



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

Introduction: A Parish Journey Towards Our Vision

This 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."

In late 2024, we invited all parishioners to take part in a survey at Mass, asking which Synod Topic Areas from the Wellington Archdiocese would best support our parish in living out this vision. Your thoughtful responses helped us identify the areas that matter most to our community. We then aligned these areas with the 2024 New Zealand Bishops' Synod Report to ensure our local plan is part of the wider Church journey.

Building on this, in May 2025, ministry leaders from across the parish came together in a workshop to reflect on our parish's strengths and discuss/endorse the priorities emerging from the survey. Together, we began shaping the goals and actions that would guide us into the next phase of parish life.

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.

We invite you—our parish community—to review and respond to this draft. Your feedback will help us ensure this plan reflects our shared commitment to Christ and to one another, as we all move forward with passion and unity over the coming years.

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 – A Work in Progress

As a parish community, we are in the process of discerning our Mission Statement—a clear expression of how our parish as an organisation will bring about our vision of being “*a community radiating the light of Christ.*”

We will begin shaping our parish mission statement at our upcoming Parish Workshop, where parishioners and ministry leaders will reflect, pray, and contribute their ideas. This process will ensure our mission flows from the lived experience, gifts, and hopes of our people, and reflects the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Once formed, our mission statement will become a part of this pastoral plan and will also help us move forward with passion and unity.

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, and prayer. In all we do, we seek to be grounded in faith and guided by the Holy Spirit.

Hospitality - We welcome all and always interact with warmth and openness, creating a place where people feel they belong. We honour the dignity of every person and celebrate the diversity of our parish community.

Service - We live out our faith through acts of love, compassion, and justice. Inspired by the example of Christ, we reach out to those in need and serve both our parish and the wider community.

Respect & Sensitivity - We honour the dignity of each person and seek to understand and value their unique qualities, perspectives, and contributions. We aim to create an environment that is welcoming, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of others.

Participation - We value the gifts and voices of all, encouraging active involvement in the life and mission of our parish. We build up the Body of Christ by working together collaboratively in unity and mutual respect.

Integrity - We act with honesty, fairness, and transparency, guided by Christian moral and ethical principles. In all things, we seek to reflect the truth and character of Christ.

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

Our Pastoral Plan Goals

The following goals have been shaped by input from parishioners through the 2024 survey and developed further during our May 2025 Parish Workshop. They reflect the areas our community has identified as 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.

Goal 1: To Support Marriages and Families

Goal 2: To Accompany One Another As Members of One Body

Goal 3: To Develop a Spirituality of Service With Other Christians

Goal 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:

- Offer marriage formation workshops and retreats led by experienced couples.
- Provide family-friendly faith formation focused on sacramental preparation and catechesis.
- Connect new school families with parishioners for tailored support at enrolment.
- Explore hosting a White Sunday celebration - a tradition observed in many Pacific communities where children lead the Sunday service through readings, performances, and prayer, honouring their place in family and church 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
- Shift offertory participation from a roster to a ‘shoulder tap’ approach, encouraging family and cultural involvement.
- Improve communication via parish app, social media, website, and newsletters.
- Provide a clear parish organisation chart and ministry role descriptions.

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:

- Continue and initiate further shared events with other Christian communities.
- Hold at least one interdenominational liturgy annually.
- Support parish faith formation by drawing on the Divine Renovation model, running Alpha, and making use of the Formed media platform and other accessible Catholic resources.
- Encourage parishioners to say ‘yes’ to 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:

- Include prayers for the marginalised in the Prayers of the Faithful.
- Ensure parish accessibility through signage, a welcoming noticeboard, and dedicated office support.
- Revive Young Vinnies with school-linked service activities.
- Encourage youth collaboration through shared cultural and social events.

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 the regular “Greeters” roster to ensure all who enter the church feel warmly welcomed.
- Continue the Sunday morning tea sign-up roster to build fellowship after Mass.
- Support ongoing outreach to the housebound and lonely members of our community.

Youth Engagement & Inclusion

- Support youth-led Masses involving school children and their families
- Keep youth groups open and welcoming to young people from all denominations and backgrounds
- Encourage youth involvement in liturgical roles, including Stations of the Cross and the music ministry
- Continue youth-led social and fundraising events

Cultural Diversity & Liturgical Enrichment

- Celebrate Cultural and Multicultural Masses, including youth-led liturgies and 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.
- Encourage lay participation in ministries such as offertory and Eucharistic service.

Community Support & Outreach

- Support St. Vincent de Paul and its Op Shop as a key ministry supporting parishioners and the wider community.
- Continue offering 'Seasons for Growth' and other support programs for those experiencing grief or transition.
- Maintain participation in the World Day of Prayer and other inter-church initiatives.
- Ensure we have available ministers for the sick and vulnerable.
- Share free Catholic resources through the Family Resource Library at the back of the church.

Parish-School Partnership

- Continue regular visits by priests and volunteers to school 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 that engage families in liturgy and service.
- Promote the Family Resource Library as a tool for parent engagement and faith development.

Next Steps and Invitation

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

We now invite all parishioners to review this plan prayerfully and share their feedback at our upcoming Parish Workshop. This gathering will give us the opportunity to reflect together, listen to one another, and help shape the final version of the plan so that it truly reflects our shared hopes and calling.

Following the workshop, the plan will be finalised and launched in September. Along the way, we will continue to listen, adapt, and respond to the needs of our people. Our shared commitment to this vision will only grow stronger as we walk together in faith.

Let us entrust this work to the Holy Spirit, asking for wisdom, courage, and unity as we move forward.

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

— Matthew 5:16

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