





“This is a critical moment in the history of our diocese. Let us open our hearts and hands to the Holy Spirit, and work to create an enduring, viable faith community filled with vitality.”

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,

I am pleased to present to you the Diocese of Greensburg Strategic Plan, which is a result of a year-long effort of prayer, study, and consultation that I pray will put us on the path to a blessed future!

Since becoming your Bishop, I have been humbled by the willingness of so many of the faithful to serve the Church, especially during a time of great hardship. I was ordained and installed as the Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Greensburg in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, a time like no other in history. Still, the dedication to so many mission-critical ministries and unselfish service in caring for people in need continued. You have my enduring gratitude.

As we emerge from the pandemic, it has become increasingly clear that the Diocese of Greensburg has experienced a tremendous amount of change. While the pandemic provided us the opportunity to invest in many technological advances to stream liturgies and stay connected on social media with the faithful, we have become accustomed to a new, virtual reality in which technology oftentimes replaces in-person interactions. But nothing will ever replace the experience of worship at which bread and wine are consecrated and shared in the gift of the Eucharist. Unfortunately, many have not returned to the pews or maintained personal connections to their parish.

A nationwide decline in post-pandemic Mass attendance is just one of the so-called “math problems” we face. The number of active native-born clergy is expected to decline significantly in the next eight years, going from 37 to just 15. The shrinking population of Western Pennsylvania is staggering. Westmoreland County has the highest number of natural deaths in the state. The county is losing 2,000 people per year. Our other counties have had significant population loss as recorded in the last census (2010-2020): Armstrong -6% (4,000 people), Fayette -7.6% (9,675 people), and Indiana County -7.2% (6,000 people). The number of Catholic funerals in the four counties of the Diocese last year was 2,100 while the number of baptisms was only 760. Our overall number of parishioners decreased in 2021 by 4% or 4,720 people.

Yet, I still have great hope for our Diocese. Together we have the opportunity to create a more Eucharistic community devoted to loving and serving one another and forming Disciples of Christ. Never in the history of humankind have we been blessed with the current resources and technologies to strengthen enduring and viable faith communities that are filled with the Holy Spirit. The statistics I give above paint only part of the picture. I am confident that, together with the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we can create a masterpiece for God and our local Church. We must believe in the power of prayer and hard work. What this strategic plan proposes will help us to accomplish great things for the glory of God.

This is a critical moment in the history of our diocese. Let us open our hearts and hands to the Holy Spirit, and work to create an enduring, viable faith community filled with vitality. I am excited to present this plan to you, which will serve as a means of achieving the important goals we set forth to accomplish together.

I hope you will join me in prayer and support of these initiatives. Please be assured you are in my prayers!

SINCERELY YOURS IN CHRIST,

+ Larry J. Kulick

**The Most Reverend Larry J. Kulick, J.C.L.
Bishop of Greensburg**



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027

Bishop Larry J. Kulick, alongside the Diocese of Greensburg Strategic Planning Committee, developed five major strategic priorities, set forth goals and objectives for each of those priorities and defined the mission, vision and values of the Diocese of Greensburg. Over the next five years, this Strategic Plan should provide the operational framework for creation of an enduring, viable faith community filled with vitality.

The process began in the January of 2022, with the preparation of a situation analysis, details of which are included in Bishop Kulick's introductory letter. They concern the current state of the Diocese, including Mass attendance, priestly vocations, population and parish statistics including baptisms and funerals. The purpose of the situation analysis, which was presented to the Bishop's Curia, was to quantify the internal and external challenges facing our faith community.

In February of 2022, Bishop Kulick launched a massive effort to gather quantitative and qualitative data from across the Diocese. The "Synodal Process" as directed by our Holy Father Pope Francis gave the Diocese an opportunity to hold 18 town hall listening sessions involving more than 1,000 people, administer two major surveys which gathered input from more than 13,000 people, and conduct a one year study with surveys and listening sessions regarding faith formation in the Diocese.



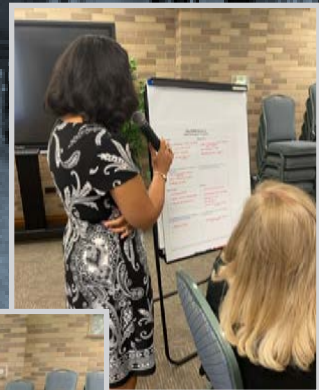
DIOCESE OF GREENSBURG STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS BY THE NUMBERS:

18
Town Hall listening sessions

1,000
People in attendance

2
major surveys

13,000
people provided input



On June 22 and 23, 2022, Bishop Kulick assembled the Strategic Planning Committee of the Diocese of Greensburg. The group utilized the situation analysis and the synodal input to develop mission-driven goals, key performance indicators, stakeholder visions, internal process changes and intellectual capital needs for the following areas:

- Evangelization and Catechesis
- Catholic Charities Operations Plan
- Clergy Formation
- Development and Fundraising
- Priestly Vocations
- Pro-Life Advocacy

FOUNDATIONAL STATEMENTS

MISSION

To create a more Eucharistic Community devoted to loving and serving Christ and one another, and forming Missionary Disciples of Christ.

VISION

The Diocese of Greensburg is a communion of believers. We exist to serve our parishes and our priority is to help each one of them to be viable and filled with vitality for spreading the Gospel and praying for the Salvation of Souls.

CORE VALUES: SOULS

SALVATION

OUTREACH

UNDERSTANDING

LIFE AND DIGNITY

STEWARDSHIP

STRATEGIC PILLARS AS GOALS FOR THE DIOCESE

- 1 Transmitting the Faith
- 2 Creating Parish Vitality
- 3 Hearing His Call
- 4 Walking In Faith
- 5 Building Connectivity



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

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 Fr. Kenneth Zaccagnini
 Barbara Zucconi
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 Robin Mull
 Beth Tallentire
 Jordan Whiteko



1 TRANSMITTING THE FAITH

GOAL

Be a more welcoming, engaging Church.

OBJECTIVE 1

Evaluate the new-parishioner experience, from the first phone call to the first person they see as they enter the church to the first time they sit in the pew.

OBJECTIVE 2

Connect to more people through the use of technology (websites, social media and CCTV).

OBJECTIVE 3

Use multi-platform communication and enhanced catechesis to reach and resonate with all parishioners.

The continuity and consistency of the responses during the synodal process should be noted; from nearly 1,000 individuals who attended the in-person and virtual listening sessions, many expressed a need to focus on transmitting the faith through enhanced catechesis and evangelization. Almost all participants have a great desire to pass on the faith and a sincere interest to help but are not sure how they can be of assistance. Many also expressed concern about fulfilling the legacy of our faith, fearful about how we will fill our pews with the next generation of disciples. Another point conveyed by many participants was the need for pastoral care of parents and grandparents whose children have already left the Church.

Nearly 10,000 paper and electronic surveys were aggregated from across the Diocese

of Greensburg, from parishioners, clergy, religious orders and young people. The surveys revealed that more than 80% of respondents feel very connected to their faith because of the communication they receive from their parishes about opportunities to engage in parish life. This is likely a positive result of COVID-19, when the shutdown necessitated a new model of communication. Many parishes began social media pages, created e-mail databases, and used video to share Mass and spiritual messages with their congregations.

More listening sessions, consistent pulse surveying, listening to the voice of parishioners and communicating to them with new and innovative evangelization and catechesis will become important tactics for transmitting the faith.

80% of respondents feel very connected to their faith because of the communication they receive from their parishes about opportunities to engage in parish life.

2 CREATING PARISH VITALITY

GOAL

Regionalize outreach efforts to create viable parishes filled with vitality.

OBJECTIVE 1

Prioritize efforts that promote vocations.

OBJECTIVE 2

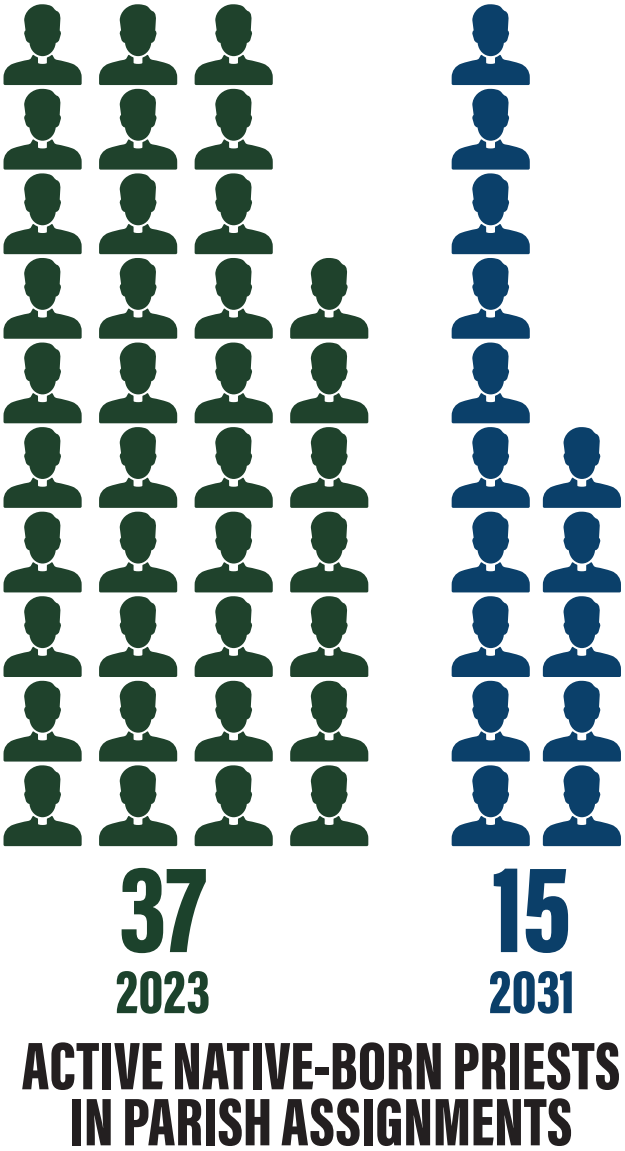
Offer ongoing and inspiring clergy formation opportunities for all priests and deacons, especially international clergy.

OBJECTIVE 3

Create strong pastoral and finance councils, develop strong lay leaders, and attract new volunteers to serve parishes.

Much of the discussion during the synodal listening sessions focused on the “math problem” in the Diocese of Greensburg – mainly that the number of native-born priests in the Diocese of Greensburg is expected to shrink from about 37 to 15 in the next 8 years.

There is great concern about vocations and the engagement of young people. Most participants believe youth and young adults will respond to mission-oriented parish work, as well as creative and new evangelization and faith formation. There was a call from many for family-oriented catechesis, youth-focused Masses, retreats and social activities to make the parish the center of spiritual life for families so that parents will prioritize involvement. The assistance of well-trained lay leaders was viewed as a necessity so that priests can focus on the sacramental needs of the parish. Regionalization of resources could be an effective tool in assisting smaller parishes to deliver the catechesis and ministries if they are willing to enter into collaborative agreements.



The need for ongoing clergy formation opportunities was clear during the clergy listening sessions, which called for additional assimilation assistance specifically for international clergy. Specific needs were also revealed in a pastoral connectivity survey taken by more than 10,000 individuals throughout the Diocese of Greensburg:

1. I can explain the mission of the Church to others.
43% said yes, definitely.
2. I leave Mass feeling spiritually fed.
68% said yes, definitely.
3. My parish is sensitive to the major needs of parishioners.
58% said yes, definitely.
4. The music at Mass helps me enter into a prayerful attitude.
65% said yes, definitely.
5. The homilies at Mass are relevant and meaningful.
67% said yes, definitely.
6. The money spent by my parish reflects its commitment to the mission of the Church.
57% said yes, definitely.
7. The religious education at my parish is forming well-rounded disciples.
45% said yes, definitely.
8. My parish communicates with me about opportunities for worship and service.
81% said yes, definitely.
9. I feel that my parish welcomes my ideas and participation.
52% said yes, definitely.
10. I feel that I am an integral part of the parish community.
50% said yes, definitely.
11. I participate in activities of my parish beyond Mass attendance.
43% said yes, definitely.
12. The Church is a visible, integral part of my neighborhood and the larger community.
59% said yes, definitely.
13. The Church reaches out to those who feel disenfranchised.
37% said yes, definitely.

The Synod Committee of the Diocese of Greensburg organized an event to engage active pastoral and finance councils throughout the Diocese of Greensburg. On Feb. 6, 2022, pastoral and finance council members from 10 parishes were invited to Mass and brunch with Bishop Kulick, and 92 attended.

Most councils believe they are successful because of the diversity of talents around the table. They

value transparency, parishioner and pastor input, and the ability to listen to one another. Many of the councils thought it was important to clearly communicate the “state” of the parish yearly, by providing a written or electronic report to ensure parishioners are aware of the opportunities and challenges facing each parish. All stressed the need for new, younger members who can bring valuable insight to the parish mission and activities.

3 HEARING HIS CALL

GOAL

Call people to action.

OBJECTIVE 1

Prioritize Eucharistic Revival efforts from the inside out, providing the best experiences the Church has to offer.

OBJECTIVE 2

Empower the next generation of Christ’s disciples to lead.

OBJECTIVE 3

Encourage stewardship by connecting to parishioners in new ways.

Eucharistic Revival is a three-year process initiated by the USCCB to invite the faithful to reflect upon the mystery and meaning of the sacrament of the Eucharist in our lives. The goal is to create a more Eucharistic Community devoted to loving and serving one another, and forming Disciples of Christ. As Catholics, we are both blessed and broken. His Real Presence in the Eucharistic can transform our hearts. Jesus left us this gift! In a world that is so hurried, we must all slow down, do a deep dive and reflect upon it.

The Diocese is also working on a plan for a series of “Know Him” Gatherings. These experiential evangelization events will help us all grow closer to Christ by learning about his life and the lessons He taught the world. We are working to create short but engaging events that include speakers, multimedia content, witness testimony and interactive activities for the “Know Him” series to be held at Christ Our Shepherd Center. The events are specifically designed for Diocesan and parish staff members, but will be open to public registration as well.

Our efforts will begin from the inside out, first offering formational and devotional opportunities for staff throughout 2023 culminating with a Eucharistic Congress in 2023. After that, we hope they are better prepared to help create a more Eucharistic Community; founding new and innovative ministries focused on re-connecting to the disenfranchised and creating experiential evangelization opportunities that interest and engage our young people. One-to-one personal invitations will be an important part of the process.

One-to-one personal invitations are also an important part of encouraging stewardship. Strategic hires including a Managing Director of Development and a Director of the Catholic Foundation will reinvigorate efforts surrounding planned giving, seminarian and clergy formation support, EITC funding and Bishop’s Circle participation.

It is also important to note the many opportunities Bishop Kulick has pursued to re-engage sectors of the faithful throughout the Diocese of Greensburg. Through pastoral visits and personal outreach.

- **YOUTH:** Only about half of respondents under the age of 18 believe that music during Mass and homilies is engaging. And only 43% feel they are an integral part of the Church.
- **FALLEN AWAY CATHOLICS:** Of the respondents who no longer feel connected to the Church, most cannot explain the mission and do not feel they are an integral part of the Church.
- **PRACTICING CATHOLICS:** Those who attend Mass regularly feel we are caring for their needs but do not feel the Church is doing enough for the disenfranchised.
- **THOSE WHO WANT TO HELP:** Many expressed a willingness to help but are not sure what they can do and disagree about parish consolidation and opportunities to share resources.
- **OTHER ISSUES:** There were pockets of discourse surrounding the Celebration of The Extraordinary Form of the Mass, the environment and the church’s stance on same sex marriage.

4 WALKING IN FAITH

GOAL

Walk with parishioners.

OBJECTIVE 1

Continuously evaluate the needs of the faithful and respond to them.

OBJECTIVE 2

Develop more engaging faith formation.

OBJECTIVE 3

Better communicate the resources provided by the Church.

Most of the attendees of the listening sessions belonged to a parish and could identify the mission of the Church. However, almost all were concerned about the next generation of Catholics feeling disconnected from the mission or not even really understanding it. In most cases, participants emphasized the need for more creative, engaging faith formation and opportunities for adult formation, devotion and well-celebrated liturgies that touch the hearts and minds of parishioners. Often, it was said, parishioners need to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit. There was also a call for a clear, united voice from the Church on its teachings.

Parishioners listed many impactful ministries at their parishes like bereavement, poverty relief, homebound and senior care ministries, and pro-life advocacy. Some recognized the need for more service opportunities to better engage younger Catholics. Many expressed a need for an evangelization ministry to reach the unaffiliated or outreach missions to those who have left the Church. There were countless parents and grandparents who expressed a deep hurt over their children leaving the Church and asked for spiritual guidance. Almost all who participated were willing to help with new evangelization and spiritual outreach but are asking for guidance on what exactly they should be doing.

The Diocese of Greensburg will continue to use an integrated approach to gather input from across the region from as many individuals as possible over the next five years. The Diocese has taken seriously the call from our Holy Father to create a more Synodal Church. We will continue to implement listening sessions, continue to gather input, and continue looking for opportunities to evangelize.

An example of that process was a year-long faith formation study in the Diocese of Greensburg called “Christ Is the Truth,” in which listening sessions were conducted and surveys distributed in order to discover the thoughts and needs of those most directly involved with providing faith formation throughout the Diocese. Input regarding the whole area of Faith Formation was gleaned from the Synodal listening sessions as well.

Much of the feedback we received centered on the need for creative catechesis programming, collaboration among parishes, schools and facilitating dynamic encounters with Christ. A strategic hire of an individual is needed who has demonstrated success in creating and executing pastoral plans that engage entire families using various forms of faith formation.

The listening sessions and the surveys supported the need for enhanced catechetical offerings, communication, collaboration and outreach in and among the parishes in the Diocese of Greensburg. The fulfillment of many of these needs will help the leaders of our parishes to bring Christ to the people.

5 BUILDING CONNECTIVITY

GOAL
Focus on the less connected.

OBJECTIVE 1
Empower Catholic Charities to assist the poor and energize Catholic schools to create new disciples.

OBJECTIVE 2
Adopt technology tools to help us better know our parishioners and who we have lost and how we can better connect with them.

OBJECTIVE 3
Implement new communication mediums realizing the internet is now the front door to our Church.

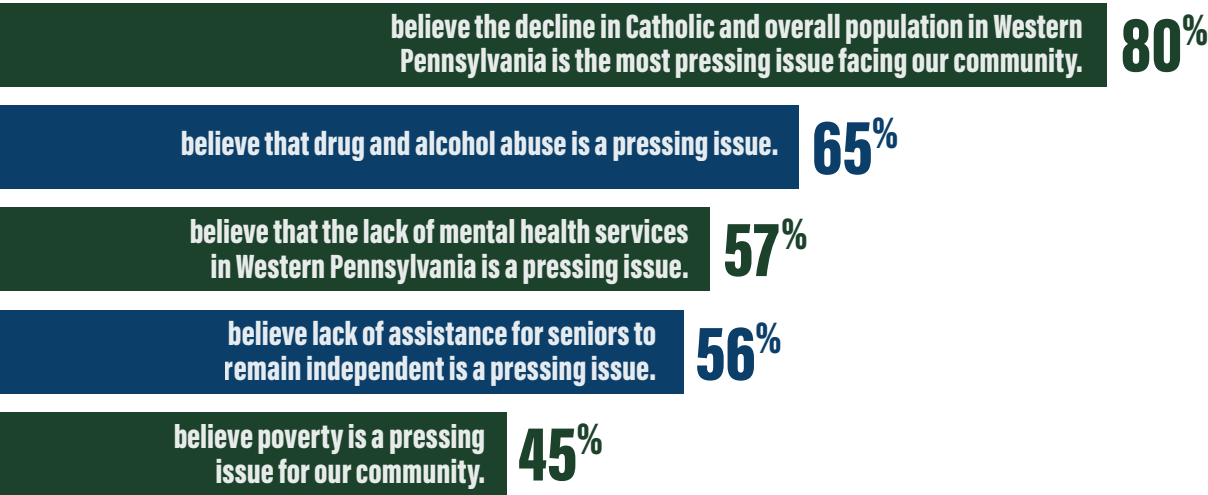
OBJECTIVE 4
Continue to prioritize the safety of youth and volunteer adults.

Data plays an important role in this strategic pillar. The Diocese must optimize parishioner relationship management tools and encourage parishes to invest time and resources into their databases. These technology tools will help us know better who we are serving and who we are not. By aggregating that data, major outreach ministries can begin, bridges can be built and those who have left can once again be invited to rejoin our faith community.

Yearly data about website and social media traffic will help us to determine who is searching for us

and why. Our front door to the faith community is both relational and virtual, so we must make sure we are on the cutting edge of connectivity.

In the fall of 2021, and as part of both the Synodal and strategic planning processes for Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Greensburg, a survey of stakeholders regarding the pressing needs of our community was sent to staff, volunteers, clergy and parishioners. Catholic Charities received 3,000 responses from across the four counties of the Diocese. The results are as follows:



According to the youth and young adult survey, Catholic Schools are critical to the formation of disciples:

Youth & Young Adult Report Respondents under age 30 Nearly 1200 Surveys Collected from all parishes



Nearly 1,200 parishioners under the age of 30 participated (about 12% of total respondents) in the pastoral connectivity survey as part of the Synodal process. The sample size by parish was not statistically relevant, and would have a large margin of error if broken down by parish. In aggregate, you can see the percentages of participants who answered "yes" as compared to the larger sample size of parishioners to each question.

Survey Question Results	Yes	Diocesan Average (Yes)
I understand the mission of the Church.	57.00%	43.00%
I leave Mass feeling closer to my faith.	61.50%	68.00%
I feel like I have a voice in my parish.	67.00%	58.00%
The music at Mass puts me in a spiritual mood.	57.00%	65.00%
The homilies at Mass are relevant and meaningful to me.	59.00%	67.00%
My parish has fundraisers that engage all ages.	51.00%	57.00%
The religious education at my parish is forming me to be a well-rounded disciple.	60.00%	45.00%
My parish informs me of opportunities for prayer and service.	76.50%	81.00%
I feel welcomed in my parish community.	47.00%	52.00%
My parish welcomes ideas and suggestions from its youth community.	67.00%	50.00%
I participate in parish activities other than attending Mass.	49.00%	43.00%
I see my Church helping in the community.	63.00%	59.00%
My parish connects with people in need.	43.00%	37.00%

Here are some responses of note:

- Only about half of respondents **under the age of 18** believe the music at Mass is engaging.
- Only about half of respondents **under the age of 18** believe homilies are engaging and meaningful.
- About 83% of respondents **under the age of 18** feel their ideas and input are welcome at their parish, but only 43% feel they are an integral part of their faith community.
- Overall, 80% of total survey respondents believe their parish communicates with them about opportunities for worship.
- Parishioner's survey responses indicate, for the most part, they feel cared for by their parish, but believe the Church as a whole is not doing enough for the disenfranchised.
- We received about 1,500 responses from a survey alert postcard mailed to individuals who have not donated to their parish in the last five years. Most could not explain the mission of the Church and do not feel they are integral part of their faith community.

Regarding the protection of children and vulnerable adults, Bishop Kulick has said publically that he will work tirelessly with all key collaborators and advisory bodies to continue to follow the Diocesan Policies put in place by his predecessors as well as monitor the best ways possible to bring reconciliation and healing to

those effected by these actions. This includes monitoring and updating as necessary our safe environment policies and regulations to continue to ensure that our parishes, schools, and organizations are the safest places for our children, youth and vulnerable adults.



DIOCESE OF GREENSBURG

**STRATEGIC PLAN
2023-2027**

May 1, 2023