



ST JOSEPH'S
CATHOLIC PARISH, LEVIN

Te Pārihi o Hāto
Hōhepa Taitoko

FINAL DRAFT PASTORAL PLAN

2025 - 2028

St. Joseph's Catholic Parish, Levin - Final Draft Pastoral Plan (2025-2028)

Introduction: A Parish Journey Towards Our Vision

This Final Draft Pastoral Plan outlines the next steps in the life and mission of St Joseph's Parish, Levin. It has been shaped by a process of listening, reflection, and shared discernment, grounded in our vision of being "a community radiating the light of Christ."

Our parish's journey to this plan has unfolded over the past nine months:

1. **2024 Parish Survey:** In late 2024, all parishioners were invited to participate in a survey at Mass. We asked which Synod Topic Areas from the Wellington Archdiocese would best support our parish in living out our vision. Your responses helped identify the areas most important to our community. We then aligned these with the 2024 New Zealand Bishops' Synod Report, ensuring our local plan is part of the wider Church journey.
2. **May 2025 Ministry Leaders Workshop:** Ministry leaders from across the parish gathered to reflect on the parish's strengths, discuss the survey results, and endorse emerging priorities. Together, we began shaping the goals and actions that would guide the parish into its next phase of growth.
3. **August 2025 Parish Workshop:** All parishioners were invited to contribute to forming the mission statement, decide on parish values, and provide feedback on the draft plan. Every contribution and suggestion has been incorporated into this final draft.

After nine months of consultation and collaboration, we now present this plan as a guide for how we move forward together as a parish in the years ahead. The mission statement has been formed and decided by the Parish Council, based entirely on the feedback from parishioners in the August Workshop. Over the past nine months, you have told us what is important to you, what goals we should set to achieve our vision, and how we could accomplish them. These inputs are summarised on a poster displayed in the church. This poster can also be found at the bottom of this document. The goals in this plan are presented in priority order to guide our collective efforts over the next three years.

At first glance, this Plan may seem a bit overwhelming, but just remember that we have three years to complete it.

We thank everyone for their insights and inputs, celebrate what we have been doing well, and now propose further practical steps to help us grow in faith, service, and unity.

Our Vision

“A community radiating the light of Christ.”

This vision is a picture of what we want the parish to be in three years' time, and this Pastoral Plan is how we intend to get there.

It calls us to be more than just a group of individuals attending Mass. It calls us to live as a united, faith-filled community - shining with the love, hope, and truth of Jesus in all we do. We cannot radiate or shine something that we do not have, so our own personal growth and formation is just as important as us radiating the light of Christ.

Our vision guides every aspect of parish life and reminds us that we are not only receivers of God's grace, but bearers of it, for the sake of the world around us.

Our Mission

“Guided by the Holy Spirit and anchored in the sacraments and the teachings of the Catholic Church, our parish strives to be a vibrant, prayerful community that welcomes all, nourishes faith, and seeks to serve Christ in everyone we meet.”

This mission flows directly from parishioner contributions at the August 2025 workshop and reflects the hopes, gifts, and lived experiences of our parish community. It provides a clear expression of how we intend to live out our vision and move forward together.

Our Parish Values

At St Joseph's Parish, our values are rooted in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. They guide how we live, behave, serve, and grow together as a faith community.

Faithfulness - We centre our lives on Christ, deepening our relationship with God through Scripture, the Sacraments, prayer, and our Catholic faith. Guided by the Holy Spirit, we live as a priestly-led people.

Integrity & Respect - We act with honesty, fairness, and transparency, guided by Catholic principles. Honouring the dignity and uniqueness of each person, we reflect Christ's love and build up the Body of Christ through unity and respect.

Hope - We are a people of hope, trusting in the Spirit to lead and renew us. Even in the face of challenge and change, we remain grounded in God's promise and look forward with courage and faith.

Hospitality & Service - We welcome all with warmth, celebrating the diversity of our parish. Guided by Christ's example, we foster belonging, serve with care, and invite everyone to share their gifts in building a vibrant, inclusive community.

Love - We radiate Christ's light, celebrating the diversity of God's love. Love guides our faith, service, and participation, shining Christ's presence into the world.

Missionary - We actively engage in evangelisation, sharing the Good News of Christ through our words, actions, and witness. Guided by the Spirit, we reach out in faith, inviting all to encounter God's love and participate in parish life.

Our Pastoral Plan Goals

These goals were shaped by parishioners through the 2024 survey, developed further during the May 2025 ministry leaders workshop, and refined with feedback from the August 2025 parish workshop. They reflect the areas most important for growing in faith, connection, and mission.

Each goal is designed to help us live out our vision—*"a community radiating the light of Christ"*—in practical and meaningful ways. These goals are presented in priority order and will guide our efforts over the coming years as we build on our strengths and respond to the needs of our parish.

The Goals:

- 1:** To Support Marriages and Families
- 2:** To Accompany One Another As Members of One Body
- 3:** To Develop a Spirituality of Service With Other Christians
- 4:** To Reach Out to the Peripheries of Our Society

Each goal in this plan is supported by a series of action points that suggest practical steps we can take as a parish community. These actions are based on ideas gathered from parishioners, ministry leaders, and the wider synodal process.

They are not a fixed checklist, but a starting point—intended to guide our planning, encourage participation, and help us stay focused on what matters. As we move forward, these actions can be adapted or expanded as needed to reflect the gifts, energy, and priorities of our people.

GOAL 1: To Support Marriages and Families

“Disciples of Jesus are born and raised first in families. Families are begun and sustained by the stable marriages of husbands and wives. Marriages are raised within the Church to a sacrament: they witness to the love of Christ the Bridegroom for His Bride the Church.”
(Catechism of the Catholic Church #1603)

We will foster activities that already support married couples and their families. We will seek new initiatives that will further empower married couples in their love for each other and their ministry to their children as parents.

Actions:

- Provide marriage preparation and enrichment through workshops and retreats in Levin, with translated sessions to meet diverse needs, led by experienced couples.
- Provide family-friendly faith formation, including children’s catechesis, family faith groups, and parent-child learning, alongside a parish-led sacramental programme to prepare all children for First Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation.
- Support blended families, widows/widowers, singles, and divorced couples, including through a ministry subgroup for couples needing help or healing.
- Connect new school families with parishioners for tailored support at enrolment.
- Celebrate cultural traditions (e.g. White Sunday) that honour children and family life.

GOAL 2: To Accompany One Another as Members of One Body

“Our parish is a community of the Christian faithful stably constituted in a particular church of Wellington, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a parish priest as its proper pastor under the authority of the diocesan bishop, Archbishop Paul Martin.” (Canon Law 515#1)

We celebrate our diverse ethnicities in our liturgies and all social gatherings within our parish and beyond.

We seek to better define the organisation of the different ministries within the parish and their respective roles.

We seek to better communicate on progress and support one another.

Actions:

- Build an enhanced welcoming team to greet parishioners and include readings in te reo Māori, NZ Sign Language, and the first languages of our diverse community.
- Involve families in helping with the offertory and other liturgical ministries through personal invitation (“shoulder tap”), especially to engage young families.
- Improve communication via parish app, social media, website, and newsletters.
- Provide a clear parish organisation chart and ministry role descriptions.
- Assign connectors for each ethnic group—parishioners who act as links between their communities and the wider parish—to encourage participation and engagement.

GOAL 3: To Develop a Spirituality of Service with Other Christians

“For whoever is not against us is for us.”

(Mark 9:40)

We already participate in the life of different ethnic communities, which are made up of our brothers and sisters of different Christian faiths. We seek to grow our involvement in ecumenical services and social events that involve other Christian churches in Levin and beyond.

Actions:

- Build and strengthen relationships with other pastors and Christian communities through shared acts of service and joint events.
- Provide faith formation and discipleship opportunities for parishioners, drawing on Divine Renovation, Alpha, Formed, and leadership development.
- Ensure all joint activities and formation support sacramental life and active participation in the Church.
- Encourage parishioners to say ‘yes’ to joint ministry opportunities by increasing awareness through creative presentations and personal invitations.

GOAL 4: To Reach Out to the Peripheries of Our Society

“Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.”

(Matthew 25:40)

We warmly welcome into our liturgies all who enter our church, especially those who visit and those who are in search of a spiritual home.
We help to serve the needs of those less fortunate in our area.
We seek to serve the growing needs of the younger members of our society.

Actions:

- Pray regularly for the marginalised, vulnerable, and elderly during liturgies.
- Ensure parish accessibility with clear signage (Mass times), a welcoming noticeboard, office support, and a visible sign of identity (e.g. St Joseph statue).
- Encourage youth service and leadership through Young Vinnies and cultural/social collaboration, in partnership with the school.
- Re-establish pastoral outreach: visitation, Masses at rest homes, and Mass at the Marae where appropriate.
- Support marginalised groups, including those recently released from prison or needing specialised care.

Ongoing Commitments: What We Will Continue to Do

Alongside the new actions proposed in this plan, we recognise and affirm the many things we are already doing well as a parish. These ongoing efforts form the foundation of our community life and will continue to be supported and strengthened over the next three years.

Welcoming & Hospitality

- Maintain “Greeters” roster; provide additional support for young families and cultural groups.
- Continue Sunday morning tea roster to build fellowship.
- Support outreach to housebound and lonely parishioners.

Youth Engagement & Inclusion

- Support youth-led Masses involving school children and families.
- Keep youth groups open and inclusive across denominations and backgrounds.
- Encourage youth participation in liturgical roles, Stations of the Cross, and music ministry.
- Continue youth-led social and fundraising events.

Cultural Diversity & Liturgical Enrichment

- Celebrate multicultural Masses and youth-led liturgies, including major feasts like Pentecost.
- Encourage and support the diverse choir groups that reflect the cultural richness of our parish.
- Promote inclusive practices in sacraments and ministries that reflect the full diversity of our community.

- Maintain collaborative events with school and iwi (e.g. Season of Creation at Lake Horowhenua, Te Ara a Maria visit).
- Continue our annual Combined Carol Service and other seasonal liturgical celebrations.
- Offer a Children's Blessing at the end of weekend Masses to nurture a sense of belonging and faith.
- Support combined choirs during special parish liturgies to foster unity and shared worship.

Community Support & Outreach

- Support St. Vincent de Paul and its Op Shop as a key ministry supporting parishioners and the wider community.
- Continue 'Seasons for Growth' and other support programs for grief and transition.
- Maintain participation in the World Day of Prayer, Seven Last Words of Jesus, and other prayer and reflection initiatives.
- Ensure ministers are available for the sick and vulnerable.
- Share free Catholic resources through the Family Resource Library.

Parish-School Partnership

- Maintain priest and volunteer visits to classrooms.
- Maintain parish support for the school's use of the church for appropriate events, building familiarity and faith connection.
- Foster joint parish-school initiatives engaging families in liturgy and service.

Next Steps and Commitment

This Final Draft Pastoral Plan marks an important milestone in our parish journey. It reflects the voices of our community, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and our shared desire to grow as a people of faith, hope, and love.

With the contributions from the 2024 survey, the May 2025 ministry leaders workshop, and the August 2025 parish workshop incorporated, this plan represents the collective vision, mission, values, and goals of St Joseph's Parish. It is ready to guide us as we move forward together over the next three years.

As a parish, we commit to implementing the actions outlined here, building on our strengths, responding to the needs of our community, and fostering a culture of faith, service, and unity.

Let us entrust this work to God, asking for wisdom, courage, and unity as we journey together.

"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." — Matthew 5:16

Together, we will continue to be a community radiating the light of Christ.

TO SUPPORT MARRIAGES AND FAMILIES

"Disciples of Jesus are born and raised first in families. Families are begun and sustained by the stable marriages of husbands and wives. Marriages are raised within the Church to a sacrament: they witness to the love of Christ the Bridegroom for His Bride the Church." (CCC 1603)

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TO REACH OUT TO THE PERIPHERIES OF OUR SOCIETY

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