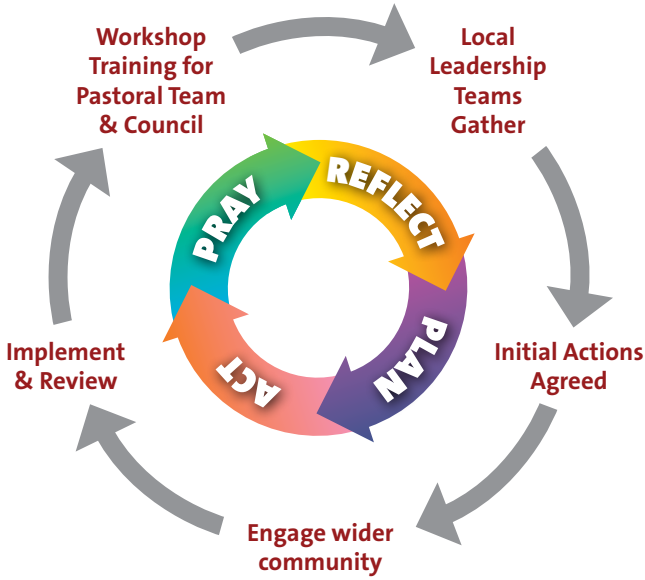
Building Hope

Pastoral Strategic Planning



A Pastoral Aid for Parish/Partnership Pastoral Councils & Parish Teams

[A suggested format for leading a local *Building Hope* workshop to share the PRAY - REFLECT - PLAN methodology and experience working with the *Building Hope* Pastoral Strategic Planning Resource 2025-2027]

Archdiocese of Dublin

Workshop Introduction (guided by a PPC or Parish Team member):

- The *Building Hope* Pastoral Strategic Planning Resource draws from our *Building Hope* dialogue in parish / partnership over the last 3 years.
- Centred on Jesus, the resource highlights 4 FOCUS areas, each with related OBJECTIVES (which are agreed for 2025-2027) and SUGGESTED ACTIONS which parishes/partnerships can flexibly choose from as they plan for and take action together.
- We recall that we are one synodal and missionary Church on a shared journey of formation – walking together as one family of faith.
- As we begin we pause and slowly read aloud Pope Francis words;

  *'Pastoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says: "We have always done it this way". I invite everyone to be **bold and creative** in this task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelization in their respective communities'* - Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, 33

The guide or the group chooses, by way of example, one of the FOCUS areas i.e. **SERVANT LEADERSHIP** (pp.12-14), **SOCIAL JUSTICE** (pp.15-17), **WELCOME** (pp.18-20), **FAITH-FILLED** (pp.21-23).

PRAY:

1. BEGIN IN PRAYER - the Person of Jesus Christ at the Centre - use the text in the planning resource drawn from the *Building Hope* Prayer and pray together:

   May the Holy Spirit working in and through us
   do much more than we can dare to imagine as we live out our
   baptismal calling in humble and loving service.
   We make this our prayer through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

REFLECT:

Group Reflection …

2. Take time to slowly read aloud the 3-year OBJECTIVES 2025-27 in the chosen FOCUS area and **IMAGINE** them in parish/partnership context.
3. Select an example of one OBJECTIVE under the chosen FOCUS area.
4. Slowly read aloud the SUGGESTED ACTIONS – Notice the **FLEXIBILITY** to adapt actions.

Personal Reflection …

5. Allow quiet time to **individually consider** the SUGGESTED ACTIONS. Invite the Holy Spirit to guide you as you reflect.
    a. Are they for parish or partnership action?
    b. Can I identify quick(er) wins – immediate priorities?
    c. Perhaps there are other actions to achieve the objective?
6. Allow plenty of time to **individually write** responses to the question in the planning resource: Listen to what the Holy Spirit might be drawing you towards.
   Which actions do I feel our parish/partnership could plan for and make our immediate priority? …What could I do?

PLAN:

7. Invite suggestions aloud – as each person speaks, simply listen.
8. Then allow time for **open dialogue in the group**, remembering again Pope Francis' invitation to be 'bold and creative', and answer the second question in the planning resource, prioritising **together**:
   Having gathered in our parish group, we discerned that we would plan for and make the following actions our immediate priority.

9. The guide takes the PRAY – REFLECT – PLAN methodology (above) very slowly and, if time permits, selects a 2nd example and the group repeats the process steps 3 – 8.

Workshop Conclusion:

- **ASK - that the group repeatedly use the PRAY – REFLECT – PLAN methodology** when gradually, over time, working through the 4 FOCUS areas, discerning together and planning pastoral actions.

- **ASK - that the group use the *Building Hope* Planning Resource to lead CHANGE** in parish/partnership to '*be bold and creative'* as invited by Pope Francis. For example;
    1. You may discern that a timeline approach would be helpful i.e. decide what might be 'easy wins' or immediate priorities, medium-term priorities and look too at more challenging areas. *See the 'Suggested Template Planning Form' for each of the four focus areas at back of Planning Resource*.
    2. Over a period of time, you may consider forming four working groups of the PPC – one for each of the 4 FOCUS areas.
    3. Perhaps you will bring the outcome of your parish conversations to your Partnership Pastoral Council meeting and consider together your chosen objectives and actions and how to be of support to each other in partnership.

- **ASK - that the group always be 'ENCOURAGERS' of each other and of the process –** '*Building Hope with Open Hearts'*, Archbishop Farrell, Pastoral Letter, 1st September 2024.

To close the gathering - PRAY together slowly

A BLESSING FOR *BUILDING HOPE*

May the Lord, risen from the dead and ascended into heaven,
grant us the grace to rediscover hope, to proclaim hope and to build hope.

Pope Francis, May 2024