basic functions of an organization over the long term within the resources available.

Vision Statement – An expression of how a group of people or organization wants to move forward. It often tries to describe what the future for the people or organization will look like.

Word of God – The entire content of how God revealed himself to us as contained in the Holy Bible and proclaimed in the living tradition of the Church.