Diocese of Austin

Pastoral Plan

ENCOUNTER that leads to
TRANSFORMATION
Table of Contents

Letter from Bishop Vásquez .......................................................... 3

I. Introduction ........................................................................ 3

II. Mission Statement ............................................................... 3

III. Diocesan Vision: Encounter that Leads to Transformation ...... 4

IV. Today's Opportunities and Issues ......................................... 5

V. Guiding Principles ............................................................... 8

VI. Goals, Initiatives, Objectives and Desired Outcomes .......... 10

   a. Goal 1 ....................................................................... 10

   b. Goal 2 ....................................................................... 11

   c. Goal 3 ....................................................................... 12

Goals, Initiatives and Objectives Chart ....................................... 14

VII. Appendix ......................................................................... 16

“invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since “no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord.” The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk; whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realize that he is already there, waiting for us with open arms.” –Evangelii Gaudium, 3
Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I am pleased to present the Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of Austin, *Encounter that Leads to Transformation*. A dedicated Steering Committee of clergy, consecrated women and men, and laity from a variety of backgrounds and cultures listened prayerfully and carefully to discern the needs of the people. It is my hope that this Pastoral Plan will guide us in furthering the mission of our local church for the next several years.

This Pastoral Plan belongs to the entire church of the Diocese of Austin. I ask you to join me in studying the goals, initiatives and objectives and become involved in the implementation of the plan. In doing so, we can help others encounter the Living Christ who desires to live in our hearts and who is very much concerned with our sufferings, hopes and joys. Christ wants to embrace all people, and we have a great opportunity through this plan to make that a reality.

For me to serve as your shepherd is both a privilege and a blessing. As we inaugurate this Pastoral Plan, let us ask Our Lady of Guadalupe to accompany us in this endeavor.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Joe S. Vásquez
Bishop of Austin

I. Introduction

“THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL” fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew … I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church’s journey in years to come.”

–Evangelii Gaudium, 1

Bishop Joe Vásquez initiated a process to develop this Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of Austin. Pastoral leaders and the faithful engaged in a year-long process of prayer, reflection and discussion to identify how the people, parishes, schools and diocesan offices might answer the call of Pope Francis to embark upon new paths on our common journey to Jesus Christ. This is a call to encounter Jesus Christ in a more intentional way with a deeper faith so that we can be transformed for greater Christian witness through renewed ways of ministry.

II. Mission Statement

This Pastoral Plan is an intentional invitation to people and faith communities of Central Texas to an *Encounter that Leads to Transformation*. First, all the people of the Diocese of Austin are invited to continue on their pathway of discipleship through a deeper encounter with Jesus Christ. Second, the invitation to renewal and transformation is also addressed to parishes, schools, Catholic entities and other ministries so they may help people deepen their encounter with Christ. Finally, the plan is an invitation to diocesan structures and offices to be transformed to support parishes, schools and individuals.

“*We, the Diocese of Austin, through the Word and Eucharist, prayer, formation, education, social ministries and advocacy, embrace diverse cultures throughout the diocese so that together, as the Catholic Church, we may continue the mission of Christ in the world today.*"
III. Diocesan Vision: Encounter that Leads to Transformation

The vision for the Pastoral Plan, “Encounter that Leads to Transformation” describes the “desired future” the people of the Diocese of Austin seek. It is the foundation upon which the Pastoral Plan’s goals and initiatives are built.

At its heart, this vision contains two key elements: encounter and transformation. The research, conversations and spiritual reflection that were part of the development of this plan all led to the conclusion that as the Diocese of Austin encounters significant change in its demographics and pastoral ministry there is a need for transformation to meet these opportunities and challenges. The path to transformation begins with this encounter.

“We are only Christians if we encounter Christ … Only in this personal relationship with Christ, only in this encounter with the Risen One do we truly become Christians … Therefore let us pray to the Lord to illumine us, to grant us an encounter with his presence in our world, and thus to grant us a lively faith, an open heart and great love for all, which is capable of renewing the world.” – Pope Benedict XVI, Vatican City, Sept. 3, 2008

This vision is embodied through three areas of focus:

**ENCOUNTER.** It is through this profound encounter with Christ, and Christ in the other, that we are formed, inspired and spiritually nourished. “Feed my sheep.” – Jn 21:17

**MINISTRY.** Our ministry, built upon encounter and transformation, embraces servant leadership, inclusion, collaboration and invitational outreach. “So we, though many, are one body in Christ.” – Rom 12:5

**WITNESS.** Our encounter and transformation leads us to be signs of God’s kingdom on earth. We become disciples: people witnessing the joy of the Gospel. “Make disciples of all nations.” – Mt 28:19

WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

Every good plan should help the community move to a “desired future.” What is this “desired future” for the Diocese of Austin? By the end of the five-year period this plan covers, the hope is that Catholics throughout the Diocese of Austin might say something like the following:

We are a very different diocese than when we started this plan. After listening to people throughout the Diocese of Austin we recognized a deep hunger for an encounter with Jesus Christ. We focused on this encounter and we were led to a powerful transformation individually and as a Catholic community. Through this encounter we put Jesus Christ at the center of our lives; the value of which cannot be underestimated.

This encounter with Jesus Christ also transformed our approach to ministry. Our parishes have become highly collaborative. We moved from a mentality where we were focused solely on our own needs to creating deep partnerships. Our diocesan offices are service-oriented, focused on supporting our parishes and schools. These changes have allowed us to become profound missionary disciples and witnesses to our faith throughout Central Texas. We are able to share our faith within our neighborhoods and communities, particularly to inactive Catholics, to the poor and the disadvantaged, and to all those who need the message of the Gospel.
The results are extraordinary. We see a deepening and new energy in our own faith lives. There are more people participating in Sunday Mass and the sacraments. Our parish activities are full of people and our adult prayer groups, retreats and Bible studies are signs of the vitality of our local Church. There is a noticeable increase in youth and young adults who are excited about their faith and the Church. People from every cultural group feel welcome and are highly visible in pastoral leadership positions. Our Catholic Schools have full enrollments and are able to welcome families from all economic levels. Above all, the people of Central Texas are aware of the wonderful presence and good works of the Catholic community. Our encounter has transformed us!

Three words sum up what we seek as our desired future: ENCLOSENT, MINISTRY and WITNESS.

IV. Today’s Opportunities and Issues

The year-long planning process, led by a steering committee of committed pastoral leaders (priests, deacons, religious and lay women and men) involved monthly meetings for prayer, reflection and discernment. A broader engagement of pastoral leaders and the people throughout the Diocese of Austin also contributed to the development of the Plan through multiple listening sessions (in English and Spanish) across the diocese, a diocesan-wide survey, interviews with priests, deacons and religious of the diocese, focus groups with key constituents and the study of the current demographic and pastoral research. The directions, ideas and recommendations expressed in this plan are the result of the hard work of many people.

Two messages emerged powerfully in the input from across the Diocese of Austin: a deep hunger for an encounter with Jesus Christ and the need for transformation in individual lives and ministerial structures. These two elements comprise the foundation of the vision for this plan.

Other consistent messages heard during the planning process were that as Church (individuals, parishes, schools, diocesan structures) we are at our best embracing all people, providing supportive and welcoming communities, celebrating inspiring liturgies, focusing on the family, caring for and being advocates for the poor and suffering, having clear and crisp messaging and helping people encounter Jesus Christ in their daily lives.

We also heard that the Diocese of Austin is shaped by, and must respond pastorally to the many issues, opportunities and challenges affecting our country, state, counties, cities and towns. These societal, demographic and cultural changes can be viewed as challenges, but they are also great opportunities for mission and ministry; therefore, this plan pays particular attention to:

• A continued population growth alongside significant demographic changes.
• A growing and shifting cultural diversity within families of faith and age generations, especially a continual population increase in the Hispanic communities.
• A growing Catholic population requiring a sustained growth in the number of vocations and active priests, deacons and religious women and men.
• Shifting demographic changes within parish communities requiring:
  ◦ greater sensitivity to the cultural diversity of families,
  ◦ a mutually shared vision, an increasing organizational complexity, a need for dynamic and new skill sets for effective ministry,
  ◦ a broader level of collaboration and teamwork, and
  ◦ a greater attention to leading pastorally in new and different ways.
• A strategy to attend to the realities of families today with diverse pastoral, cultural and life experiences.
PASTORAL LIFE IN CENTRAL TEXAS

RAPID GROWTH AND CHANGE
During the planning period, as the table below shows, the total population in the Diocese of Austin is expected to continue to grow rapidly (a projected 10 percent increase in the period from 2012 to 2017). Census projections indicate that the non-white population will nearly match the white population in size by 2017. Also noteworthy is the fact that by 2017 the Hispanic population is projected to double the number identified in the 2000 Census.

Currently, nearly 103,000 Catholic families live in the Diocese of Austin, approximately 560,000 Catholics, but this number is increasing rapidly, primarily due to the growth of the Hispanic population. The fastest growth will occur along the I-35 corridor, particularly in the counties surrounding Travis County, where an estimated 76% of the population of the Diocese of Austin resides. The Austin metropolitan area is projected to grow 50%-100% by 2040.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000 CENSUS</th>
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<th>2017 PROJECTION</th>
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PARISHES
The Diocese of Austin has 123 parishes and missions plus 6 University Catholic Centers in 25 counties. In 2014, 76% of diocesan Catholic families belonged to only 40 parishes consisting of 1,000 up to over 6,000 families or more, while 24% reside in 87 parishes with less than 1,000 families. This distribution presents a challenge to diocesan entities dedicated to supporting parishes, as most parishes have staffs consisting of only a pastor and a secretary, often part-time, thus limiting the range of services available at the parish level. The challenge will be to find ways to extend diocesan services beyond the top 40 parishes, i.e., education, youth and social ministries.

PRIESTS, DEACONS AND RELIGIOUS
In 2015, there were 221 priests, 213 deacons, approximately 42 brothers and 89 sisters serving in the Diocese of Austin. The number of “active” priests is expected to decline over the plan period from 176 active priests in 2015 to 148 or fewer due to retirements, deaths and health issues. An opportunity to adjust this expected decline is a new emphasis on vocations that can create enthusiasm and energy for ordained ministry, especially among Hispanics. If not, this decline in priests could be more than 15% in the face of a rapidly increasing and changing demographic. It will be a growing challenge for the Diocese of Austin to provide an adequate sacramental and catechetical presence.

Further, there is expected to be a decline in Spanish-speaking priests in the face of the rapidly growing Hispanic population. In 2015, approximately 83 priests offered 131 Masses in Spanish in 60 parishes. This level of sacramental and catechetical ministry will be difficult to maintain given the challenge to serve the soon-to-be majority population. Indeed, there will be increasing pressure upon the Diocese of Austin and the priests in the plan period to provide sacraments at the same level as in 2015. And, it will be a challenge to maintain the presence of 10% of all priests who provide sacraments to 1% of the families in the smallest 20 parishes with fewer than 100 families. The Diocese of Austin will have to prepare in order to adapt to these challenges.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
Catholic schools have a long history in the Diocese of Austin reaching approximately 1% of all potential K-12 students, and 5% of potential Catholic students. Over the past 10 years, the enrollment of Catholic Schools increased 9% reaching the highest enrollment in 2012-2013. Creative ways to increase enrollment need to be identified and implemented in Catholic schools. Concerns over the affordability and accessibility of Catholic education must also be addressed.

CONCLUSION
At the heart of it all, the issues and realities noted above are opportunities and challenges for people and institutions to deepen their faith by encountering Jesus Christ and being transformed by that encounter.

As we think about the present lived experience of people, it is clear that the audience for this Pastoral Plan is not solely institutions but individuals as well as communities of faith. The Plan must first engage the individual person before it can start with the Diocese of Austin or the parish. Once it begins there, the role of the parish is to provide a supportive community to accompany people on their journey of encounter and transformation. This requires the parish to shift its focus from how many people come to the parish to how the parish reaches out to and supports the encounter with Jesus Christ and his people. The Diocese of Austin must in turn do the same.
V. Guiding Principles

In the process of creating this plan a series of principles were identified to guide its implementation. These principles reflect the important realities, values and best practices that must always be addressed.

FORMATION AND SPIRITUAL NOURISHMENT

- The first task of evangelization and catechesis is to connect people with Jesus Christ by nurturing and strengthening their relationship and encounter with Christ lived through the Church community.

- Christian formation is directed to all people and takes place at all times in a person’s life, including those who minister within the Church.

- Evangelizing formation nurtures the faith of people in the pews, reaches out to inactive Catholics and extends an invitation to “come and see” to non-Catholics.

- The desired outcome of formation, worship and discipleship is a lived Christian witness in everyday life that propels us to announce the good news and serve our sisters and brothers on the periphery of society.

COLLABORATIVE TEAMWORK

- **Encounter** and **transformation** take place through ministry built upon a mutually shared vision, collaborative teamwork, and a willingness, value and desire to share resources, knowledge and experiences.

- Leadership formation, including pastoral formation, mentoring, coaching and outreach to new and different people as leaders is an intentional value of the Diocese of Austin at all levels.

- Sound pastoral practices and guidelines for calling, forming and sustaining missionary disciples are embraced and practiced throughout the diocese.

- Pastoral leaders call forth, form and nurture inter-culturally competent ministers.

INVITATIONAL OUTREACH

- Pastoral outreach addresses the needs of the people of the Diocese of Austin through their lived experiences recognizing the diversity of cultures, age groups and geographic realities.

- Pastoral ministry strengthens faith life through an intentional and inclusive invitation to encounter Jesus Christ, participate in parish life through transforming hospitality, relationship building and effective communication.

- Pastoral outreach has a particular focus on the poor and those with special needs.

HISPANIC CATHOLICS

- In response to the growing Hispanic Catholic population in the Diocese of Austin, every initiative of this plan answers the question of how it will serve Hispanic Catholics.

- All major initiatives of the plan are available in both English and Spanish.

- In addition to Spanish-language translation, plan initiatives must also recognize and address the unique cultural context of Hispanic Catholics.
VI. Goals, Initiatives, Objectives and Desired Outcomes

GOAL 1: PROVIDE SPIRITUAL FORMATION THAT LEADS TO ENCOUNTER

Transmormed by Encounter (with Jesus Christ), we are formcd, inspired and spiritually nourished.
“Feed my sheep.”
–Jn 21:17

Initiative 1: Develop a spiritual formation strategy that fosters encounter by awakening faith, engaging the heart and transforming believers.

Objective 1.1.1: Using adult learning principles, create engaging and inspiring formation processes and methods.

Desired Outcomes:
1. Adult learning principles, faith sharing groups and family prayer are implemented at the diocesan and parish level.
2. Throughout the diocese there is an increase in the participation of formation programs.
3. Increase in the number of parishioners involved in parish ministries.
4. Parishioners demonstrate their appreciation for their Catholic faith through an increase in offertory collections.

Objective 1.1.2: Provide formation, resources and support for priests and deacons in developing specific awareness, knowledge and skills on the role of preaching as a key aspect of encounter.

Desired Outcomes:
1. Priests and deacons participate in on-going formation sessions on preaching.
2. Priests and deacons self-assess how participation in formation sessions has positively affected the style and content of preaching.

Objective 1.1.3: Attract, engage and inspire people to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ through prayer by teaching people how to pray.

Desired Outcomes:
1. There is an increase in parishioners and families participating in prayer activities.
2. Annual parishioner survey results – I pray on a daily basis. I feel comfortable sharing faith and praying as a family or with friends.

Objective 1.1.4: Strengthen present retreat experiences on the diocesan and parish level for all age groups, so that retreats are a key ministry that help facilitate encounter with Jesus Christ.

Desired Outcomes:
1. There is an annual increase in the number of people participating in retreats for all age groups.
2. Annual parishioner survey results – Did you attend a retreat?

Objective 1.1.5: Attract, engage and inspire young people to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ and knowledge of the teachings of the Church, resulting in stronger participation in parish life and external Christian witness.

Desired Outcome: There is an increase in the number of youth and young adults in parish ministries and diocesan programs.

Initiative 2: Create pastoral strategies that support the family as the Domestic Church; a place of transforming spiritual growth for forming disciples.

Objective 1.2.1: Incorporate church programs, ministries and/or apostolates that support the life cycle of marriage and family from dating through the end of life.
**Desired Outcome:** There are programs, ministries or apostolates available for parishioners to support the life cycle of marriage and family.

**Objective 1.2.2:** Foster and educate families that they are the Domestic Church and that the parish is a family of families.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. There is an increase in the number of families that understand that they are the Domestic Church.
2. Annual parishioner survey results – *Do you see yourself as part of the Domestic Church? Do you see the parish as a part of your family?*

**Objective 1.2.3:** Create family centered formation that supports life-long faith formation.

**Desired Outcome:** Parishes provide family centered activities and faith formation opportunities.

**Initiative 3:** Identify pastoral approaches that overcome obstacles and increase opportunities to participate in the Church’s sacramental life as a means of deepening faith and witness.

**Objective 1.3.1:** Attract, engage and inspire people to deepen their participation in the sacramental life of the Church resulting in stronger Christian witness.

**Desired Outcome:** There is an increased participation in the Church’s sacramental life.

**Objective 1.3.2:** Raise the quality of the Sunday experience through hospitality and welcome, preaching and music to actively engage current parishioners and to attract inactive Catholics.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. There is an increase in Mass attendance, particularly among Catholics who had previously been inactive.
2. Annual parishioner survey results – *Parishioners report more vibrant Sunday experiences.*

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**GOAL 2:**

**DEVELOP A CULTURE OF MINISTRY THAT SUSTAINS TRANSFORMATION OF INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES TO BE MISSIONARY DISCIPLES**

**Transformation by Encounter, ministry embraces servant leadership, inclusion, collaboration and invitational outreach. “So we, though many, are one body in Christ.”**

*–Rom 12:5*

**Initiative 1:** Strengthen, nourish and support ministry by focusing on the spiritual and professional formation of priests, deacons, consecrated religious women and men and lay ministers.

**Objective 2.1.1:** Provide comprehensive spiritual formation, leadership and professional development for priests, deacons and religious.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. The international clergy participate in formation/culture awareness programs.
2. Priests, deacons and religious attend spiritual formation, leadership and professional development opportunities in the diocese.
3. There is an increase in the number of priests that participate in support groups and spiritual direction.

**Objective 2.1.2:** Provide comprehensive spiritual formation, leadership and professional development for lay ministers.
**Desired Outcome:** Lay ministers attend spiritual formation, leadership and professional development opportunities in the diocese.

**Objective 2.2.1:** Build a culture of collaborative ministry throughout the diocese.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. There is an increase in the collaboration and partnership between diocesan offices and parishes, schools, Catholic entities and other ministries.
2. There is an increase in the collaboration and partnership among parishes, schools, Catholic entities and other ministries.

**Objective 2.2.2:** Assess, refine and implement an organizational culture for the Pastoral Center rooted in collaborative teams that provide service to parish ministries.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. Pastoral Center staff participate in formation opportunities and utilize best practices in serving and supporting parishes, schools, Catholic entities and other ministries.
2. Annual survey results – Are the Pastoral Center teams providing support and services to parishes, schools, Catholic entities and other ministries?

**Objective 2.2.3:** Provide diocesan financial support and resourcing for ministries in need.

**Desired Outcome:** There is an increase in the assistance and resourcing of parishes and Catholic schools.

**Objective 2.2.4:** Develop strategies for effective hiring practices to recruit professional lay people.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. The pastors attend best practices workshops on human resources.
2. Parishes have job descriptions and evaluations for staff and volunteer positions.

**Initiative 3:** Call, form and support pastoral leaders from different cultural communities and demographics, especially among Hispanic youth and young adults.

**Objective 2.3.1:** Increase the number of vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

**Desired Outcome:** There is an increase in the number of vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

**Objective 2.3.2:** Increase the number of laity serving in the parishes, schools, Catholic entities and other ministries.

**Desired Outcome:** There is an increase in the number of laity serving in parishes, schools, Catholic entities and other ministries.

**GOAL 3:**
STRENGTHEN CHRISTIAN WITNESS AND OUTREACH TO TRANSFORM INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES

*Transformed by Encounter, we go forth to be signs of God’s kingdom on earth. “Make disciples of all nations.”*  
–Mt 28:19

**Initiative 1:** Strengthen the commitment to be disciples in today’s society by being transformed through an encounter with Jesus Christ.

**Objective 3.1.1:** Provide formation opportunities for Catholics on how to evangelize and give witness to their faith.
**Desired Outcomes:**
1. Catholics participate in formation and workshops on evangelization.
2. Annual parishioner survey results – *Are you as a Catholic, more likely to speak about and bear witness to your faith?*
3. There is an increase in the number of non-practicing Catholics returning to the Church—annual parishioner survey results: *I feel welcomed by the parish.*

**Objective 3.1.2:** Tell the Catholic story!

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. The diocese is effective in telling the Catholic story through a public awareness campaign.
2. The diocese is implementing the Strategic Plan for Communications.

**Initiative 2:** Create strategies to strengthen and enliven our outreach and engagement to and with culturally diverse communities.

**Objective 3.2.1:** Advocate, support and nurture a greater sensitivity and knowledge of intercultural competency for all Church ministries.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. The parish, school and diocesan staff participate in formation opportunities focused on intercultural competency.
2. Parishes provide at least one celebration of cultures.

**Objective 3.2.2:** Increase enrollment in Catholic schools, with an emphasis on creating culturally diverse communities.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. There is an increase in enrollment in Catholic schools and the student population is more culturally diverse.
2. The Catholic schools provide at least one celebration of cultures.
3. Annual parishioner survey results – *Parents see Catholic education as an option for their family.*

**Initiative 3:** Strengthen outreach and engagement with those at the periphery of society including the poor and the disadvantaged.

**Objective 3.3.1:** Strengthen witness and outreach to affirm and support the life and dignity of the human person.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. There is an increase in the number of parishioners who advocate for the dignity of the human person.
2. There is an increase in the number of parishioners who participate in outreach programs.
3. Annual parishioner survey results – *Are you more aware of and value efforts related to the life and dignity of the human person and are inspired to act upon this value?*

**Objective 3.3.2:** Provide opportunities and programs that meet the spiritual and material needs of people in need.

**Desired Outcomes:**
1. Parishes have outreach programs to serve those in need.
2. There is an increase in the number of people in need being served at the parish and diocesan level.
Goals, Initiatives and Objectives

Diocesan Vision

ENCOUNTER
that leads to
TRANSFORMATION

Goals

Spiritual Formation That Leads to Encounter

Culture of Ministry: Individuals and Communities

Witness and Outreach

Initiatives

Spiritual Formation of the Faithful

Family as Domestic Church

Renewed Sacramental Practice

Leadership Formation

Collaborative Ministry

Call and Form Diverse Leaders

Commitment to Discipleship

Engage Culturally Diverse Communities

Engage Those at the Periphery of Society
Objectives

- Create engaging and inspiring formation processes
- Provide formation on the role of preaching as a key of encounter
- Teach people how to pray
- Strengthen retreat experiences for all age groups
- Inspire young people to participate in the life of the Church

- Develop ministries that support the life cycle of marriage and family
- Educate families that they are the Domestic Church
- Create family centered formation

- Inspire people to participate in the sacraments
- Raise the quality of the Sunday experience

- Provide comprehensive formation for clergy and religious
- Provide comprehensive formation for lay ministers

- Build a culture of collaboration
- Develop a culture of collaboration for the Pastoral Center
- Provide support for ministries in need
- Develop effective hiring practices

- Increase the number of vocations
- Increase the number of lay ministers

- Form Catholics to evangelize
- Tell the Catholic story!

- Support knowledge of intercultural competency
- Increase enrollment in Catholic schools

- Affirm the life and dignity of the human person
- Provide spiritual and material support for people in need
APPENDIX: Development of the Pastoral Plan

The following insights directly flow from the various listening sessions, interviews, surveys and consultations and suggest that the following findings should guide the development of the Pastoral Plan:

- **The Plan should present a creative vision** for the church in the Diocese of Austin telling the story of faith. The Pastoral Plan must be synergistic, connect things together and identify essential issues.

- **The Plan is a vehicle for creating energy, enthusiasm, direction (focus)** for ministry in the church. (We cannot do everything at one time, so what is it that we need to do now?)

- **The Plan should use language that clearly identifies the desired “results”** (outcomes for the work of the Diocese of Austin) with clear objectives while leaving specific pastoral ministries to be developed at the parish, school and local level.

- **The Plan can be a roadmap** for “disciple making” by the Diocese of Austin, parishes, schools, Catholic entities and other ministries.

- **The language of the plan should be clear, simple and engaging** to all people of the Diocese of Austin.

- **The plan should clearly point towards effective ministry** that addresses the needs of the people of the Diocese of Austin and their lived experiences recognizing the diversity of cultures, age groups and geographic realities.

- **The communication of the Pastoral Plan should be done through various mediums (multimedia)** not just in a written format.

**FINDINGS RELATED TO MINISTRY IN THE DIOCESE OF AUSTIN**

- **Education and formation in faith** at all stages of life can be accomplished so that understanding and knowing one’s faith is something people value for themselves and their descendants.

- **Making disciples** ought to be supported by forming people at the service of the Gospel, especially within local communities and society.

- **Prayer and worship** should be spiritually uplifting, inspiring, participative and accessible to all the families of faith that make up the diversity in the Diocese of Austin (including age and culture).

- **Family life** should be the lens through which ministry at the diocese, parish, school, Catholic entity or other ministry ought to focus.

**FINDINGS RELATED TO HOW THE CHURCH ACCOMPLISHES ITS MINISTRY**

- **The Plan should support leadership formation**, including pastoral formation, mentoring, coaching and outreach to new and diverse people as leaders; including identifying sound pastoral practices and guidelines for calling, forming and sustaining missionary disciples.

- **The Plan should promote and strengthen collaboration and teamwork** through sharing of (human and financial) resources, knowledge and experiences (best practices) between/among parishes, between/among schools, within diocesan offices, and between diocesan offices and parishes.

- **The Plan should promote and strengthen outreach and invitation** to participation in parish life through invitation, relationship building and effective communication.

- **The Plan should create within the Diocese of Austin an ecclesial culture** rooted in prayerfulness, hopefulness and mercy.

- **The Plan should provide guidance and be a roadmap for effective and efficient use of technology**, including communication technologies.