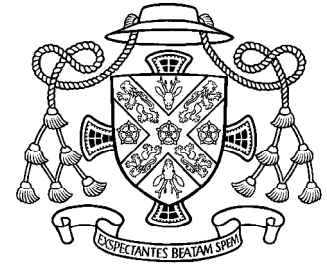
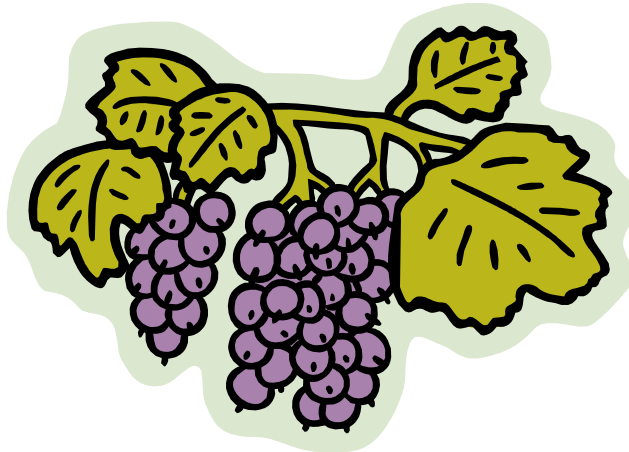


Diocese of Middlesbrough



Bearing Much Fruit

From collaboration to co-responsibility



**A Strategy for Adult Formation and
Evangelisation in the Diocese**

January 2010 – December 2014

Preface

The Diocesan Adult Formation Committee, which had been appointed by Bishop John Crowley to consider recommendations as to how we might develop Adult Formation in Middlesbrough, presented a strategy entitled '*Sowing the Seed*' for the period 2005 to 2009. In his Preface to the strategy Father John Lumley, the Chairman of the Committee said "Christians of every generation are entrusted with the mission of making sure that the faith is lived out and handed on".

Bishop John accepted and approved the strategy and so created the Council for Evangelisation and Adult Formation (CEAF), which met for the first time on 21st September 2005. Father John Lumley was appointed the Director of Adult Formation and Mrs Jane Cook as Adult Formation Adviser. It is because of their hard work and extraordinarily sympathetic understanding of the difficulties any such enterprise would face, that we can say that the objectives set by the Council each year in accordance with the strategy, have been met.

One of the most recent tasks of the Council has been to draft the strategic plan for the next five years, for which our thanks must go to the core group of Father John Lumley, Jane Cook, Kit Dollard and Mike McCann, whose intelligent, careful and thoughtful approach to the task is revealed in this strategic plan for adult formation and evangelisation "Bearing Much Fruit" - 2010 to 2014.

Roger Iveson

Diocesan Trustee and Chair of the CEAF
December 2009

Thanks

'Sowing the Seed' and 'Bearing Much Fruit'

The Sower sows the seed, the Word of God, which grows according to the soil in which it is sown. Adult Formation seeks to ensure that the soil of our lives is fertile ground in which the Word might flourish. Jesus said: "*Whoever remains in me bears fruit in plenty*" (John 15:5). This Strategic Plan for our Diocese looks to that promise of the Lord. In this document, we review the situation in which we find ourselves, describe how we might rise to the challenges of that situation, and describe the resources we will need to do so. The Lord says: "*I have commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit*" (John 15:16). We rely on His guidance to ensure that the fruit we might bear will be "*fruit that will last*".

Thanks are due to our outgoing Chairperson of the CEAF Roger Iveson, for his unwavering support, and to Bishop Terry Draney for his clear commitment to evangelisation and his encouragement of the work of the CEAF.

Rev John Lumley
Director of Adult Formation

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“Bearing Much Fruit”

From collaboration to co-responsibility

Strategic Plan for Adult Formation and Evangelisation 2010 – 2014

Executive Summary

Introduction

- The CEAF of the Diocese of Middlesbrough has prepared this Plan. Its purpose is to address the tasks of Adult Formation and Evangelisation over the next five years, for both Clergy and Laity.
- It builds on the work of the previous Plan “Sowing the Seed”.
- Section One analyses the needs of Adult Formation based upon research into demographic trends and in the light of experience of the last five years. Section Two sets out a strategy, along with programmes and partnerships, to respond to the identified needs. Finally, Section Three outlines the resources – human, physical and financial – needed to implement the Plan.

Needs

- Catholic demographic trends in the Diocese continue to reflect a smaller, ageing population and Church membership, served by fewer Priests. This is a time of transformation for parishes.
- In recent years there has been substantial growth in the number of people involved in various Lay Ministries.
- The Adult Formation Team, along with other providers of formation in the Diocese, offers a rich resource and a willingness to serve. They have implemented a number of new initiatives, including the “Celebrating Family” Project and the Hull Evangelisation Project.

A Response for the Diocese

Strategy:

A number of strategic initiatives are proposed including:

- Review the workings of the CEAF.
- Address issues of change and transition.
- Develop a Diocesan strategy for Marriage and Family Life.
- Develop a Diocesan strategy for Evangelisation.
- Develop a systematic programme for catechesis.
- Consolidation and expansion of the Adult Formation Team.

Programmes and Partnerships:

There is a need to:

- Develop a programme for on-going formation of Clergy.
- Develop specific formation programmes for the Lay faithful.
- Promote collaborative formation and life-long discipleship.
- Establish working in partnership wherever it is feasible.

Resources

Human:

- It is proposed to employ a team of two full-time workers with a Priest (part-time) and administrative support **OR** employ one full-time worker and two part-time workers with a Priest (part-time) and administrative support.

Physical:

- It is proposed to provide office and IT facilities for new employees.

Financial

- The core costs of a Diocesan team are estimated to be between £95,000 and £100,000 p.a. after initial set-up.
- It is proposed that the Diocese establish a permanent basis for financing the team.

Section One: Needs Analysis

Introduction

This part of the plan sets out to explore the needs of Adult Formation in the Diocese of Middlesbrough. It starts by looking at Catholic demographic trends in the Diocese over the last thirty years in order to envisage the shape of the Catholic community in the next decade (assuming these trends continue).

1) Catholic Demographic Trends in the Diocese of Middlesbrough 1980 - 2008

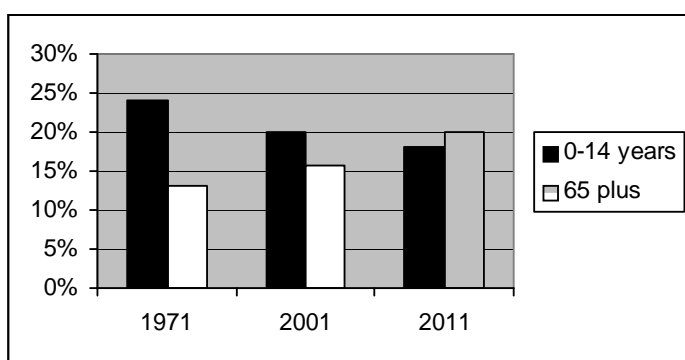
The purpose here is to identify key demographic trends that will influence the shape and nature of the Catholic community over the next decade or so, and to discern any implications for Adult Formation.

Parishes conduct an annual *Pastoral Survey* that is aggregated at a Diocesan level and is then published in the *National Catholic Directory*. Key data has been extracted from this source for each year since 1980 and used to construct the graphs below.

It ought to be stated at the outset that the trends described here are not unique to this Diocese. Similar trends are discernible for the whole of the Catholic Church in England and Wales.

Age structure-England

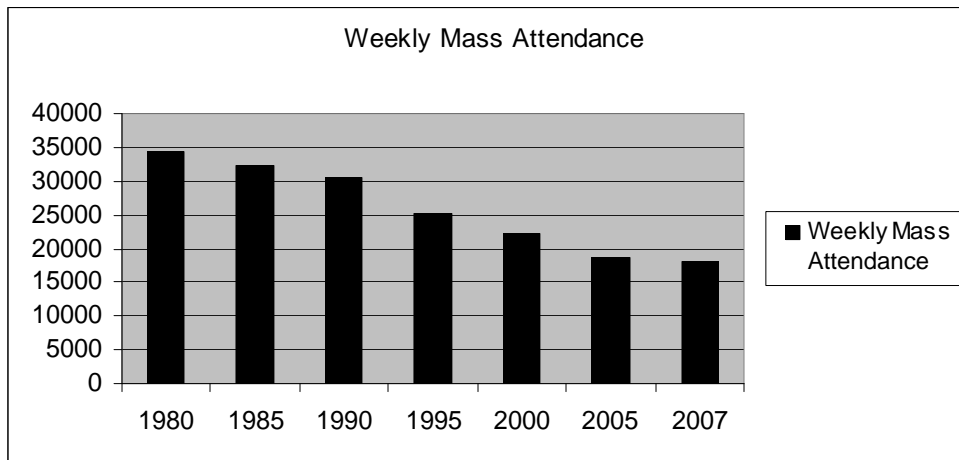
A significant change is taking place in the age structure of the general population in England. The number of young people is declining and the old increasing. It is estimated that by the year 2011 there will be more people over 65 than under the age of 15.



Source - Office for National Statistics

Age structure is significant in that there is a correlation between age and religious belief. A recent survey shows that 48% of 15-24 year olds in the UK claim to be Christians compared with 89% of the 65-plus age group. It can be assumed that the general changes in the age structure will be reflected in the Catholic population, resulting in an ageing congregation now and smaller congregations in future decades.

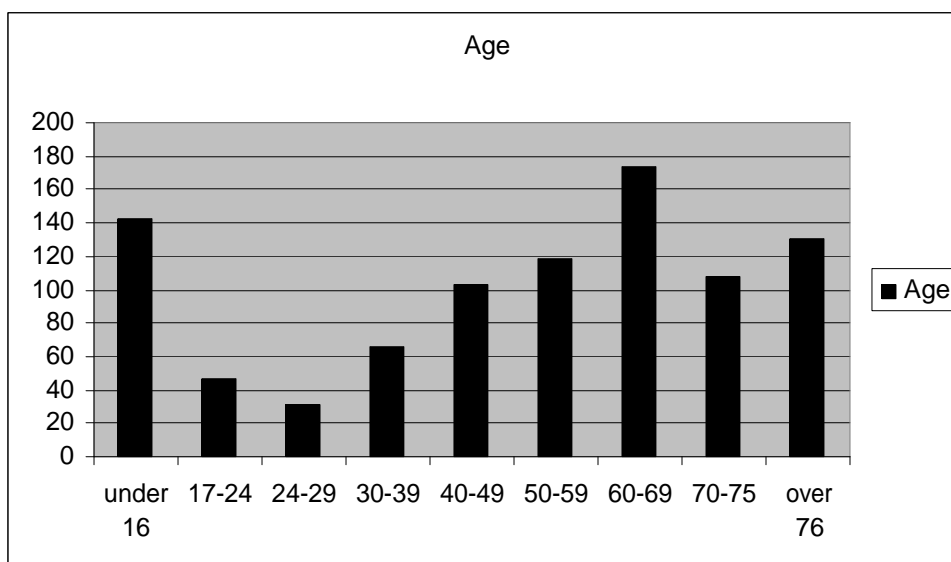
Mass Attendance



Weekly Mass attendance in the Diocese has declined by 47% since 1980. Should the present trend continue, Mass attendance will be down to 14,533 by 2020. However, this figure maybe optimistic for two reasons. The North of England is an area of outward migration, particularly for the young, leaving a higher than average older population. A recent national survey suggests that 29% of Christian congregations are aged 65 or over. However, the figure for our Diocese is much higher (see below) and therefore a steeper decline in Mass attendance is anticipated by 2020 if this trend continues.

Age and Gender of Mass Goers

In July 2009 a survey was conducted of Mass goers in six representative parishes selected to provide a geographic (rural, market town, large town and city) sample, typical of the Diocese. A total of 825 attendees participated. If this sample was applied to the Diocese it would offer a 95% accuracy of age and gender.



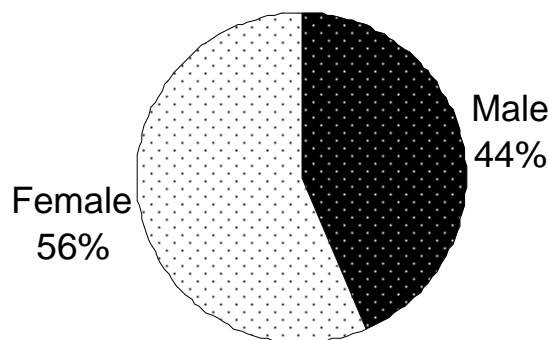
Mass Goers

A number of factors are striking about this survey. Almost a third, 28% of Mass goers, are aged 70 or over, a further 22% aged 60 to 69, so that the over 60's represent 50% of our congregations.

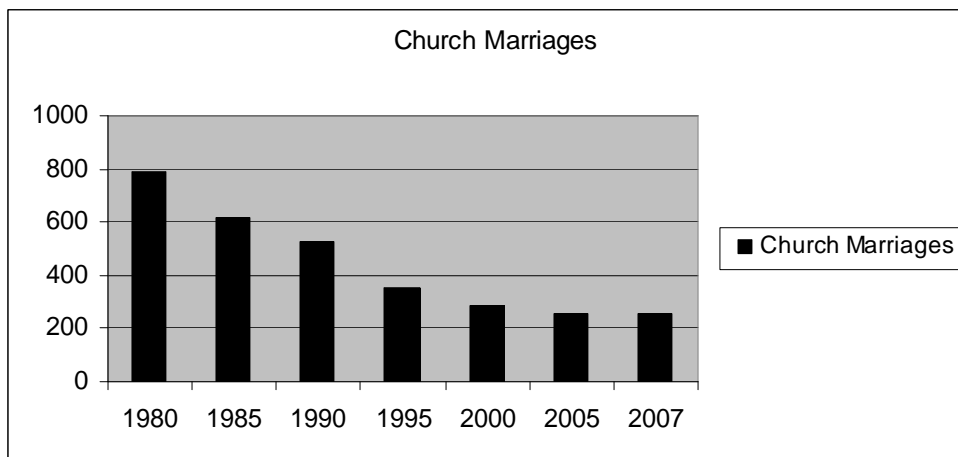
In the younger age groups only 4% are aged 24 to 29, and 8% between 30 to 39. Interestingly, 17% of the sample were 16 or under, but this drops to 5.6% in the age group 17 to 24.

Gender

The sample shows that 56% of Mass goers are female and 44% male.

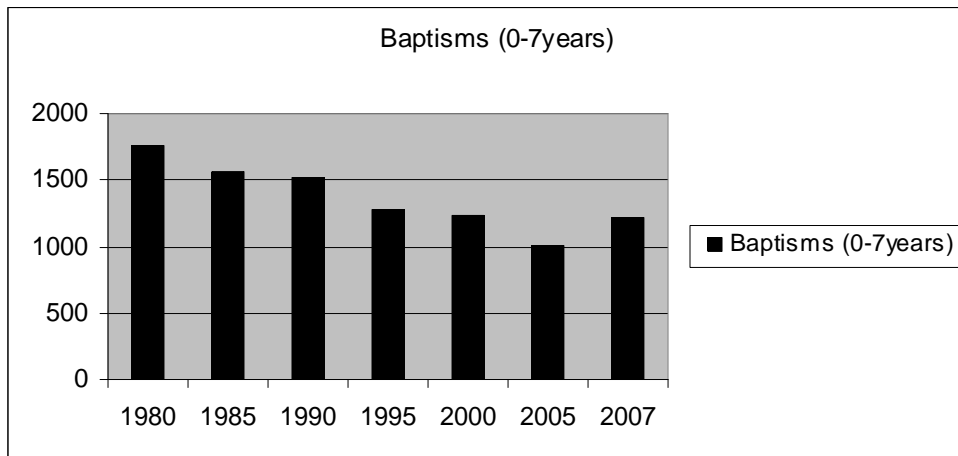


Marriages and the Family



The number of marriages in Church in 2007 was 257, a decline of 67% since 1980. Although the trend is still downward, it does appear that the rate of decline has slowed down notably since 2000 (287 marriages in 2000, down to 257 marriages in 2007).

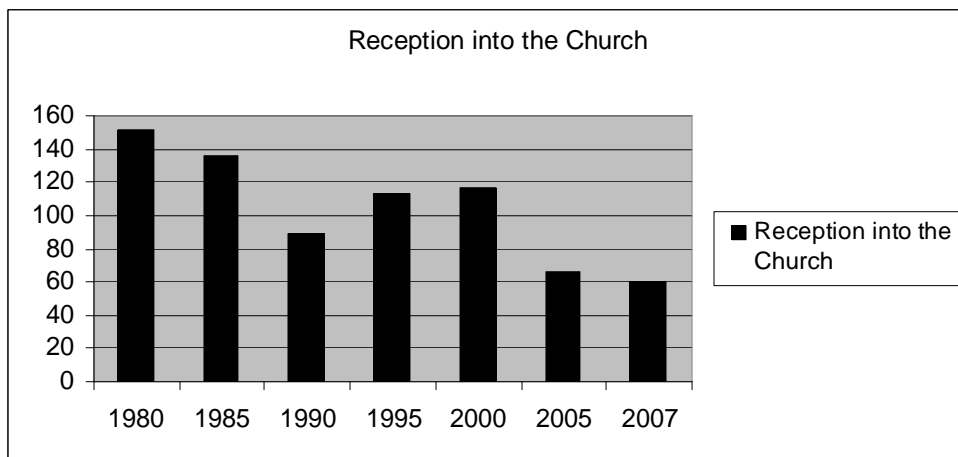
Baptisms



There were 1,220 baptisms recorded in parishes throughout the Diocese in 2008 compared with 1763 in 1980, a decline of 31%. However, the trend has slowed down to just a 5% decline during the period from 1995 to 2007. Perhaps the more structured baptism programmes adopted by parishes in recent years is a factor influencing the slow down and apparent stabilisation.

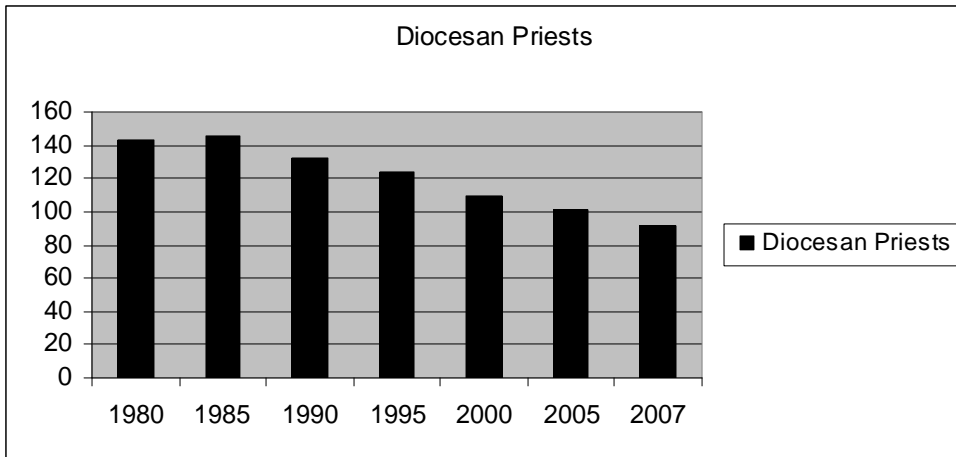
Receptions

The number of receptions into the Church has fluctuated over the last 20 - 30 years with no clear trend emerging. The peak year was 1980 with 151 receptions falling to a low of 89 in 1990 and then gradually climbing to 117 in 2000, declining to 60 in 2007, its lowest figure over the period.

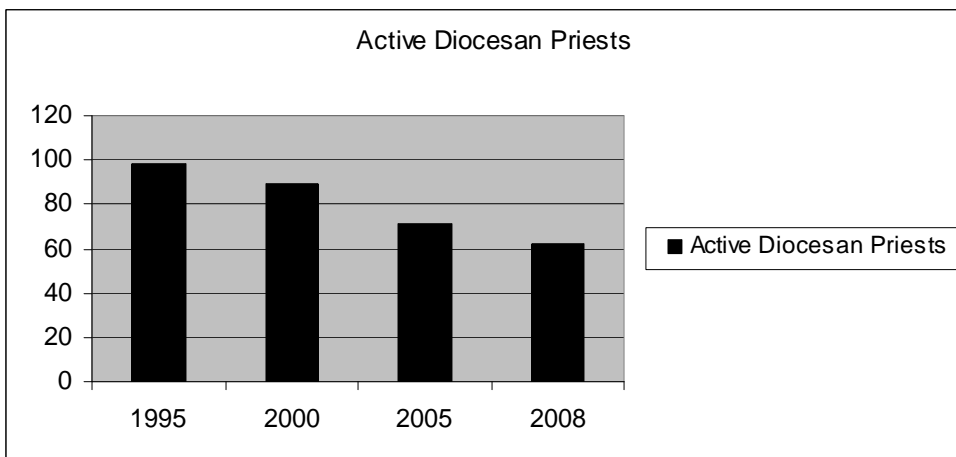


Diocesan Clergy

The number of Diocesan Priests, including those retired from full-time parish work, has fallen from 143 in 1980 to 87 in the year 2008, a decline of 39%.



The Diocese began to publish the number of retired as well as active Priests in 1995. In 1995 there were 98 active Priests, by the year 2008 the number had fallen to 62, a decline of 39%.



When the age structure of the clergy is taken into account, the number of active Priests in the future is set to fall even more sharply.

Year	AGE GROUP OF PRIESTS						Total Active	Retired	Total
	24-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-75			
2009	0	3	10	15	26	8	62	24	86
2019	0	(4)#	3	10	15	13	45	21*	66
2029	0	(4)#	(4)#	3	10	15	36	20*	56
2039	0	(4)#	(4)#	(4)#	3	10	25	12*	37

Source: Figures supplied by the Diocese, June 2008

NOTES

> *Total Active: Total minus retired Priests*

Number in brackets are nominal estimates, assuming a continued trend

* *Retireds: calculated, except for 2009, as the numbers aged 70-75, in each preceding row together with half of the numbers aged 60-69. The retired priests of the preceding row are omitted.*

As of September 2009 the Diocese has four Seminarians in formation for the Priesthood.

Based upon the above figures, it is estimated that in 20 years time (2029) the number of active Priests in the Diocese will be 36 – a decline of 42% from present.

Permanent Deacons

Deacons were very much part of the early Church. The Second Vatican Council envisaged the restoration of a Permanent Diaconate. The first Permanent Deacon for our Diocese was ordained in July 1995 and since then a further eleven have been ordained. They meet together for on-going formation several times a year and have an annual retreat. As of September 2009 the Diocese has four men undergoing formation for the Permanent Diaconate. During late 2009 a campaign to raise awareness of the vocation of the Permanent Diaconate is planned to take place throughout the Diocese that may well lead to more vocations in future years.

2) Lay Ministries

Over the last twenty years there has been substantial growth in the number of people involved in lay ministries. Every parish has commissioned Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Records show that by July 2008 1,949 Extraordinary Ministers had been commissioned. Some parishes have commissioned Ministers of the Word and the number is growing. Since formal training began in 1999, 837 have been commissioned (July 2008).

The ministry of Catechist has also been developed, and since 1999 there have been four Diocesan Catechists Courses, each 14 months in duration, with the specific aim of forming Catechists for parish ministry. February 2007 saw the completion of the fourth course, bringing the total to 180 Catechists formed and commissioned by the Bishop for work in their parishes.

Chaplaincy

Since the late 1990's there has been a marked increase in the number of lay people assisting Priests, either in a paid or voluntary capacity, in the work of Chaplaincy throughout the Church in England and Wales. The demand has been so great that Ushaw College in Durham offers a qualification that is recognised by schools, hospitals and prisons.

- **Schools**

There are nine secondary schools and colleges in the Diocese with a total average roll of 7,732 students aged between 11 and 18 years of age (Diocesan Year Book 2008). In the academic year 2008/9 there were six full time Lay Chaplaincy Coordinators (two expect to leave at the end of the year) and another two 'double up' with another responsibility in the school. All schools have support from the local Clergy and in one school a Priest is employed full time. A recent development is in primary school Chaplaincy, with five schools in Hull jointly funding a Lay Chaplaincy Coordinator.

In some schools governors play an active part in the Chaplaincy team and in many schools parents get involved in Chaplaincy events.

The Chaplains and Lay Chaplaincy Coordinators meet termly during which one session is devoted to issues concerning ongoing formation. The Association of Catholic Chaplains in Education also offer ongoing formation that Chaplains and Coordinators can access.

Posts for Lay Chaplaincy Coordinators set out desirable skills and attributes in the job descriptions rather than seeking formal qualifications in Chaplaincy. The focus is on liturgical, spiritual, pastoral and curriculum areas.

- **Hospitals**

All the hospitals in the Diocese have Priests working in Chaplaincy Teams assisted by lay volunteers and in some places by Deacons. James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough for example, has a team of 5 employed Chaplains supported by 5 lay voluntary Chaplaincy workers (one Catholic). In addition a team of 34 Extraordinary

Ministers of Holy Communion from the local parishes take Holy Communion to patients, and 12 members of the Saint Vincent De Paul Society visit patients.

At York General Hospital there are 9 lay people in the Chaplaincy visiting team and 10 Saint Vincent De Paul visitors.

Seven Catholic lay volunteers are part of a large ecumenical Chaplaincy Team in Scarborough where they are allocated to different wards to visit patients according to their interests and skills. Some induction training is provided for new volunteers.

- **Prisons**

There are eight HM Prison establishments in the Diocese. It is estimated that 25% of the prison population are Catholics. Six Priests and one Deacon work either full or part time, three Religious, two lay people full time (one Catholic) and three lay volunteers (December 2008) in Chaplaincy work.

All Chaplains, Coordinators and volunteers have a full range of local training provided by the prison. In addition to this there is a full programme of training provided by the Prison Service Training Department with regular area meetings for Chaplains which incorporate training. Catholics meet for an annual residential training meeting and a meeting with the Bishop and his adviser. The advisor is also available for individual one to one or team requests for specific advice or training.

Lay people seeking an appointment as a Chaplaincy coordinator must have either a Catholic Teacher's Certificate or the Lay Chaplaincy certificate from Ushaw or Maryvale or equivalent. Before taking up any appointment they also need the formal endorsement of the Bishop.

- **Ports**

There are two large ports in the Diocese, Tees Port and Hull. Each port welcomes over 6000 ships each year with thousands of seafarer's, 60% of whom are Catholics. The Apostleship of the Sea employs a full time Lay Chaplaincy Coordinator in each port. These work as part of an ecumenical team. A large number of volunteers work as ship visitors, drivers or staff the Social Centres in each port. Local Clergy celebrate Mass on board ships for the crews.

The lay Chaplaincy Coordinators have completed a Chaplaincy Qualification at Ushaw College and most of the Ship Visitors are working towards this qualification.

3) Adult Formation and Evangelisation since October 2006

Background and context

An unprecedented consultation process to explore how to develop Adult Faith Formation within the Diocese was underpinned by the publication in 2005 of a five-year strategic plan entitled "Sowing the Seed". As a result of this work, an Adult Formation Team was created in October 2006, consisting of a Priest Director, a lay Adult Formation Adviser, plus administrative support. This represents a major financial commitment by the Diocese, obtained with the consent of the whole Presbyterate at the conclusion of the consultation process.

Since the last strategic plan was drawn up, the Diocese has created the Bishop's Council for Evangelisation and Adult Formation (CEAF). This grew out of the now defunct Adult Formation Committee, and so while the emphasis of its work has been predominantly on Adult Formation, this also forms a vital and proactive part of the overall Evangelisation strategy of the diocese. The CEAF oversees the work of the Adult Formation Department.

The CEAF presently comprises a mixture of clergy, religious and lay people: the Adult Formation Team, those responsible for Clergy Ongoing Formation, RCIA, Liturgy, University Chaplaincy, Pastoral Centres, the Hull Evangelisation Team, and a Diocesan Trustee (plus a member of the Youth Department as observer).

Adult Formation

The team has made a significant impact in the life of the Diocese, especially in raising awareness of the Church's teaching on lifelong discipleship and of the right and responsibility of every Catholic to engage in ongoing faith formation. The team has visited every parish in the Diocese, speaking at over 140 Sunday Masses over the period of a year, and personally handing out 20,000 prayer cards. The aim of this exercise was simply to raise awareness of adult catechesis, and to launch the 'Handbook of Short Courses'.

A network of Adult Formation Contacts has been established – almost every parish in the Diocese now has a Lay Contact. In a handful of parishes the Lay Contact is assisted by a small group of interested parishioners. Their task is to publicise and help share information about Adult Formation events between local parishes, and to provide feedback to the department team.

In 2007 / 2008, 500 copies of the '**Handbook of Short Courses**' were distributed around the Diocese. The Handbook offers around 90 different talks / workshops or series of talks, which parishes can book. Around 20 speakers (mostly Clergy, with some Religious and lay) are involved in the delivery of accessible catechesis on topics covering Scripture, Church Teaching, Liturgy and Sacramental Catechesis, Moral and Social Teaching, Spirituality, Pastoral Care and Community, and Evangelisation. Every parish has several hard copies of this Handbook, although it is constantly updated on the Adult Formation page of the Diocesan website. Details of where and when events are being held across the Diocese are also published on the site.

133 Handbook courses were delivered in the first eighteen months of its use – i.e. October 2007 to April 2009. The most numerous were Scripture – accounting for 38% of all sessions – followed by courses in Liturgy and Catechesis, and Spirituality. During this period 44 parishes made use of this resource. These parishes are remarkably evenly spread geographically throughout the three Vicariates.

Another major initiative in Adult Formation has been a year long course, launched in September 2008, entitled “**Supporting Lay Pastoral Ministry**”. As the name suggests, the aim of this course is to provide theological and spiritual support to the many hundreds of lay volunteers who provide pastoral care in various ways throughout the Diocese. The course consists of 10 sessions covering topics such as Jesus as our model, Church Tradition and pastoral care, listening skills, the needs of the elderly, ministering to the dying and bereaved. About 120 people, who have met in two groups in York, and two in Middlesbrough, completed the course in July 2009. It has been extremely well received and will be offered again, with some minor modifications, in 2009-10 at both Middlesbrough and Hull.

- **Partnerships**

Ecumenically, the Adult Formation Advisor is working in partnership with the Acorn Christian Healing Foundation in the teaching of advanced listening skills, and is a member of an ecumenical adult catechesis group – ‘Christians Learning Across Yorkshire’ (CLAY). A group of ten parishioners from Scarborough completed the Acorn “Learning to Listen” course in January 2009 in preparation to establish a bereavement visiting group.

The work of adult catechesis is also carried out by other groups across the Diocese, as detailed in greater length below. The Pastoral Centres in particular offer a host of events, retreats, study days and workshops on a variety of themes. CCRS (Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies) continues to be the main Diocesan qualification (with accreditation from the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales), while individuals also make use of the opportunities for further studies at Ushaw College (Durham), Maryvale Institute (distance learning based in Birmingham), and York St John University.

Another development to note, in the wider field of Adult Formation, is the growing abundance of programmes and resources for use with parish groups. Many of these are based on DVDs, with leaders’ and participants’ manuals, and are suggested for use over a set number of sessions. These are produced by diverse organisations within the Church – “Evangelium” from CTS, “Echoes” from Maryvale Institute, “With Hearts and Minds” from the CBCEW Liturgy Office.

In addition, over the past decade, a number of reports from the Bishop’s Conference have focussed upon issues pertinent to Adult Formation e.g. “A Gift Destined to Grow” and “On the Threshold”, both on pastoral aspects of catechesis. These are written in a format to encourage group discussion and prayer.

- **Formation for Parish Catechists**

With the departure of key personnel from the Ampleforth Pastoral Team, the Diocesan Catechist Course which they led ended in 2008. Their work had seen over 180 Catechists commissioned by the Diocese over the past 12 years.

The Adult Formation department is now looking to create a new Catechists Course to begin in 2010. They have inaugurated an annual Study Day for all commissioned Catechists. The Adult Formation team also provides support and sessions of formation to individual parishes and groups of Catechists upon request.

- **Diocesan Pastoral Centres**

- John Paul II Centre, Middlesbrough (Redemptorist): chapel and drop in centre.
- Endsleigh Centre, Hull (Sisters of Mercy): retreats, courses and workshops.
- Madonna House Apostolate: retreats, courses and workshops
- St Bede's, York (CJ): conference centre, retreats, courses and workshops.
- Ampleforth Abbey (Benedictine): retreats, courses and workshops

- **Clergy on-going formation**

Bishop Terry in 2009 introduced a two year programme of retreats and in-service training for Priests, giving space to reflect on how this might develop. The Diocese has candidates enrolled for on the Permanent Diaconate training course offered by St Cuthbert's Seminary, Ushaw. Each vicariate hosts regular holy hours or study mornings for clergy. There is an annual Diocesan retreat for Priests, and some Priests also make use of national retreats and sabbatical opportunities.

- **Pilgrimage**

Each year there is a Diocesan Assumption pilgrimage to the Diocesan shrine of Our Lady at Mount Grace at Osmotherley, and a rally and Mass to honour the martyr Blessed Nicholas Postgate on the Yorkshire Moors. The Marian shrine also offers a range of spiritual opportunities throughout the year, which is well-used by parish groups of all ages. The annual Diocesan Lourdes pilgrimage, which is well-supported by Clergy and adult Laity, and youth and school groups, continues to offer diverse opportunities for formation in spirituality, prayer and pastoral service.

- **CCRS (Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies)**

The course is offered throughout the Diocese in Middlesbrough, York and Hull. In Middlesbrough the course is run on behalf of the Diocese by St Mary's College, in York by York St John University and in Hull by the Fr Jim O'Brien through the University Chaplaincy.

The course was re-launched in 1999 in cooperation with St Mary's College, Middlesbrough, and offered at the College, at St Bede's Pastoral Centre in York and the Endsleigh Centre in Hull. The main take up was in Middlesbrough with over 30 initial course members. The course ran in York with 6 students and Hull with 3. The latter two venues ceased to be viable after the initial two year period.

Numbers on the course have been low in Middlesbrough –

2004/5	4
2005/6	8
2006/7	8
2007/8	3
2008/9	4

In Hull the course has only run once in the past five years – with 13 students in 2006 / 2007. The numbers at York St John are higher, with annual registrations of between 15 and 20 students.

Evangelisation

The CEAF held a workshop for itself in 2006 with the purpose of exploring recent Church teaching on evangelisation, and in the light of that, it was decided that our priority would be to initially focus on efforts to reach out primarily (though not exclusively) to the “lapsed”. There have been several specific evangelisation initiatives held between 2006 and 2009, to which all Diocesan parishes have been invited. These include:

- “Welcome Back”: 2 Diocesan-wide study days on how our parish communities can reach out to the lapsed and become more welcoming communities.
- “Fanning the Flames”: a one day workshop on parish evangelisation teams, led by CASE (Catholic Agency to Support Evangelisation).
- “Go and make Disciples”: a two hour workshop led by the Adult Formation Team, available to all parishes on request. Based on the US Bishops’ Conference Document of the same name, it explores evangelisation specifically at parish level.
- “Once a Catholic”: A one day workshop, based on the ethos of the “Landings” programme, aimed at resourcing parishes in the work of outreach to “returning” Catholics.
- The creation of the Hull Evangelisation Team – a team of one Diocesan Priest, 2 religious sisters of the Daughters of Charity and lay people, whose brief is specifically to work in the city of Hull. (A fuller report about the work of the team follows below)

Typically Diocesan events have attracted between 60 and 100 participants, whilst evangelisation workshops held at parish level attract between 12 and 30.

A number of the workshops and courses offered in the “Handbook of Short Courses” also address the broader topic of Evangelisation of culture - such as those looking at Christian-Jewish relations, the Church’s teaching on Sexual Ethics, War and Peace, and Life Issues.

In addition, CAFOD (the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development), an agency of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, now has a full time field worker in the Diocese, based in York. CAFOD continues to raise awareness and hold events to promote the Social Teaching of the Church, along with our own diocesan Justice and Peace group.

- **Hull Evangelisation Project**

The Hull Evangelisation Project (HEP) was set up in January 2008 on the arrival of the Sisters of Charity in Hull. The sisters are funded by a voluntary financial contribution from each parish or group of parishes. The overall aim is to initiate and support works of evangelisation across the city, both within particular parishes and for the entire city from St Charles.

In January 2008 all the parishes of Hull were invited to send representatives to a meeting to form a team who would organise, advise and contribute to individual projects. The team meets at least three times a year. The members consist of Clergy, Religious and Laity from parishes across the city.

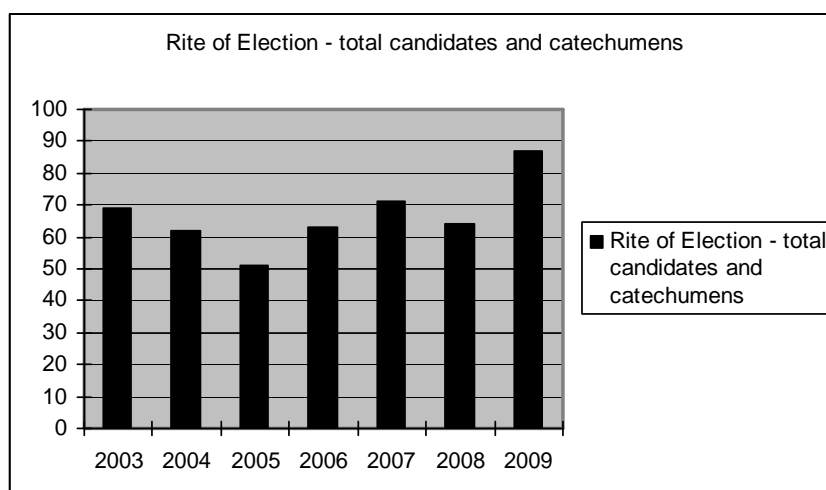
The Project has assisted in the establishment of the following initiatives: *Landings* (a ten week programme for returning Catholics); *Say a Prayer & Light A Candle* (helping parishioners to keep open their church and offer hospitality to visitors for an entire day); *Scripture Sharing Groups*; *Prayer Groups*; *Alpha Course*; *two RCIA groups* (one based at St Charles for parishes without groups); *SVP*; *Godly Play* (an imaginative way of instructing children using scripture & the liturgical year); *Parents Group in Schools* (helping parents to understand what their children are being taught in RE); *Legion of Mary* (based at St Charles). A notable initiative of the team was organising of *street evangelisation* in Hull city centre in Easter 2008, Advent 2008 and Lent 2009. On two of these occasions they were joined by a team of young people from the St Patrick’s School of Evangelisation (SPES) in London for visits lasting several days.

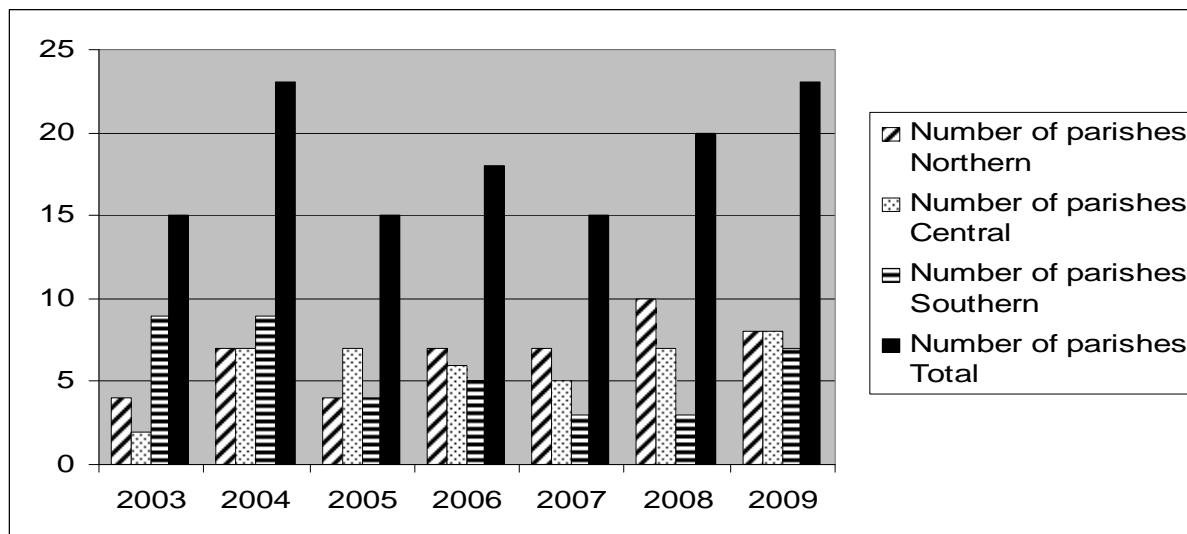
The HEP has lead the “Once a Catholic” workshop for the whole Diocese, and helped to organise a visit of Legion of Mary missionaries (*PPC – Peregrinatio pro Christo*). They also intend to extend *Say a Prayer...* to parishes in East Hull and offer local *Days of Recollection* for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and those involved in parish ministry. Many of the projects are on-going and at different stages in being “owned” by individual parishes.

- **Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA)**

During 2006 RCIA was promoted around the Diocese with several “Roadshows” to raise awareness and support, and with the introduction of an Annual Diocesan Retreat Day for Candidates and Catechists. Since then there has been work to establish a network of parish RCIA Lay Contacts, to help disseminate information in the parishes. Three RCIA Days, with notable guest speakers, were held in autumn 2009, to which Clergy and Laity were invited.

Statistics of the total number candidates and catechumens at the Rite of Election, and of parishes represented at the Rite from 2003 to 2009, may give some indication of the spread and level of parish engagement with RCIA:





4) Other groups and initiatives in Adult Formation / Catechesis / Mission

Other groups offer days of reflection (and action), such as the Justice and Peace group, the Women's Commission, the Newman Society (in Middlesbrough and Hull) , the St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP), Ascent (movement for people in the third age).

- Justice and Peace Commission** – The Diocesan-wide Commission meets quarterly, with attendance of around 30 to 60. In addition smaller groupers meet at parish / deanery level (often working ecumenically). A quarterly newsletter is published, and an annual Father Anthony Storey Lecture draws a large audience.
- CAFOD** – There is a full time Manager for the Diocese based in an office in York. This is a source of information, events and resources to promote the Church's social teaching and practical action within the Diocese. The CAFOD Manager offers Handbook courses on Social Teaching and Fairtrade issues, and has worked alongside both the Adult Formation and Youth departments on Diocesan workshops.
- Ascent** – Across the Diocese there are presently 6 Ascent Groups for people of retirement age. They meet monthly for formation based upon spirituality, mission, lectionary-based study, days of recollection etc. The groups are small, but membership numbers are holding steady.
- SVP** - The SVP is divided into four districts, East Cleveland, Middlesbrough, Hull and York. In East Cleveland there are 8 parish conferences, 7 in Middlesbrough, 14 in Hull and 18 in York. There are also Youth SVP groups at St Mary's, Hull and All Saints, York, and an active University conference in Hull. There are approximately 290 adult members across the Diocese, with an active programme of training and recruitment. Work consists of visiting the elderly in their own home and in residential homes, visiting hospitals, helping families in difficulty and working with asylum seekers. One conference visit ships' crews through the Apostleship of the Sea. Festival meetings and days of recollection are held annually.
- Women's Commission** – The Commission is run by a voluntary core group who organise 3 public meetings a year. The Commission is a resource for the Diocese, particularly relating to issues that directly affect women, and provides a forum for women to meet and discuss matters such as ethics, spirituality and theology.

- **Catholic Women's League** – There are 150 members meeting in 8 section groups across the Diocese. Some sections meet fortnightly, others monthly, whilst Diocesan meetings are held four times a year. The emphasis is upon exploring Christian teaching, ethics and contemporary issues, as well as fellowship. Catholic Women's League also supports Our Lady's Catechists – an association which offers online and postal training for parish Catechists. Presently there is one catechetical tutor, and six students within our Diocese.
- **“Celebrating Family” Project** – The Diocese secured funding through the Bishop's Conference Marriage and Family Life Department, to employ a part-time “Celebrating Family” Project Worker for up to three years (2008-2011). This is in response to the perceived gap in the Church's provision in this fundamental area of Catholic life. The Project Worker is working across the whole Diocese, principally with parish, deanery and school groups, introducing and resourcing the application of “Everybody's Welcome” and “Home is a Holy Place”. A network of parish Marriage and Family Life Lay Contacts has been established.
- In 2009 Bishop Terry ran a **Lenten Programme** called “Who do you say I am?” consisting of 4 sessions (each in 3 venues in the Diocese) which was both evangelistic and catechetical, aimed at the 13-30 age group. These sessions were well attended and received, with approximately 60 and 100 young people at each session.
- **The Diocesan Liturgy Department**

The Department continues to run an annual day of Formation and Commissioning in the spring for both Ministers of Word (MOW) and Extra-ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (MOHC). These days are highly successful and well-attended and seen by all as an opportunity for fellowship and training. Practical aspects of training for MOW now take place in individual parishes facilitated by a network of trainers.

Two days of inspiration are also offered for the two ministries in the autumn with outside speakers. These are well attended, usually with between 160 to 300 people.

The Department has taken a lead in improving music in the Diocese through the Diocesan Choir. It also sets and maintains a high standard of liturgical practice at events such as the Annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes, the Year of St Paul, the visit of the relics of St Therese, as well as a ‘travelling road show’ on liturgy in schools, and producing an aide-memoire for all Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion on best practice.

Art and architecture also come within the remit of the Liturgy Department.

The Department is preparing material to be used in the Diocese in preparation for the introduction of the new Missal in 2010/11.

- **The Youth Department**

The Youth Department employed its first full-time Lay Youth Manager in December 2006. The work of the Youth Service since then has focussed on diocesan-wide events and smaller, more parish-based work.

The highlights have been the annual Lourdes pilgrimage, where upwards of 300 of our young people participate and help during the week; the “*Who Do You Say I Am?*” initiative during Lent 2009 where a total of 700 young people gathered together over 4 weeks to meet and pray with Bishop Terry; and the identification of parish representatives to enable the Youth Service to work more effectively at local levels.

In September 2009, an additional full-time employee joined the Youth Service as a Youth Worker principally covering York and the Southern Vicariate. He is based in York and his work focuses on schools and parishes and catechesis therein.

Father Paul Farrer has been appointed as Diocesan Youth Chaplain and is working towards establishing a Youth Mission Team to live and work together in community. The team will work with young people in the secondary schools and feeder parishes of the Diocese.

The Diocesan Youth Manager offers courses in the Handbook (some jointly with the Adult Formation team), and gives input to Catechist study days and formation.

Analysis and Conclusion

1) Demographic Trends

Catholic demographic trends over the last 30 years show significant decline in key areas of Catholic life. These include weekly mass attendance, marriages in church, and baptisms. In addition there is a decline in the number of Clergy and vocations to the Priesthood. However, an upward trend can be discerned in two areas over the last twenty years, namely Lay Ministry and the Permanent Diaconate.

Today there are almost 3,000 of the Laity commissioned to exercise Ministries in the Diocese and many more are active as non-commissioned Readers and Catechists. There are also 10 full time Lay Chaplaincy Coordinators and hundreds of lay volunteers working in schools, hospitals, and prisons, and with sea farers. At least 20% of the adult Mass goers are exercising Lay Ministries in the Diocese, a remarkably high figure.

There are twelve Permanent Deacons working in parishes or in other pastoral activity. The role of the Deacon continues to be explored in the Church as a whole and needs clarification, as does the relationship between the Diaconate and Lay Ministries.

Nonetheless, the majority of active Priests and Mass goers are 60 years of age or over, and these factors have major implications for the sustainability of parish communities in the future.

With a smaller, less active number of Priests, there is a need to further discern the relationship between Priest and Laity. How does the Priest retain a key role in the life of the community, without being reduced to a sacramental servant, seen as merely “dashing and doing”?

The parish community has shared responsibility to support and encourage the continuing formation of each individual baptised person in that community throughout life. The experience of belonging to a community lies at the heart of Christian faith. There are implications here for careful development of the community itself, away from individualistic "me and God" towards the realisation that we are the "People of God", "Disciples of Christ". We come to "know the Lord better ourselves"¹ through our relationships with others also trying to live out their faith. In gathering together, the Holy Spirit somehow makes us "one"². In summary, a move away from lay 'collaboration to co-responsibility'³.

The number of people involved in lay ministries may remain high over the next decade, but in an ageing Church population, there maybe a smaller number of people able and willing to do so in the future. There is a need for imaginative outreach to younger people and families to encourage them in their co-responsibility.

Given a smaller Mass-going population, there are implications concerning the use of buildings, and the need to plan strategically to create parish communities, where people have a good experience of shared life, liturgy, ministry and outreach, together with sufficient financial resources to maintain the appropriate buildings for parish use. This requires careful, sensitive formation for communities, and raises the question of our Option for the Poor - do finances dictate which communities survive and which do not? Such questions have implications for parish amalgamations and closure of buildings, and the creating of "new" communities. There are financial implications for all of the above.

Formation for Priests and Laity will need to be developed to assist them through this process of change. Some of the areas to be addressed by collaborative formation will include:

- raising awareness of baptismal responsibility
- sharing decision-making and leadership to support the new structures.
- practical administration (finances, maintenance)
- resourcing of pastoral work
- co-ordination and leadership of sacramental preparation, catechesis and liturgy
- the parish's missionary outreach

2) Adult Formation and Evangelisation

In October 2006 an Adult Formation Team consisting of a Priest and a lay person was appointed in response to the first strategic plan for Adult Formation in the Diocese, 'Sowing the Seed'. The team has made a significant impact on the Diocese in raising awareness for the need for Adult Formation and the design and delivery of a number of courses and workshops. (For fuller details of their work please refer to page 9)

A solid foundation has been created by the team for Adult Formation in the Diocese. In the next five years a number of new initiatives will be needed to address the formation needs of Clergy and Laity as the demographic and other changes in society and the Church impact upon the Diocese. (These will be addressed in Section Two).

¹ GDC 254

² RCIA 4, GDC 70, 158, 220, 86a, 253, 254, 257CT 67c

³ Bishop Terry, referring to Pope Benedict XVI's address to delegates to the annual convention of the Diocese of Rome, 26 May, 2009

Out of the first strategic plan came the creation of the Bishop's Council for Adult Formation and Evangelisation (CEAF) which took on responsibility and oversight of evangelisation in the Diocese. The CEAF is aware of the need to increasingly develop Diocesan work in evangelisation, knowing that it is central to the Diocesan Pastoral Plan with its aim to create "evangelising and sustainable parishes". Evangelisation is seen as an area of priority, into which the CEAF and the work of the Adult Formation team is growing.

3) Existing Providers of Adult Formation in the Diocese

The primary locus of ongoing Adult Formation is the daily and weekly homily at Mass, with the pastoral care and guidance offered by the Clergy. To support this, a two year programme of **Clergy on-going formation** has been established by Bishop Terry and there are opportunities for Clergy to attend retreats and undertake sabbaticals. However, there remains the unanswered need to develop a systematic programme of formation.

The work of adult catechesis is also carried out by other providers and groups across the Diocese including **Pastoral Centres** and **Diocesan groups and societies**. The **RCIA** has established a network of contacts and is active in a gradually increasing number of parishes. All play a valuable role in assisting individuals in their personal growth towards maturity as an adult Christian, and in areas of social action, and justice and peace.

The **Catholic Certificate in Religious Studies** was set up by the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales primarily to replace the Catholic Teachers Certificate and offer accredited formation for teachers, Catechists and Catholic Laity more generally. The take up in the Diocese is very small. However, many of the modules would be valuable for Catechists and others working in pastoral situations. The course, in addition to being offered in the traditional way, is now accessible on-line at Ushaw College.

An exciting new venture, the **Hull Evangelisation Project**, is now underway. In time there could be useful initiatives and practical ideas arising from the project that can be shared with other parishes and pastoral areas in the Diocese.

Conclusion

This analysis has raised a host of issues that require urgent attention, many of which lie outside the remit of this plan and that need to be addressed by the whole of the local Church.

There can be no doubt that the survival of flourishing Catholic communities in the Diocese will depend on a radical deepening and maturity of our understanding of Christian discipleship, and of what it means to belong to a Church community which uses the gifts and talents of all. The Catholic communities in the Diocese face a period of significant change, and an Adult Formation team will be central to the process and management of change.

Since its creation in 2006 the Adult Formation Team has built a solid foundation of courses, initiatives in evangelisation, as well as creating a network of parish contacts, and is therefore well placed to assist in the further development and provision of formation required in response to this needs analysis. The issues that will need to be addressed and the resources required to provide them will be outlined in the next section of this plan.

Section Two: Response

The Needs Analysis both reveals and reflects a Church in transition, which is hardly surprising given that the world in which we live is undergoing a period of rapid change. Whilst there are areas of Catholic demographic decline, there are areas of growth particularly in Lay Ministry. Over the last four years a solid foundation has been laid in the diocese for Adult Formation.

The response to the Analysis of Section One is set out below under two headings: strategy; programmes and partnerships.

Strategy

1) Implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Plan. Since 2006 the CEAF has set and monitored annual objectives for the Adult Formation Team grounded in the 2005 Strategic Plan "Sowing the Seed". This has been the chief way in which the Plan has been implemented, monitored and evaluated. Thus far there has been a high rate of success in achieving the objectives.

After three years, and with the retirement of the Chair of the CEAF, it is an opportune time to review the workings of the Council. Representatives of the following areas might be included in the future membership of the Council: RCIA, Clergy on-going formation, Liturgy, Lay Chaplaincy, Marriage & Family Life, Evangelisation, Parish Catechesis, Youth Chaplaincy.

In addition it is proposed that:

- The CEAF will normally meet twice a year.
- Day to day issues will be handed by an executive team comprising the CEAF Chair, Adult Formation Director and Adult Formation Adviser.
- The CEAF has the power to draw upon people from throughout the Diocese to form small working groups to meet agreed objectives for specific purposes.

❖ **Proposal:** Review the workings of the CEAF in the light of the above considerations.

2) Life-long Discipleship. The rich tradition of belonging to Lay associations has declined in recent years, and there is a need to renew a sense of life-long discipleship. This requires concerted work to foster such a culture throughout the Diocese. The aim is to help Laity and Clergy see their journey of faith as an ongoing commitment which needs constant nourishment, and to better understand their baptismal calling to proclaim the good news.

❖ **Proposal:** Promote a sense of lifelong discipleship

3) Managing Change. The demographic trends suggest that existing parish communities and structures will be subject to much change in coming years and that the work of the Adult Formation Department will involve helping people in a time of transition. There is an increasing need for a group dedicated to, and skilled in, walking with people in times of change and stress - indeed the Bishop has already sent a number of key Diocesan personnel on an extensive facilitation skills course to this end.

❖ **Proposal:** The CEAF will collaborate with Diocesan initiatives to address issues of transition

4) Marriage and Family Life (MFL). The three-year “Celebrating Family” project is having considerable success. Given the statistics in the Needs Analysis regarding the decline in the Sacrament of Marriage there is need for a Department of Marriage and Family Life with a full-time, permanent staff, to help enrich and support on-going work and new initiatives throughout the Diocese. It is suggested that there should be a Diocesan Strategic Plan for Marriage and Family Life.

- ❖ **Proposal:** The CEAF will promote the development of a Diocesan Strategic Plan for Marriage and Family Life

5) Evangelisation. Adult Formation is in the service of evangelisation. There have been recent exciting developments with the establishment and work of the Hull Evangelisation Team. There is potentially great benefit in developing a Diocesan evangelisation strategy and plan of action, to be implemented across the whole Diocese, yet to be sensitive and adaptable to local need.

- ❖ **Proposal:** The CEAF will promote the development of a Diocesan evangelisation strategy

6) Systematic Planning for Catechesis. The General Directory for Catechesis speaks frequently of systematic planning for catechesis and evangelisation, e.g. in #201 it highlights the need for “... a commitment to evangelisation and integral systematic catechesis”. There is potential benefit in a Diocesan-wide systematic programme, perhaps on a thematic model as used in a neighbouring Diocese, which is based upon co-operation across Diocesan departments. This requires consideration about how to ensure “joined-up thinking” between various departments, perhaps involving some restructuring.

- ❖ **Proposal:** The CEAF will promote the development of a systematic Diocesan programme for catechesis

7) Diocesan Team. The present Adult Formation Team (one Priest working part-time plus one Lay Person working full-time) has a high profile throughout the Diocese, is having significant impact in Parish life, and working at full capacity.

The Needs Analysis leads to the conclusion that the survival of flourishing Catholic communities in the Diocese will depend on a radical deepening and maturity of our understanding of Christian discipleship, and of what it means to belong to a Church community which uses the gifts and talents of all. It also concludes that the Catholic communities in the Diocese face a period of significant change, and the Adult Formation team will have a significant role in the process and management of change.

Part of the strategic response is to make a recommendation for the consolidation and expansion of the Adult Formation Team – in order to take into account all of the achievement of objectives set out above – and that the programmes proposed below may be implemented.

- ❖ **Proposal:** That the Diocese consolidate and expand the Adult Formation Team

Programmes and Partnerships

8) Clergy. Bishop Terry has launched a two-year programme of on-going formation and retreat, based in Valladolid. Following on from that there is a need to explore and develop a systematic programme for ongoing formation for Priests in the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions of their ministry. The Diocesan Director of the Diaconate is responsible for the on-going formation of Deacons.

- ❖ **Proposal:** The CEAF will promote the development of a programme for on-going formation of clergy

9) Lay Faithful. To date the Adult Formation Team has developed the Handbook of Short Courses and “Supporting Lay Pastoral Ministry” which have been well received, used and attended. The Team also give on-going support at local and Diocesan level for Parish Catechists. It is suggested that there are additional areas of work which should have priority within the lifespan of this Plan.

- ❖ **Proposal:** The CEAF is to implement the following identified priorities:
 - A new Diocesan Foundation Catechists Course
 - Developing on-going pathways for accreditation, e.g. CCRS
 - Promoting learning, discussion and application of recent Church Teaching
 - Offering further formation in pastoral skills (including advanced listening skills)

10) Collaborative Formation. It is acknowledged that there are specific formation needs of different groups: Priests, Deacons and Laity. We already have a degree of collaborative working in our parishes; however, the challenges which face us as Church today also require collaborative formation (Clergy and Laity together) as a priority, in order to develop the spirit of co-responsibility identified by Bishop Terry.

In “The Sign we Give” the Bishop’s Conference recognises that a truly collaborative Church requires collaborative formation: “...to enable a gradual formation of ideas and attitudes across the Diocese which provide foundations and resources for collaboration at local level”. It is always beneficial to do together whatever we feasibly can. This will require discussion and reflection throughout the Diocese on the relationship of Priest and community (as outlined in the Needs Analysis on page 17).

- ❖ **Proposal:** The CEAF to promote collaborative formation

11) Partnerships. There are many agencies, within and outside of the Church that are already engaged in offering Adult Formation in many of the areas identified in the Needs Analysis and outlined in the Responses above. The aim will be, wherever possible, to work with and establish partnerships with these agencies to avoid duplication of cost and effort, and make their resources available to the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese.

- ❖ **Proposal:** The CEAF to promote working in partnership wherever it is feasible

Conclusion

The challenges and opportunities the Church faces in the years ahead demand a bold response. These proposals, though ambitious, outline an achievable agenda over the next five years. They cannot be achieved by the Adult Formation Department alone, but demand co-operation right across the Diocese. The reward - a high level of participation in Adult Formation within the Church - will make a major contribution to the realisation of the vision of Vatican II: clergy and lay people together playing their full part in the life and mission of the Church.

Section Three: Resources

This section sets out the resources required to implement the response described in the previous section under three headings: human, physical and financial.

Human

In 2006 the current team of Adult Formation Director and Adviser came into existence and has so far been successful in achieving the objectives outlined in the first Strategic Plan "Sowing the Seed". This current plan now sets out more extensive objectives and to meet them will require an increase in human resources.

The proposal is:

- ❖ **OPTION A** - One additional full-time employee (working in the southern half of the Diocese)

OR

- ❖ **OPTION B** - Two additional half-time employees (working in the Central and Southern Vicariates)

The secretarial/admin support provided so far has been essential but insufficient in quantity; the Team will need an increased level of secretarial support of one ½ time employee.

Physical

The lap-top computers, portable screen and digital projector are extensively used by the existing Team, and it will be essential to provide such equipment to new employee(s). Extra office space and computer provision will also be required, most probably in York and/or Hull.

Financial

There are two particular financial matters to be considered:

- 1) Consolidation of the existing Team. This is currently financed through a levy on all parishes under an initial agreement for five years, but a way needs to be found to put the finance of the Team onto a permanent basis.
- 2) Additional costs of an increased Team.

The cost of the two options outlined in the proposal above are set out below:

Adult Formation (Option B)

Proposed New Employees (Estimated Costs)									
<u>Pay</u>							Year 1	Year 2	
	Gross Pay	NIC Costs	Pension				Total	Total	
Emp 1	35500	4000	2145				41645	41645	
Emp 2 (1/2)	12500	1300	725				14525	14525	
Emp 3 (1/2)	12500	1300	725				14525	14525	
Emp 4 (Clerk) (1/2)	7500	750	450				8700	8700	
Priest	4000						4000	4000	
Motor Costs									
	Purchase	Car Insurance	P11D Costs	Motor Expenses	Mileage				
Emp 1		350	370	300	1200		2220	2220	
Emp 2 (1/2)	-	-	-	-	2000		2000	2000	
Emp 3 (1/2)	-	-	-	-	2000		2000	2000	
Emp 4 (Clerk) (1/2)	-	-	-	-	-		0	0	
Priest	-	-	-	-	300		300	300	
Other Costs									
	Telephone	Books/Publications	Hospitality	Office Rent	Ongoing Formation	Printing & Stationery			
Emp 1	420	300	300	-	1000	-	2020	2020	
Emp 2 (1/2)	420	300	200	1000	500	-	2420	2420	
Emp 3 (1/2)	420	300	200	1000	500	-	2420	2420	
Emp 4 (Clerk) (1/2)	-	-	-	-	-	2000	2000	2000	
Priest	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0	
							Total Annual Costs	98775	98775
Other Costs (One off)									
	Compuer Equip.	Office Furniture							
Emp 1	50	50					100	100	
Emp 2 (1/2)	1000	1000					2000	100	
Emp 3 (1/2)	1000	1000					2000	100	
Emp 4 (Clerk) (1/2)	-	-					0	0	
Priest	-	-					0	0	
							Grand Total For Year One, Say	102875	99075

Conclusion

The aim of catechesis is “to put people not only in touch, but also in communion and intimacy with Jesus Christ” (*GDC*, #80). This faith (“a gift destined to grow”) “sets in motion a process of continuing conversion, which lasts for the whole of life” (*GDC* #56). For this reason, “catechesis for adults ... must be considered the chief form of catechesis (#59). This ‘*Priority of Adult Formation*’ – not just for the whole Church but for this Diocese, is what has informed our reflections and conclusions in this Plan.

The Church, as Section One illustrates, is living through a period of significant change, which in itself presents new challenges and opportunities. The study of the demographic trends in the Diocese over the last thirty years shows significant decline in key areas of Catholic life so that today there are markedly fewer active priests and smaller ageing congregations. Looking to the future, given that these trends look set to continue, further thought and action will be needed about the number and shape of parish communities.

There are encouraging signs for the future. Despite smaller congregations a sign of growing co-responsibility between clergy and laity is demonstrated by the large number of people active in various lay ministries and chaplaincy throughout the Diocese. There is also growing interest and an increase in vocations to the Permanent Diaconate.

Given all the changes of the last thirty years there is an urgent need to enter into dialogue, in the Diocese or elsewhere, to discern the role and relationship between the Priest and People. This is important in developing a proper understanding of co-responsibility in building evangelising parish communities capable of proclaiming the ‘Good News’ in our changing and challenging society.

The demographics also point to the urgent need for evangelisation with young people and young families. There has been a dramatic decline in the number of people marrying in the Church, and consequently the number of baptisms. These factors are reflected in the age profile of parish congregations.

The creation of an Adult Formation Department in the Diocese has made a significant impact in raising awareness of lifelong discipleship, the provision of many new courses responding to need, developing a network of contacts and initiating and supporting a number of evangelisation activities at parish and Diocesan level. Other providers of Adult Formation in the Diocese also offer a rich and valued resource.

However, much more needs to be done. In line with the recommendations of the *GDC*, we need to develop a *systematic catechesis for all*, raising people’s awareness that the call to be a disciple is a lifelong process, an apprenticeship, which needs support at every stage. The sense that catechesis is either for children or else something tied up with academic learning needs to be replaced with an awareness that catechesis is in fact quite simply about our ongoing relationship with Christ.

The review of Church Teaching set out in Appendix One indicates the way forward for the Diocese:

- To foster in adults a fundamental awareness that all are called to be disciples.
- To provide personnel and resources which ensure systematic, comprehensive, good quality, accessible, well-resourced catechesis for all.

- To give creative thought to the geography and size of the Diocese, its areas and parishes, the age and numbers of people, and the specific needs of local parish communities.
- To enable parishes to look at their own needs, and discern the needs of the inactive Catholics in their local area, rather than having "programmes" launched from above. Local communities must take responsibility for formation.

Section Two sets out eleven proposals in response to the issues and challenges identified in the Needs Analysis. Seven deal with strategy and vision. The first calls for a review of the working of the CEAF so that it can more effectively implement, monitor and evaluate this Strategic Plan. A number of proposals respond to the issues raised about life-long discipleship, systematic planning for catechesis and evangelisation; all require a strategic vision as well as embracing practical action and outcomes. The demographics point to the urgent need for work in the area of Marriage and Family Life and a proposal is made to set up a permanent Department in the Diocese to undertake this work.

The present Adult Formation Team (one Priest working part-time and one Lay Person working full-time with some secretarial and administrative support) was set up with funding from a parish levy for five years in response to the first Strategic Plan '*Sowing the Seed*' and is due to expire in 2011. Most of the objectives set out in that plan have been achieved, whilst the remainder are a work in progress.

As this plan demonstrates, there are new challenges to be faced and Adult Formation has a vital role to play in developing the skills and understanding of clergy and laity as they seek to find a way forward. It will be difficult to do this without a team of people with the appropriate skills and competence. It is proposed that the Team be made permanent and expanded so that it can achieve the objectives and implement the programmes set out in this plan.

There are four proposals concerning programmes of formation and partnerships. These include on-going formation for clergy and a number of specific programmes for the Lay Faithful responding to identified needs. The challenges set out here for the coming decade and beyond face the whole Church, clergy and laity and require a collaborative response. It is proposed therefore to develop programmes of collaborative formation wherever appropriate and possible.

It is important to acknowledge that we do not always have to reinvent the wheel. There are other providers and agencies offering Adult Formation in various fields and where appropriate the Team will co-operate with them to avoid unnecessary duplication and enable the Diocese to make use of resources which already exist.

The resources required to implement the plan are set out in Section Three under three headings: human, physical and financial.

It is not possible to respond in any effective way without a team of people with the requisite skills to plan, develop and deliver the strategic initiatives, the programmes of formation and training, and the partnerships envisaged in this plan. The present team consist of one full-time worker and a priest working part-time. The proposal is to add to this team either one additional full-time worker (whose work will focus on the southern half of the Diocese) or two part-time workers (based in the Central and Southern Vicariates). The costs of each option, as well as office equipment and accommodation are also set out.

In his Letter to the Ephesians Saint Paul writes that the Lord gives gifts “to equip the saints for the work of service, for the building up the Body of Christ, until all of us come to unity in our faith and in our knowledge of the Son of God ... fully mature with the fullness of Christ himself.” (*Eph 4:12-13*)

This succinct description of the Holy Spirit animating the Church is our blueprint: to grow into maturity as disciples of Christ, equipped for the work of service, especially the work of proclaiming the Good News. It is an invitation to move from collaboration in the life and mission of the Church, to accept co-responsibility for that life and mission. This Plan is proposed as one means by which the Church in the Diocese of Middlesbrough can respond to this mandate.

Recommendations to the Bishop

It is recommended that:

- ❖ **this Plan for Adult Formation and Evangelisation be adopted for the Diocese of Middlesbrough.**
- ❖ **the financing of the Adult Formation Team be put on a permanent basis.**
- ❖ **in order to achieve the objectives of this Plan, the Adult Formation Team be expanded and a decision made for Option A or Option B.**
- ❖ **this Plan be promoted to the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese.**
- ❖ **consideration be given to the Diocesan-wide implications of this Plan, especially a Diocesan Strategic Plan for Marriage and Family Life and Diocesan Strategies to promote Evangelisation and Catechesis.**

Appendix 1

Review of Church Teaching & Initiatives

The aim here is to give an overview of the documentary sources that underpin and give life to a vision for the priority of Adult Formation in the Diocese. These are essential for the understanding of Adult Formation as a priority for the Church.

The concern voiced at the Second Vatican Council about the split between what is believed and what is actually lived out (*Gaudium et Spes* 43) has been expressed consistently in the forty years since its close.

“The tasks of catechesis constitute a totality, rich and varied in aspect... just as the human body needs all of its organs to work, so too if the Christian life is to mature, all aspects of it must be cultivated: **knowledge of the faith, liturgical life, moral formation, prayer, belonging to a community, the missionary spirit.** If catechesis ignores any one of these, the Christian faith cannot attain full development”.⁴

Summary of Documents of Vatican II

Vatican II presents a whole sea-change in the Church’s understanding of itself and its mission in the world. The four main Constitutions of the Second Vatican Council each have a significant bearing on the priority of Adult Formation:

- *Lumen Gentium*: Constitution on the Church
- *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
- *Dei Verbum*: Constitution on Divine Revelation
- *Gaudium et Spes*: Constitution on the Church in the Modern World

It is also important to note other Vatican II documents: concerning **the Role of Bishops, and Priests**, in the life of the Church, and their own continuing formation, with their key role of enabling mature and adult participation of all the baptised. (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* and *Christus Dominus*) and the **formation that comes through service of others** (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*).

Documents that give shape to the Vatican II Vision: 1970-1979

- *General Catechetical Directory* (1971):
- *RCIA* (1972)
- *Evangelii Nuntiandi: On Evangelisation in the Modern World* (1975)
- *Catechesis Tradendae: On Catechesis in our Time* (1979)

In the 1980's our own Bishops in England and Wales produced their reflections on Adult Formation in the document *Easter People* (1980):

“The continuing Christian education and formation of adult members of the Church must become a priority in our Church's educational labours... we willingly accept the practical implications of this decision, including the allocation of personnel and resources that may be proved necessary... There can be no priority more urgent. Disappointments and frustrations will abound, but nothing should deflect bishops or priests from the task of calling, forming and sustaining Christians who are deeply

⁴ GDC (1997) 87

committed to Christ and who will express this commitment in the whole of their lives"⁵

Formation must enable development of talents, prayer and study together, support of the young, opportunity for talking about life. At the heart of all education and formation is community. Continuing formation is needed by all adult Christians, whether clergy, religious or lay.

During this period, **His Holiness Pope John Paul II** created the Pontifical Council for Culture, later merging with the Council for Dialogue with Non-believers, to seek to understand, relate to and engage with the culture of today. His decision to call together leaders from a wide range of religious groups in Assisi in 1986 points to his willingness to engage with people from all possible religious backgrounds, reflecting the Council's stress on the importance of ecumenical and interfaith dialogue.

Pope John Paul II issued a document on the Laity, *Christifideles Laici* (1988), the first of three pathways of discipleship, followed by *Pastores Dabo Vobis* on priestly ministry (1992) and *Vita Consecrata* on religious life (1996), which deal with the continuing process and shared responsibility of all the baptised for maturation in faith, as individuals and communities, throughout life. The document restates that the mission of the lay faithful derives from their baptism. This mission is to bring about the perfection of creation through an application of the fruits of redemption. It spells out the real life situations of family, work, leisure, and in society in which the laity fulfil their vocation. It also points to the necessity of formation: "Growth in the spiritual life and commitment for mission require that the laity receive a well grounded and complete formation, offered by the Church in a variety of ways, and at different stages in life." (*Paragraph 70*).

The Code of Canon Law was revised, deliberately speaking of the parish in terms of relationships rather than mere territory, and highlighting that it was the right and duty of adults in the community of believers to "strive for maturity".

From 1990 to the present, several major documents came from Rome:

- *Adult Catechesis in the Christian Community* (1990: Produced by the International Council for Catechesis, in Rome).
 - "To become an adult and live as an adult is a vocation given by God to human beings (10).
 - A fully Christian community can only exist when a systematic catechesis of all its members takes place: adult catechesis is the central task (25).
 - It needs to be part of an overall pastoral plan, integrated with liturgical formation, and with due regard for the faith/scripture content and its implications for life.
- *On the Formation of Priests: Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1992). The programme of priestly formation should respect the principles of Adult Formation (41). The *Charter for Priestly Formation* (1991) says the programme for formation is part of the journey in faith undertaken within the Christian Community. It is important to note the prime role and responsibility of the clergy (Canon Law 776) in the area of catechesis is to "animate the gifts of others". Priests too need opportunities for

⁵ Easter People 145-151

continuing formation, including insights into the principles of adult learning, as part of their “own growth towards maturity as an adult Christian”. (PDV 70 & 76). Taking responsibility for this as a priest is described as “*an act of love for the people of God, whose fundamental right is to receive the word of God*”. Such formation should integrate the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral.

Two further major developments in Adult Catechesis are firstly, the advent of the **Catechism of the Catholic Church (1992-1994)** which presents “an organic synthesis of the essential and fundamental content of Catholic doctrine as regards faith and morals”⁶ and as such it is an indispensable reference for those responsible for Adult Formation. It gives priority to post-baptismal growth towards maturity. Secondly, the blueprint strategy to support the priority of adult catechesis is embodied in **The General Directory for Catechesis (1997)**, giving the theological and pastoral guidelines whereby catechists and others can accompany, encourage, challenge believers on their journey of faith. It exhorts that catechesis must be integrated formation in doctrine, scripture, liturgy, social teaching, discipleship, prayer – with the breadth of theology and vision of Vatican II, as expressed in all former documents mentioned. It involves the whole of life – faith as known, celebrated, lived out and prayed, as a life-long journey to maturity. The theology of Trinity is at the centre, establishing our communion with God and one another in Christ, through the workings of the Holy Spirit. The context for catechesis is the community of the faithful. There should be a co-ordination amongst all involved in formation, and full awareness of up-to-date developments in catechesis. There is also a concern for Christian unity.

Alongside these two visionary documents of the Church, our own Bishops have produced teachings which have a strong bearing on Adult Formation, the first being **The Sign We Give** (Bishops of England and Wales, 1995) on collaborative ministry, highlighting the importance of working together towards maturity. This document was followed two years later by **The Common Good** (1997) on the Church's Social Teaching and our responsibility to play our part in shaping our society. Most recently, in 2002, the Bishops produced a document called **The Priority of Adult Formation**, placing the priority of Adult Catechesis firmly in the context of the Church's mission to evangelise: “There is a sense in which we in Britain are very much in a missionary context, in which we need to summon people to the faith, as well as affirm them in the faith”.⁷ Our Bishops highlight the need for: collaborative formation whenever possible; provision of formation and support for those responsible for catechesis (parents, priests etc) as well as for inactive Catholics. They also acknowledge the need for increased resources, better use of the homily, the simple need for both individuals and established parish groups to acknowledge their need for continuing formation, and a greater sense of outreach to the marginalized as well as to inactive Catholics.

These documents offer a comprehensive and developing understanding of the importance and nature of Christian formation from Vatican II to the present time. The documents make it clear that the purpose of Adult Catechesis is the formation of mature, responsible adult Christians, enabled by the community, within the community, to contribute to the life of the community, and share in the responsibility for mission. The parish is re-defined as the basic unit or “Eucharistic Community”, to which the adult Catholic Christian belongs, to love and to serve and give glory to God.

⁶ GDC #121

⁷ Soil for the Seed: Jim Gallagher SDB. (p 158-161)