



EVANGELISING COMMUNITY SERVING GOD, HUMANITY AND ALL CREATION

A WORKBOOK: IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

FOR THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCILS AND OTHER GROUPS

The value of any Pastoral Plan depends on the ability of the Local Parish to implement its actions. This Implementation Guide, based on the Pastoral Cycle, is designed to help **Parish Pastoral Councils (PPC's), their Sub-Committees, Small Christian Communities (SCC's), Sodalities, Youth, Formation and Prayer/Devotional Groups and the ordinary practising faithful** as they put the new Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan, *Evangelising Community Serving God, Humanity and All Creation*, into practice.

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Phase 1

First Meeting: INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW ARCHDIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN

The Decree of Promulgation and Preamble on pages 1-3 provide the basic aims of the New Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan. Read and study these three pages together and share with your group what was for you the outstanding point(s).

What are the 9 focus areas of the new Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan?

1.

- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

Why is a Pastoral Plan needed in the Archdiocese and in the Parishes?

- What do we need to make this Pastoral Plan real?
- Which points do you consider to be of greater importance?
- Is there something which you would like to add?
- What would you suggest to your group?

Read through the **Vision** and **Mission** Statements (pp. 4-5) together and note how do these very inspiring Statements resonate with your experience of your parish?

Second Meeting: The VISION and MISSION

Take time to read these quietly and then ask someone to read them aloud, repeat each one a few times.

VISION (read p. 4)

“They devoted themselves to the Apostles’ teaching and communal life, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. All who believed were together and had all things in common. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved” (Acts 2:42, 44, 47b).

- *In the image of the first Christian community, WE, the Archdiocese of Pretoria, seek to be an Evangelising Community Serving God, Humanity and all Creation.*

MISSION (read p. 5)

In order to realise our Vision, we commit ourselves:

- *To promote and foster a personal encounter with Christ.*
- *To deepen our faith and spirituality.*
- *To become a truly and authentic evangelising and missionary Church together.*
- *To work at becoming a self-supporting, self-reliant, self-ministering and self-propagating Church.*
- *To promote and commit ourselves in the social action of the Church.*

1. What do you find attractive in the **Vision**?

2. How will this **Mission** enhance the understanding of our Vision?

Third Meeting: THE PARISH AT THE CENTRE OF PASTORAL CARE

This Pastoral Plan will be realised within a Parish and through the activities and programs of the Parish community. Each Parish is unique and has to be aware of its own situation and context.

The Parish is the Centre of the Pastoral Care of the Faithful (read p. 6)

- What is the name of your Local Parish?
- How many Catholics are there in your Parish?
- Which communities form part of your Parish? (e.g. Small Christian Communities; Outstations; Religious Sisters and Brothers etc).
- Which Sodalities form part of your Parish?
- What other Formation group exists in your Parish?

- As a Parish, how do you relate to your Parish Priest?
- How do you relate to one another as Parishioners?
- How does your Parish relate to other Parishes? How is it involved in both Deanery and Archdiocesan activities?

- How will our Parish implement this Pastoral Plan?
- What are the challenges presented by this Pastoral Plan to your common way(s) of doing things in our Parish?
- In order to fulfil the mandate of this Pastoral Plan, where and how should your Parish improve?

When will your Parish be ready to start implementing the Archdiocesan Pastoral Plan?

Phase 2:

PART 1: Understanding the Methodology

Organise a study day or morning (afternoon) for these two meetings.

The method that will be used to implement our vision and mission is called the **Pastoral Cycle**. The Pastoral Cycle consists of 4 stages which helps us to stop, stand back from a situation and reflect on it before we jump in and take action. It helps us to discern the will of God with regards to the issue being faced. This process helps us to develop critical judgement about situations, events and structures.

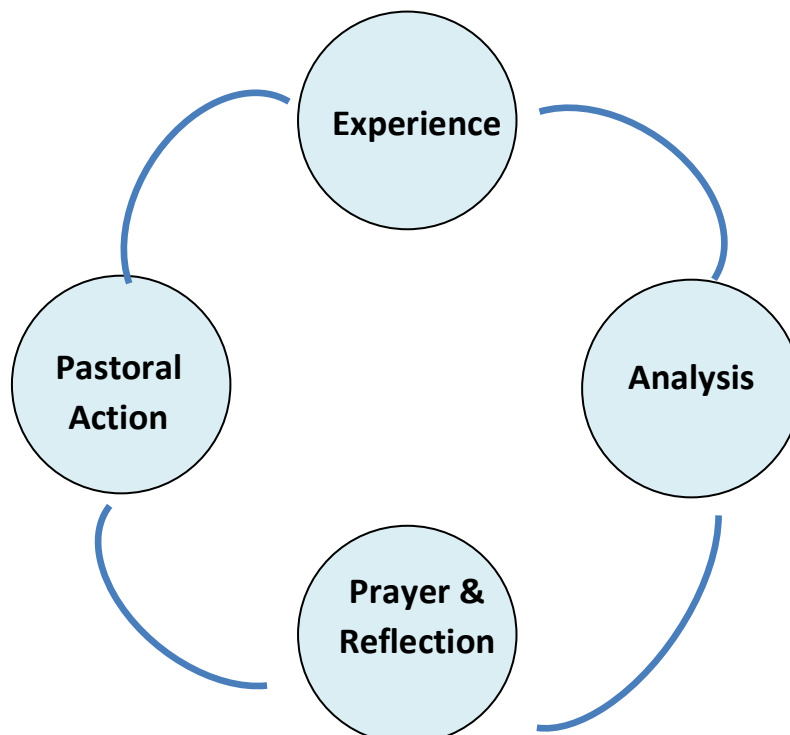
The 4 stages are:

1. **Experience**
2. **Analyses**
3. **Prayer and Reflection**
4. **Pastoral Action**

The stages within this process often overlap and intermingle. Although this cycle identifies 4 specific stages, in reality it is impossible to disconnect one stage from the rest without breaking the circle. In other words, your experiences will always call for your further analysis, which in turn leads to prayer and theological reflection and pastoral action, which brings you to other experiences.

As a Parish we need to study and understand the methodology of the Pastoral Cycle as each step of the cycle helps us to be effective pastoral agents to the rest of our Parish Community.

THE PASTORAL CYCLE



Group work: here we work with a simple buzz group (2-3 people sitting alongside each other)

1. Identify the four stages of the Pastoral Cycle.
2. How do you think each stage can be explored?
(Here is a random list of words: in which stage do they belong? – plan-action, discuss, research, explore, test evidence, think out of the box, Jesus’ teachings, teaching of the Church, understanding culture, identifying root causes, listening to experiences of others, cooperation)
3. What would be necessary for achieving each stage?

PART 2: Exploring and Learning the Method

I. Experience

The first step in the Pastoral Cycle is **experience**: your own experience and the experiences of others. Our reflections on experience are the most fruitful when we experience something deeply, and/or when we listen to multiple perspectives on the same experience. We also look at how we are connected to the situation. In small groups we ask ourselves the following:

1. *What is happening in my home, in our surroundings, in our Parish? Name the different things which may or may not have a positive influence/result.*

2. *Who are the people involved in these situations?*

3. *Identifying Issues – what are the “burning issues” that need to be addressed when we look at the VISION of the Pastoral Plan in response to the challenges in our Parish?*

4. *Identifying Issues – what are the “burning issues” that need to be addressed when we look at the MISSION of the Pastoral Plan in response to the challenges in our Parish?*

5. *What can we do about these?*

I. Analyse

Analysis is a process of constantly asking questions. We constantly ask because we truly want to understand what is happening and we want to make an informed decision when we take action. Through our analysis we attempt to come to a better understanding of our situation. It is recommended to use SWOT Analysis method where Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in the Parish are analysed and appropriately attended to.

After listening to a report from each of the smaller groups, make a summary of the points noted to the questions posed above. This is the beginning of an analysis.

Second round of group work:

1. Relate an experience where you have been involved in confronting any of the challenges that you have brought above.

2. Describe how you felt in the situation.

3. Were there any regrets? What led to these?

5. Would you do things differently next time? Why? In what way would it be done differently?

6. How did the others feel about what you did or the way you did it?

3. What are the values and attitudes people have and how do these values affect the issue?

3. Reflection

Reflection is the stage in the Pastoral Cycle where we look at discerning the will of God as regards the issue being faced.

- *We reflect on the experiences that we have as individuals and as a community after analysing our situation/context.*

- *We reflect on the Scriptures and other relevant documents. Is there a passage in the GOSPELS which relate something similar in Jesus' experience? (Look at the Gospels and other relevant Scripture passages)*

- *We reflect on what the Pastoral Plan holds out to us as the Vision and Mission of the Parish.*

- *What is prayer?*

- *How do we communicate to God?*

- *Why do we pray?*

- *How does our Parish community pray?*

4. Pastoral Action

The next step is to identify **Pastoral Action**. However, in this introductory phase we will confine ourselves to the following: (adapt the “I” to “we” if you are a small group)

1. *What personal action can I decide on in responding to a pastoral challenge?*
2. *What advantages/disadvantages do I see in this action?*
3. *Who else can I involve in this action?*
4. *What is the time frame for this action?*
5. *Where will this action take place?*
6. *How will I evaluate my planned response? When?*

Phase 3:

In phase 3, the Parish community enters into the reality of the Pastoral Plan, where it engages itself with the nine (9) Focal Areas. The Parish (or a group) chooses any area to deal with and prioritises its activities around that area.

Focal Area A: Evangelisation

I. Experience

The first step in the Pastoral Cycle is **experience**: your own experience and the experiences of others. Our reflections on experience are the most fruitful when we experience something deeply, and/or when we listen to multiple perspectives on the same experience. We also look at how we are connected to the situation. In small groups we ask ourselves the following:

1. *What is happening in our Parish with regard to evangelisation? Name the different things which may or may not promote 'a personal encounter with Jesus'.*

2. *Who are the people involved in spreading the Good News (Gospel) in your Parish?*

3. *What are the obstacles in spreading the faith? Why are Catholics hesitant to speak of their faith?*

4. *What can we do in order to understand 'evangelisation' more fully?*

2. Analyse

Analysis is a process of constantly asking questions. We constantly ask because we truly want to understand what is happening and we want to make an informed decision when we take action. Through our analysis we attempt to come to a better understanding of our situation.

After listening to a report from each of the smaller groups, make a summary of the points noted to the questions posed above. This is the beginning of an analysis.

Second round of group work:

1. *Relate an experience where you have been involved in bringing the Good News. (e.g. A catechist. Visiting someone who has fallen away from the practice of the faith. Sharing your faith with another).*

2. *Describe how you felt in the situation.*

3. *Were there any regrets? What led to these?*

7. *Would you do things differently next time? Why? In what way would it be done differently?*

8. *How did the other one feel about what you did or the way you did it?*

9. *What are the values and attitudes people have and how do these values affect the issue?*

3. Reflection

In this stage of the Pastoral Cycle, we look at discerning the will of God as regards the issue being faced - evangelisation.

- We reflect on the Scriptures and other relevant documents.
- The Pastoral Plan is designed to give us an indication as to where we will find the teaching of Jesus and of the Church as regards this crucial issue and how to go about fulfilling God's plan envisioned in our Vision and Mission.

We reflect on what the Pastoral Plan holds out to us as the Vision and Mission of the Parish.

Note the points of importance to you:

- *What does God want us to do?*

What is the vision of the Pastoral Plan for our Parish?

Evangelisation and Parish life are inter-related.

How do we gauge our parish in the light of this vision?

4. Pastoral Action

It is the role of the Parish Pastoral Council and its Sub-Committees to prioritise the parts of the Plan and to set a time scale of years and months - this should be in line with what the Archdiocese has already prioritised or proposed.

After the main pastoral areas which the Parish Pastoral Council will focus on have been identified and accepted, the process of mapping out the key steps and responsibilities required to transform your parish community, follows.

This phase of the cycle involves, Planning, Implementing and Evaluation.

(a) PLANNING

Now we plan and carry out actions considering our Faith. We work to change or improve the situation and build the Kingdom of God here ‘on Earth.’

We ask questions such as:

1. *What can we do to bridge the gap between what is happening (the reality) and what should be happening (the ideal/what our faith says)?*
2. *What action are we going to take and what do we want to achieve?*
3. *What are the different ways we can achieve our objective? (List all our options)*
4. *What are the advantages/disadvantages of each option? (Choosing our best option)*
5. *Who can we involve in our action? e.g. Catechists, youth etc.*
6. *What time frame will we put to our action? (seasonal, short term or long term)*
7. *Where will our action take place? (setting or an area of activity)*

Parish involvement is essential for effective pastoral action. It is the role of the Parish Pastoral Council to ensure that as many people are involved in pastoral action. We must involve others by bringing this process and its discoveries to the sodalities and Small Christian Communities in our parish.

After we have asked all our questions and have as much information as needed, we are ready to write up our Action Plan. Our Action Plans can be as detailed as we want it but keeping it very basic is more advisable as it will enable us to focus on the essential and increase our chances of achieving our plan.

APPLYING THE EXAMPLES IN THE PASTORAL PLAN

The following is an example of an Action Plan:

WHAT What action are we going to do?	WITH WHO Who are we going to do this action with?	WHERE Where will we do this action?	WHY Why will we do this action?	WHEN When will we do this action?	WHO Who will be responsible for doing this action?	HOW How will we monitor this action and by when?
e.g. Prayer e.g. SCC meetings						12 months time

(b) IMPLEMENTING

When we have spent as much time as necessary planning our pastoral action, it often happens that we fail to implement our plans for reasons which might include: e.g. lack of knowledge and resources; difficulty to work together. It is important that Parish Pastoral Councils understand all that will be needed to implement their plans in order to put their plans confidently and effectively into action.

What are the existing positive factors, in our Parish, that will facilitate the implementation of the Pastoral Plan?

What are obstacles and challenges we may encounter in implementing our plan?

How can we overcome these? What is necessary to assist as many as possible in working together?

(c) MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Monitoring and Evaluating is the last step in our Pastoral Cycle. To monitor means to keep track and to Evaluate means to judge.

This is an important step as it helps us to think through many aspects of our pastoral action that we will do again but will be able to improve on or eliminate in future.

The following questions help us to evaluate/judge what we have done. We should take careful note of the outcomes of these questions and make deliberate decisions to base our future actions on these outcomes so as to avoid repeating the same mistakes over and over again.

1. What have we achieved/not achieved?
2. What are our failures and mistakes?
3. What did we do well?
4. What needs to be improved?
5. What is important to remember?

How far have we achieved implementing the Vision and Mission of the Pastoral Plan regarding Evangelisation?

How far have we achieved implementing the Vision and Mission of the Pastoral Plan regarding the Parish, a Centre for Pastoral Care and Evangelisation?

Part 3

Plan two or three meetings to evaluate the implementation and progress of this first Action Plan regarding the Parish Pastoral Council and the commitment of the local parish and communities in Evangelisation. “What?”, “Who with?”, “Where?”, “Why”, “When?”, “Who?” and “How?” identified in the process will be important indicators for the evaluation.

Part 2 will be evaluated according to the time plan you as a Parish Pastoral Council have planned. You need not wait for this process to be completed before beginning with the next focus area – Laity formation and empowerment – using the same methodology of the Pastoral Cycle.

Phase 3

Focal Area B: Laity Formation and Empowerment

It is proposed to proceed with the Second Focus area, viz. Laity Formation and Empowerment. After this the PPC may choose to proceed with any other focal area 3 or 4 or 5 etc. Focal areas 1 and 2 together with the Vision for the Parish are considered to be basic to the implementation of the rest of the Pastoral Plan

PART 1: The Pastoral Cycle applied to the second focal area.

I. Experience

The first step in the Pastoral Cycle is **experience**: share on your own experience and the experiences of others. Our reflections on experience are the most fruitful when we experience something deeply, and/or when we listen to multiple perspectives on the same experience. We also look at how we are connected to the situation. We ask:

1. *What is happening in our parish?*
 - a. *How are the laity involved?*
 - b. *What commitments do lay people have?*

2. *Who are the people involved?*
 - a. *How many lay people respond to invitations to greater involvement?*
 - b. *What are the obstacles to greater involvement?*
 - c. *How do people relate to being part of a Small Christian Community?*

3. *Are Small Christian Communities helpful? Share the reasons behind your answer.*

4. *What generally happens in the Small Christina Community that you belong to? Why do things happen in that way? What improvements would you welcome? How could these be brought about?*

5. *Identifying Issues – what are the “burning issues”.*
6. *Can we do something about these burning issues?*
7. *What Research (fact finding) should be done to help us address these issues meaningfully?*

2. Analyse

Analysis is a process of constantly asking questions. We constantly ask because we truly want to understand what is happening and we want to make an informed decision when we take action. Through our analysis we determine the following:

a. Who is affected, how and why;
We ask questions such as:

1. *How do you feel about the level of involvement of the lay members of the parish?*
2. *Have you ever tried to address the situation and improve it?
If so, what happened? Why? How did you and/or those involved feel?*

3. *What do you think should be happening to help the lay members of the parish to become more actively involved?*
4. *What are the values and attitudes people have and how do these values affect their involvement?*

3. Reflection

In this stage of the Pastoral Cycle, we look at discerning, the will of God as regards the issue being faced.

- We reflect on the Scriptures and other relevant documents.
- We reflect on what the Pastoral Plan holds out to us as the Vision and Mission of the Parish.
- What does God want us to do?

In each and every focal area, our Pastoral Plan contains some relevant texts from the Scriptures, from the Teachings of the Church and other relevant sources so as to be guided by what the Church teaches about the issue.

What does the Pastoral Plan say about the Laity?

How does your parish involve the Laity?

How do we gauge the promotion of the vocation of the laity in our parish in the light of this vision?

4. Pastoral Action

It is the role of the Parish Pastoral Council to prioritise the parts of the Plan and to set a time scale of years and months - this should be in line with whatever the Archdiocese has already prioritised or proposed.

After the main pastoral areas which the Parish Pastoral Council will focus on have been identified and accepted, the process of mapping out the key steps and responsibilities required to transform the life and participation of the Laity in the parish community, follows.

This phase of the cycle involves, Planning, Implementing and Evaluation.

(a) PLANNING

Now we plan and carry out actions in light of our Faith. We work to change the situation and build the Kingdom of God here ‘on Earth.’

We ask questions such as:

1. *What can we do to bridge the gap between what is happening (the reality) and what should be happening (the ideal/what our faith says)?*
2. *What action are we going to take and what do we want to achieve?*
3. *What are the different ways we can achieve our objective? (List all our options)*
4. *What are the advantages/disadvantages of each option? (Choosing our best option)*
5. *Who can we involve in our action?*
6. *What time frame will we put to our action?*
7. *Where will our action take place?*

Parish involvement is essential for effective pastoral action. It is the role of the PPC to ensure that as many people as possible are involved in pastoral action.

After we have asked all our questions and have as much information as needed, we are ready to write up our Action Plan. Our Action Plans can be as detailed as we want it but keeping it very basic is more advisable as it will enable us to focus on the essential and increase our chances of achieving our plan.

APPLYING THE EXAMPLES IN THE PASTORAL PLAN

The following is an example of an Action Plan:

WHAT What action are we going to do?	WHO WITH Who are we going to do this action with?	WHERE Where will we do this action?	WHY Why will we do this action?	WHEN When will we do this action?	WHO Who will be responsible for doing this action?	HOW How will we monitor this action and by when?
e.g. Prayer e.g. SCC meetings						12 months time

(b) IMPLEMENTING

When we have spent much time planning our pastoral action, it often happens that we fail to implement our plans for reasons which might include: e.g. lack of knowledge and resources; difficulty to work together. It is important that PPCs understand all that will be needed to implement their plans in order to confidently and effectively put their plans into action.

What are obstacles and challenges we may encounter in implementing our plan?

(c) MONITORING AND EVALUATING

Monitoring and Evaluating is the last step in our Pastoral Cycle. To monitor means to keep track and to Evaluate means to judge.

This is an important step as it helps us to think through many aspects of our pastoral action that we will do again but will be able to improve on or eliminate in future.

The following questions help us to evaluate/judge what we have done. We should take careful note of the outcomes of these questions and make deliberate decisions to base our future actions on these outcomes so as to avoid repeating the same mistakes over and over again.

1. *What have we achieved/not achieved?*
2. *What are our failures and mistakes?*
3. *What did we do well?*
4. *What needs to be improved?*
5. *What is important to remember?*

How far have we achieved implementing the Vision and Mission of the Pastoral Plan regarding the formation and empowerment of the laity?

Part 2

Plan a series of meetings to evaluate the implementation and progress of this first Action Plan regarding the Parish Pastoral Council and the commitment of the local parish and communities. “What?”, “Who with?”, “Where?”, “When?”, “Who?” and “How?” identified in the process will be important indicators for the evaluation.

When part 2 has been successfully implemented, launch ahead with the next focus area – choose for your parish one of the focus areas – and use the same methodology of the Pastoral Cycle.

Guidelines for Small Group Discussions

This Implementation Guide has been designed to enable Parish Pastoral Councils to implement the new Pastoral Plan, Evangelising Community Serving, God, Humanity and All Creation.

During your implementation there will be meetings with discussions and many opportunities for sharing experiences and ideas on how to best implement the Plan in your parish.

Below are some helpful points to remember during your discussions and sharing of experiences and ideas:

1. *Accept all ideas; do not judge some as good and others as not good.*
2. *Encourage all group members to participate.*
3. *Give equal time for each person to speak.*
4. *Stay on the topic/task. Do not allow conversations that are unrelated to the topic/task at hand.*
5. *Be respectful of others' feelings and ideas.*
6. *Be thoughtful, courteous, and enthusiastic.*
7. *Listen respectfully and actively.*
8. *Criticize ideas, not individuals.*
9. *Commit to sharing, not debating.*
10. *Avoid blame, speculation, inflammatory language.*
11. *Avoid assumptions about others, especially based on their perceived social group.*
12. *Silence is OK.*
13. *If you do not understand what another person has said, ask for clarification.*
14. *Respect the role of the leader. The leader's role is simply to facilitate the discussion. It is not the role of the leader to dominate the group or the discussion.*



Outline of Pastoral Cycle

1. Identify the focal area.
2. Insertion into the situation
3. Analyse the situation
4. Reflection: first look at what is presented in the Pastoral Plan. Find other sources for reflection in the Scriptures or in the teaching of the Church
5. Pastoral action: planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating.