



diocese  
of limerick  
our catholic community

## ***“MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER IN HOPE”***

### **LIMERICK DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN**

2016-2026

Based on the April 2016 Diocesan Synod

# **PROGRESS REPORT**

*September 2017*



**SYNOD  
2016**

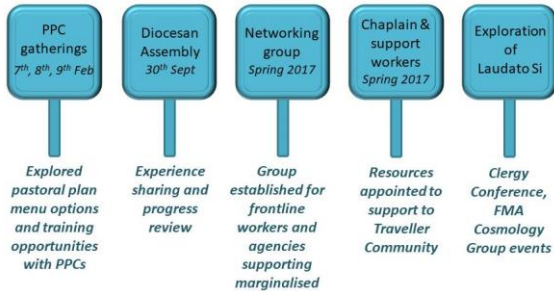
JOURNEYING TOGETHER IN FAITH  
“THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH WILL GUIDE YOU”  
JOHN 16:13

# **PROGRESS REPORT - TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Summary of Key Achievements to date .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Theme 1: Community and Sense of Belonging.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Theme 2: Pastoral Care of the Family.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Theme 3: Young People .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Theme 4: Liturgy and Life .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Theme 5: Faith Formation and Education.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Theme 6: New Models of Leadership .....</b>	<b>19</b>

# Summary of Key Achievements to date

## Community and Sense of Belonging



## Pastoral Care of the Family



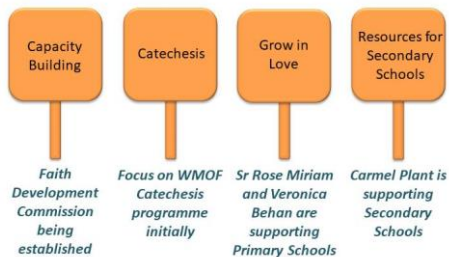
## Young People



## Liturgy and Life



## Faith Formation & Education



## New Models of Leadership



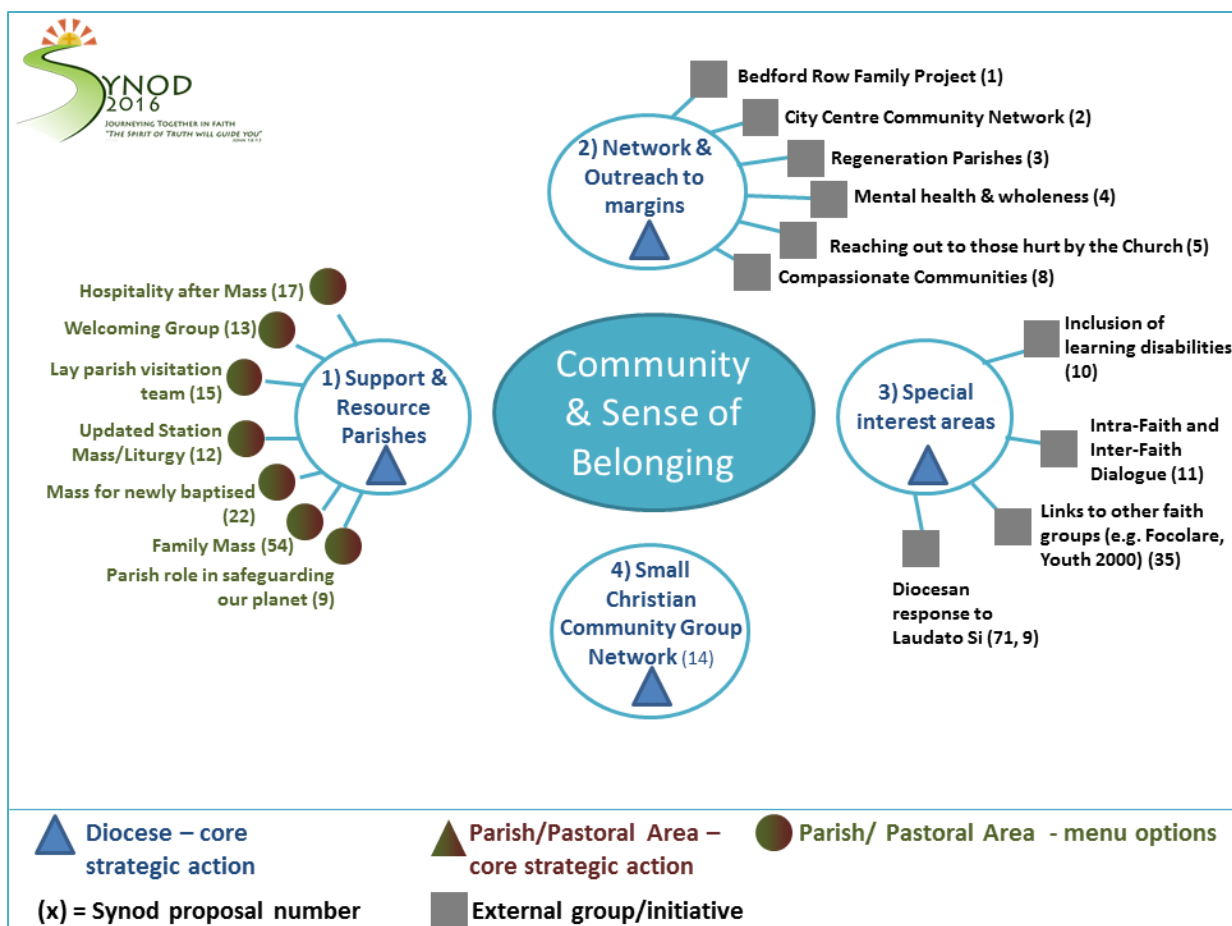
# Theme 1: Community and Sense of Belonging

## Vision

In Baptism we are all welcomed into the Christian community and conferred in our dignity as children of God. As children loved by God and in whom God delights we are called to be disciples of God’s infinite love. The Synod invites us to reflect on what Community and Sense of Belonging says to us in our time and in our Diocese. How can this theme renew us? How will it be reflected to the Diocese as a whole?

We recognised two approaches to the Synod vote on building an inclusive church. The first was in the ‘key’ of parish – local initiatives to reach out to local people. The second worked in wider categories – people on the margins across the city and the Diocese. There were strong votes in favour of proposals from both approaches.

The following figure provides an overview of the actions proposed under the theme of Community and Sense of Belonging:





## Core Strategic Action One

The Diocese will develop a 'menu' strategy supporting, training and resourcing parishes as they choose from a menu of local proposals (similar to Core Strategic Action Seven in Liturgy and Life).

### Further Actions:

This core strategic action will in turn enable subsequent delivery in our parishes of the following proposals:

- Hospitality after Mass
- Establish a Welcoming Group
- Lay parish visitation team to visit homes, hospital and nursing home
- Introduce an updated version of the Station Masses/Liturgies
- Continue tradition of inviting all children baptised during the year to a special Mass where they receive an individual blessing
- To foster the Family Mass
- Parishes collectively examine how they can make a difference to safeguarding our planet and develop outcomes that are practical and relevant in their own area.

### Progress

*Parish Pastoral Councils and Leadership Groups were gathered in three separate venues on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> to support them in engaging with the Pastoral Plan. Parishes have been choosing from the menu of possibilities, recruiting volunteers and an update will be given at a Diocesan Assembly Saturday September 30<sup>th</sup> 2017 at the Castletroy Park Hotel.*

## Core Strategic Action Two

In regard to the wider categories of inclusion – people on the margins in the city, people with mental health issues, disability, people hurt by the church, the natural environment – the Diocese will network with groups and agencies already engaged with these people with a view to concrete actions to support their work.

### Progress

- Engage with marginalised: as a missionary Church/Bedford Row Family Project
- That the city delegates and parishes are encouraged to engage with and support the City Centre Community Network
- 'Regeneration parishes - Caring for and inclusion of the Marginalised'

*In Spring 2017 a group was established at Diocesan level comprising people who are aware of issues facing people on the margins and this group has been meeting regularly every six weeks or so with an attendance of 15 to 20 people. The establishment of the group has enabled networking and support between various frontline workers and agencies, raising awareness and deepening understanding of the issues.*

*Since the Plan was launched a Diocesan initiative to support members of The Travelling Community has been developed whereby Fr Pat Hogan is now Chaplain*

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the area of mental health and wholeness engage with the marginalised members of our community – homeless, prisoners, travellers etc., and be a missionary church</li> </ul>	<i>to members of the Travelling Community and he is assisted by the appointment of Frank Carmody as a Support Worker with families from the Travelling Community and Phil Mortell, former Social Worker, as a Support Worker.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reaching out to those hurt by church</li> </ul>	<i>The Diocese is a member of the Connecting for Life Steering Group (Suicide prevention plan for the Mid West launched 24/4/2017) and is the lead agency for two actions.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compassionate Communities – <i>Café Conversations</i></li> </ul>	<i>Some Parishes have engaged with the Compassionate Communities initiative.</i>

### Core Strategic Action Three

A number of proposals were brought forward by delegates who have particular interest and/or expertise in aspects of community life. Contact will be made with those groups who brought forward particular proposals with a view to furthering these.

	Progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning disabilities to be included in the Diocesan plan</li> </ul>	<i>This action is scheduled for launch going forward</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Intra-Faith and Inter-Faith Dialogue'</li> </ul>	<i>Bishop Brendan has met regularly with Bishop Kenneth Kearon and visited the Mosque at the end of Ramadam. This is an ongoing activity.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To create links to other faith groups (e.g. <i>Focolare</i> and <i>Youth 2000</i>)</li> </ul>	<i>The Diocesan Family Forum has a sub group working on the preparation for the World Meeting of Families 2018. Engagement with Focolare, Emmanuel and other communities is planned to ensure the work is inclusive and family-friendly.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Diocesan response to <i>Laudato Si</i>, an approach/philosophy involving all schools, parish structures and communities</li> </ul>	<i>At the April 2017 Clergy Conference a presentation on <i>Laudato Si</i> was given by Michael Long of Cabra Wetlands and the Council of Priests is currently exploring ways in which this issue can be brought to parishes. The FMAs Cosmology Group has run a number of cosmology events to raise awareness of the topic.</i>

### Core Strategic Action Four

<p>That a network of Small Christian Community groups be established throughout the Diocese. Small communities of around 10 people would meet monthly to share a reading of Scripture, linked to life and building up community.</p>	<p><i>This action is scheduled for launch going forward (see also Faith Formation &amp; Education)</i></p>
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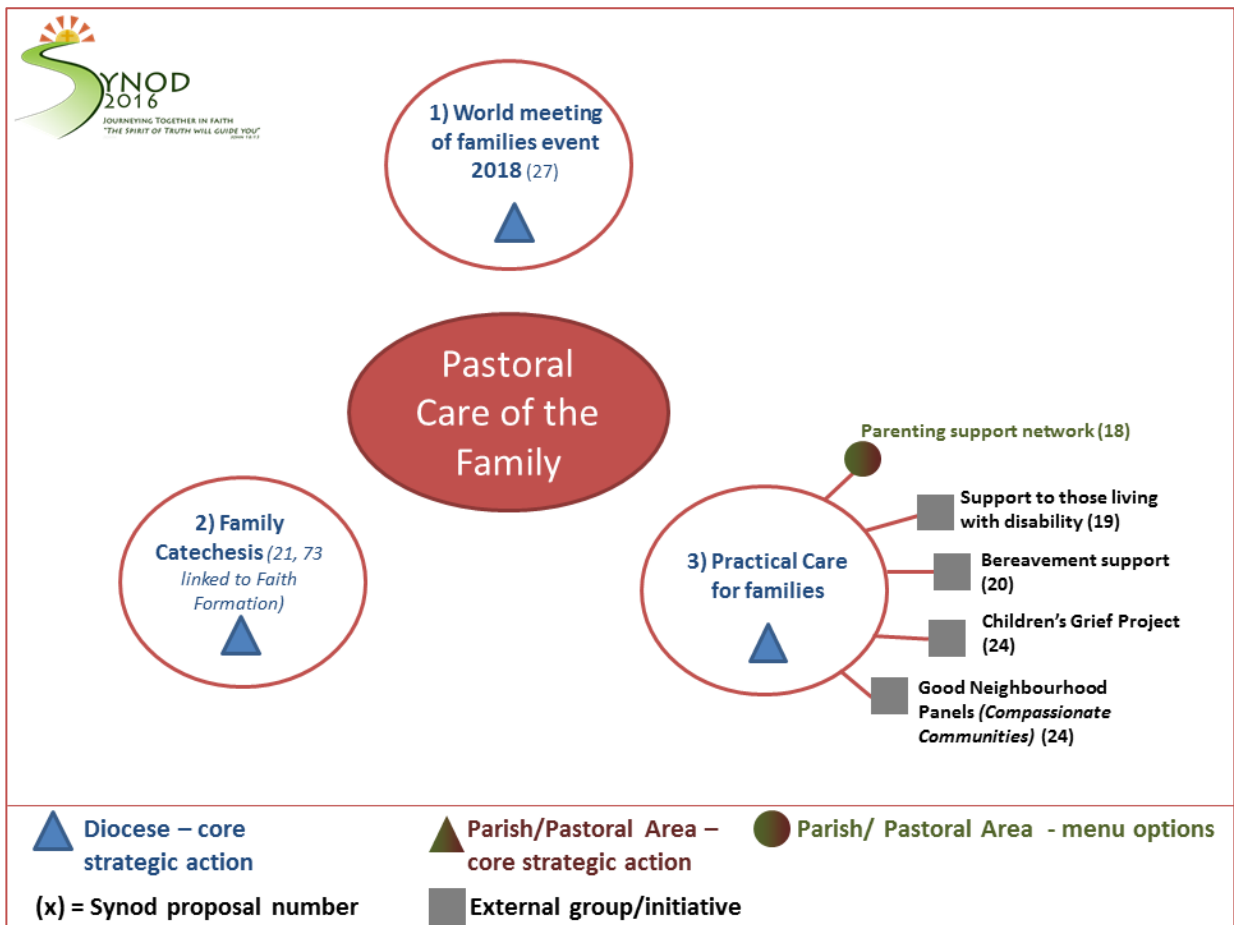
# Theme 2: Pastoral Care of the Family

## Vision

The Christian vision states that family life is sacred and its activities holy, and that the family can be described as the “domestic Church.” The family, ideally and potentially, is the school of human enrichment, where everyone is someone, where everyone belongs and has a place, where each is appreciated for the unique individual he or she is. It is also the school of Christian belief, where faith is caught, if not always explicitly taught. For all these reasons Pope Francis, told the Synod on the Family, “The Lord is asking us to care for the family, which has been from the beginning an integral part of his loving plan for humanity.”

There are two priorities in this vote at the Synod – a faith development outreach and secondly, practical care on areas of need, such as bereavement, disability and parenting. Any approach to faith development with parents needs to be dialogical – engaging with their burning issues, seeking to share the good news of the gospel in relation to those issues. The upcoming World gathering on families due in Ireland for 2018 offers a positive context for prioritising faith outreach to parents now.

The following figure provides an overview of the actions proposed under the theme of Pastoral Care of the Family:



Core Strategic Action One	Progress Report
<p>The Diocese invited representatives to attend a Conference in Dublin on The Joy of Love, <i>Amoris Laetitia</i>, incorporating the launch of the World Meeting of Families Event in Ireland 2018. Following this a Diocesan Forum on the Family will be established. This Forum will fulfil the role of a Diocesan Promoter of Pastoral Care to the Family.</p>	<p><i>Representatives from the Diocese attended this Conference. A Family Forum has been launched. A programme of catechesis in preparation for WMOF 2018 is being engaged with. A Conference took place on July 13<sup>th</sup> with Cardinal Christoph Schönborn in MIC. A sub-group of the Family Forum is involved in Diocesan preparations for WMOF 2018. On Aug 21<sup>st</sup> Diocesan representatives attended the Launch in Knock of the Countdown to WMOF 2018. A presentation was made to a gathering of clergy on the 21<sup>st</sup> of Sept. A Family Fun Day is planned for Oct 8<sup>th</sup>.</i></p>
Core Strategic Action Two	Progress Report
<p>Having trained lay Catechists/Sacramental Co-ordinators (as outlined under the theme of Faith Formation CSA 3) the Diocese will then be equipped to develop and deliver a support programme for parents to provide family catechesis and facilitate them in passing on the faith to their children, and deliver a parish support programme for children preparing to receive sacraments.</p>	<p><i>Leaders will be identified and trained in Catechesis for WMOF in Autumn 2017</i></p>
Core Strategic Action Three	Progress Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a Parenting Support Network to support parents (and their relationships) from the birth of their babies onwards.</li> </ul>	<p><i>The Parenting Support Network is scheduled for launch going forward. Additionally, the Limerick Social Service Council, under the Patronage of the Bishop, has a range of parent &amp; child supports; programmes in parenting, Community Mothers, Parents Plus and staff trained in Meitheal, in association with HSE and Tusla.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support to those living with disability.</li> </ul>	<p><i>This action is scheduled for launch going forward.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer led community bereavement support trained and supported by Milford Care Centre.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Raheen/Mungret/Crecora engaged with the Compassionate Communities Project.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Diocese, as part of its pastoral care of families programme, provide support to the <i>Children's Grief Project</i> in its work for children/young people affected by loss through death, separation or divorce.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Through the establishment of the group named in Core strategic Action Two under Community and Sense of Belonging and by other resource means the Diocese provides support for the work of the Children's' Grief Project.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Good Neighbour Panels</i> - Milford Care Centre's <i>Compassionate Communities Project</i> trains Compassionate Communities Volunteers in Parishes to assist people living with life limiting illness (and/or their family caregivers) to ensure that their social &amp; practical needs are met.</li> </ul>	<p><i>See note above re Compassionate Communities project</i></p>

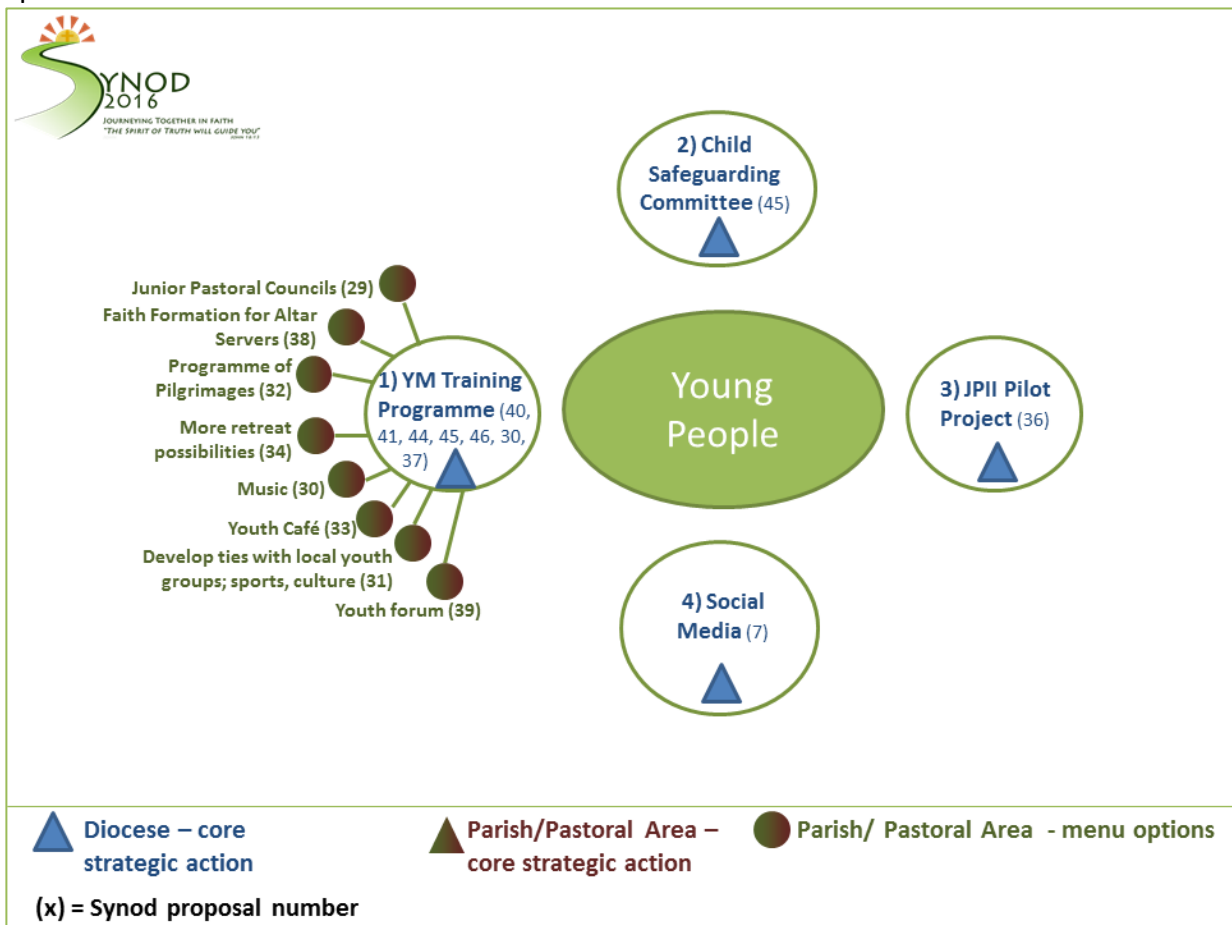


# Theme 3: Young People

## Vision

By implementing the proposals accepted in the Synod we hope to ensure that young people feel connected, involved and active in a multigenerational church whereby grandparents, parents and children minister to each other. The overall thrust of the vote on the proposals at the Synod was to replicate at a local level the success of the youth ministry at Diocesan level - to create local opportunities for young people to meet their peers in the *Eaglais Óg*.

The following figure provides an overview of the actions proposed under the theme of Young People:



Core Strategic Action One	Progress Report
<p>The Diocese will develop and begin the delivery of a youth ministry training programme for volunteer youth ministry leaders. This programme will include a range of elements highlighted in other votes – safeguarding, music, media, mental health, evangelisation.</p>	<p><i>This training programme was researched and prepared through Spring 2017 in conjunction with Michael Kelleher CSsR and the Diocese of Kerry. 30 parish volunteers began the youth ministry training programme</i></p>
<p><b>Further Actions:</b> The above strategic action will enable the newly trained Youth Ministry Leaders to choose from the following for their local community:</p>	<p><i>This menu will be available for parishes to choose from throughout the duration of the Pastoral Plan</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The formation of Junior Pastoral Councils</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme of ongoing faith formation for Altar Servers</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop a programme of pilgrimages, local, national and international</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide more retreat possibilities for young people in primary and secondary schools, college and young adults.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To use music as a means of engaging young people in their local church and liturgy.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To set up a Youth Café</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop ties between church and local youth groups - e.g. sport, culture</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support youth leadership by means of a youth forum</li> </ul>	

Core Strategic Action Two	Progress Report
<p>The work of the Diocesan Child Safeguarding Committee in all its various aspects will continue to be fully supported and developed.</p>	<p><i>The Safeguarding committee has worked through each Standard of the new Safeguarding Policy of the National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI) and has updates on progress in each standard at each meeting of the committee. Two additional Trainers have completed their training to increase capacity. Training programmes and one-to-one training have been delivered to various groups (clergy, religious, leadership groups etc.) throughout the Diocese. Other activities include; Annual Safeguarding Sunday, Newsletter, Facebook Inputs and a Safeguarding Conference in MIC.</i></p>

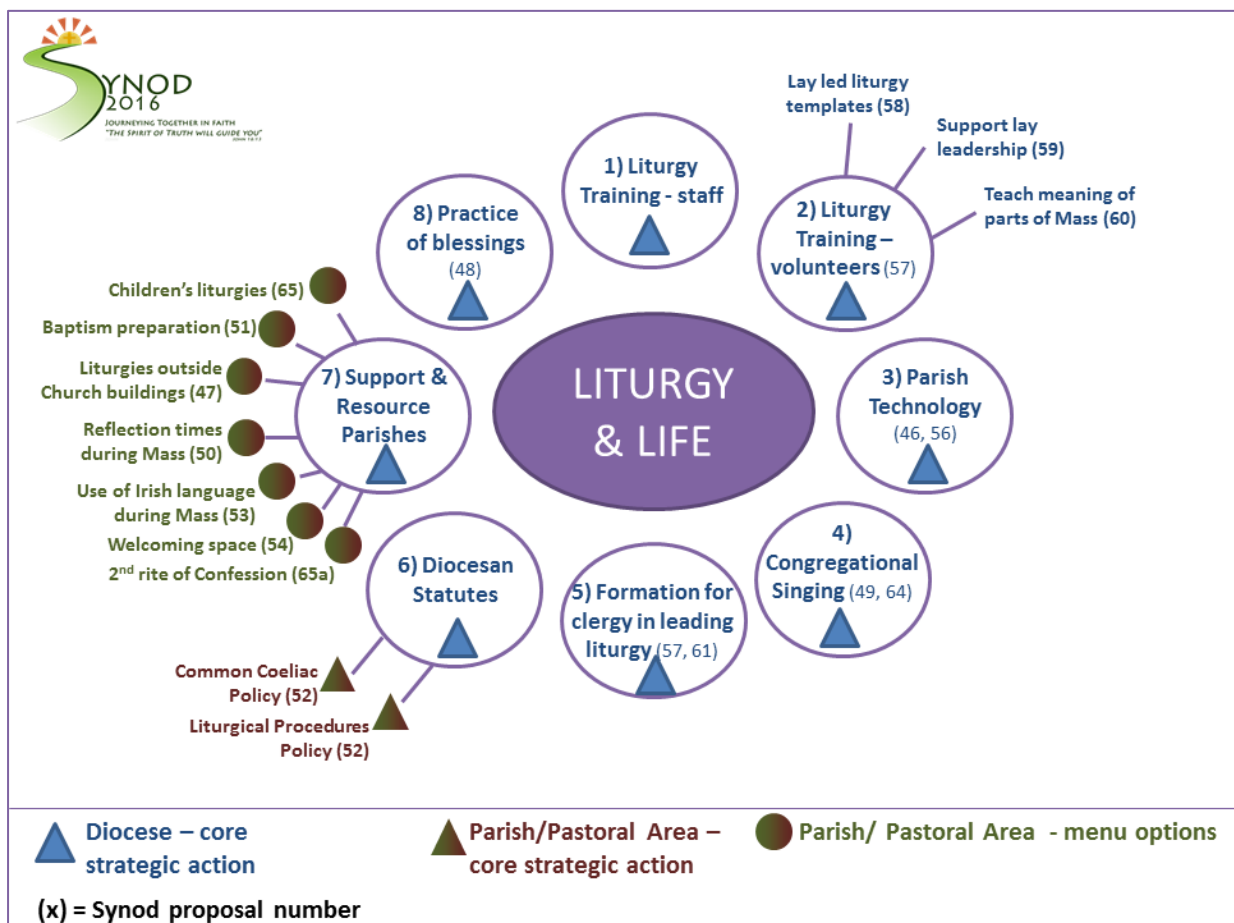
Core Strategic Action Three	Progress Report
<p>A Pilot Project in which the JPPI Awards will be launched in one community will occur.</p>	<p><i>Through 2016/2017 the parish of Kilfinane piloted the JPPI Awards.</i></p>
<p><b>Further Action:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The JPPI Awards, following the Pilot, will be reviewed and rolled out.</li> </ul>	<p><i>The JPPI Awards will be rolled out across the Diocese from Autumn 2017. Contact has been made with Secondary Schools and parishes. At present up to 6 schools have expressed an interest in participating in the initiative.</i></p>
Core Strategic Action Four	Progress Report
<p>The Diocese will continue to use and further develop its use of social media especially with young people. Every parish to avail of Social Media e.g. a Facebook page. The Diocesan office to take a central role in training and helping people/parishes to develop skills.</p>	<p><i>This is an ongoing activity.</i></p>

# Theme 4: Liturgy and Life

## Vision

The Synod demonstrated that there can be no separation between the liturgical life of the community and the ordinary life of those who share in it. There is an intimate link between life and liturgy. We must explore and advance the development of liturgical ministries in the Diocese. The core thrust of the vote was towards enhancing the quality and experience of liturgy at a local level achieving ‘conscious, active and full’ participation. And here we saw that the emphasis was on liturgy that connects with the lives of ordinary people and that can be delivered by ordinary people. The development of local capacity for leadership in liturgy was a key enabler for this – both for liturgies led by clergy and by lay people.

The following figure provides an overview of the actions proposed under the theme Liturgy and Life:



<b>Core Strategic Action One</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
To build capacity at Diocesan level two people have been assigned for Liturgy Training in Maynooth.	<i>Noirin Lynch and Fr Frank O' Connor have completed have completed one year of studies in Liturgy in Maynooth.</i>
<b>Core Strategic Action Two</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
Training will be provided for local volunteers to lead liturgies in the Diocese on a designated date when priests are away on in-service training.	<i>About 120 people from almost every parish participated in the formation for lay people to be able to lead public prayer in parishes. This is the first step in a longer process – the emphasis this spring was on leading a liturgy on a weekday morning when a priest is not available.</i>
<b>Further Actions:</b> This core strategic action will in turn enable subsequent delivery of the following proposals:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lay led Liturgy templates</li> </ul>	<i>As part of the above action a Diocesan Prayer Card for Liturgy of the Word was made available throughout the Diocese.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laity &amp; Liturgies/Sacraments: develop and support lay leadership in liturgies and the celebration of sacraments (e.g. lay led liturgies of the Word with Holy Communion, homilies, baptisms, funerals, 'occasion' liturgies, etc.)</li> </ul>	<i>The next step this Autumn is to look at public prayers at funeral times</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach people the meaning and source of all parts of the Mass and sacrament</li> </ul>	<i>As part of the action outlined above (Core Action Two) catechesis on the Eucharist has taken place and resources are being prepared for 2017/2018, that parishes can adapt and use in newsletter, posters, etc.</i>
<b>Core Strategic Action Three</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
The Diocese will undertake an initiative to equip each parish church with modern technology	<i>An exercise in scoping out what exactly would be required is underway with the intention of putting together a 'brief' for tender. A number of 'experts' in the area of communications technology have been approached to assist with this; a presentation was made to clergy about the possibilities of technology on Sept 21st.</i>



<b>Core Strategic Action Four</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
<p>A training initiative will be designed and delivered by liturgy staff this coming year to foster congregational singing.</p>	<p><i>There were two workshops for choirs and cantors this Spring. Tracey Fitzgerald in Adare parish organised one with Fr Liam Lawton, (The Mass of St Patrick); 45 people participated. Sr Moira Bergin led a workshop for congregational singing - an introductory workshop for parishes exploring the idea of cantors and of congregational singing with resources for Mass settings, Easter season and especially Alleluias. 65 people participated.</i></p>
<b>Core Strategic Action Five</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
<p>The Institute for Pastoral Studies will provide a Summer School in 2017 for clergy and as part of this ongoing formation will be delivered on homilies and leading liturgy.</p>	<p><i>Due to Summer Works on the building in MIC St Patrick's campus, Thurles this has had to be deferred until Summer 2018.</i></p>
<b>Core Strategic Action Six</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
<p>As a result of the Synod a set of Diocesan Statutes will be finalised which outline the local law for this Diocese containing procedures and policies.</p>	<p><i>The Diocesan Statutes were finalised and published on January 10<sup>th</sup> 2017.</i></p>
<p><b>Further Actions:</b> This core strategic action will in turn enable subsequent delivery of the following proposals:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Common Coeliac Policy will be developed</li> </ul>	<p><i>The National Centre for Liturgy have produced guidelines: <a href="http://www.liturgy-ireland.ie/uploads/8/4/2/9/8429650/ncl_coeliac_dl_online.pdf">http://www.liturgy-ireland.ie/uploads/8/4/2/9/8429650/ncl_coeliac_dl_online.pdf</a></i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similarly other policies and procedures around liturgical procedures will be clarified where necessary and developed where necessary.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p>
<b>Core Strategic Action Seven</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
<p>The Diocese will support and resource parishes as they choose from a menu of local proposals.</p>	<p><i>Parish Pastoral Councils &amp; Leadership Groups were gathered in 3 separate venues on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> to support their engagement with the Pastoral Plan.</i></p>

<b>Further Actions:</b> <b>Parishes will choose from:</b>	<p><i>Over the lifetime of this Plan parishes will choose from this menu year on year; examples of parish initiatives will be shared at the Diocesan gathering of Parish Pastoral Council representatives in Castletroy Park Hotel on September 30<sup>th</sup>.</i></p> <p><i>This year 35 people have participated in workshops for new Ministers of the Eucharist as well as evenings in a few parishes for those engaged in liturgical ministry.</i></p> <p><i>Fifteen people have participated in Baptism Team Training. Further training will be offered in a number of parishes this Autumn. In the area of Children / Family liturgy, Godly Play training will be made available next summer.</i></p> <p><i>Reflection during Mass; parishes are taking this on as an aspect of Lay Led Liturgy. The Diocesan Liturgy Commission is looking at creating a resource for newsletters/homilies.</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have liturgies outside the church building.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection times during Mass.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on preparation for Baptism &amp; its celebration during Sunday Mass</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better recognition be given to hymns, prayers &amp; blessings <i>as Gaeilge</i> which may be incorporated into the Eucharist</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church Environment- Create a Welcoming Space</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a child friendly space in churches and also to facilitate ‘play &amp; pray’ etc. during Masses</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liturgical Music and resources for Family/Children’s’ Masses and Young People’s Masses – Separate session for children, prepare for Christmas, Easter concert, Kids Clubs, Easter concert.</li> <li>• More general and imaginative use of the second rite of confession.</li> </ul>	

<b>Core Strategic Action Eight</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
<b>A Sunday will be dedicated throughout the Diocese to reintroduce the practice of blessing into our lives. Ideas and resources will be provided to parishes.</b>	<i>A prayer card (wallet sized) which families could take home is being prepared.</i>

# Theme 5: Faith Formation and Education

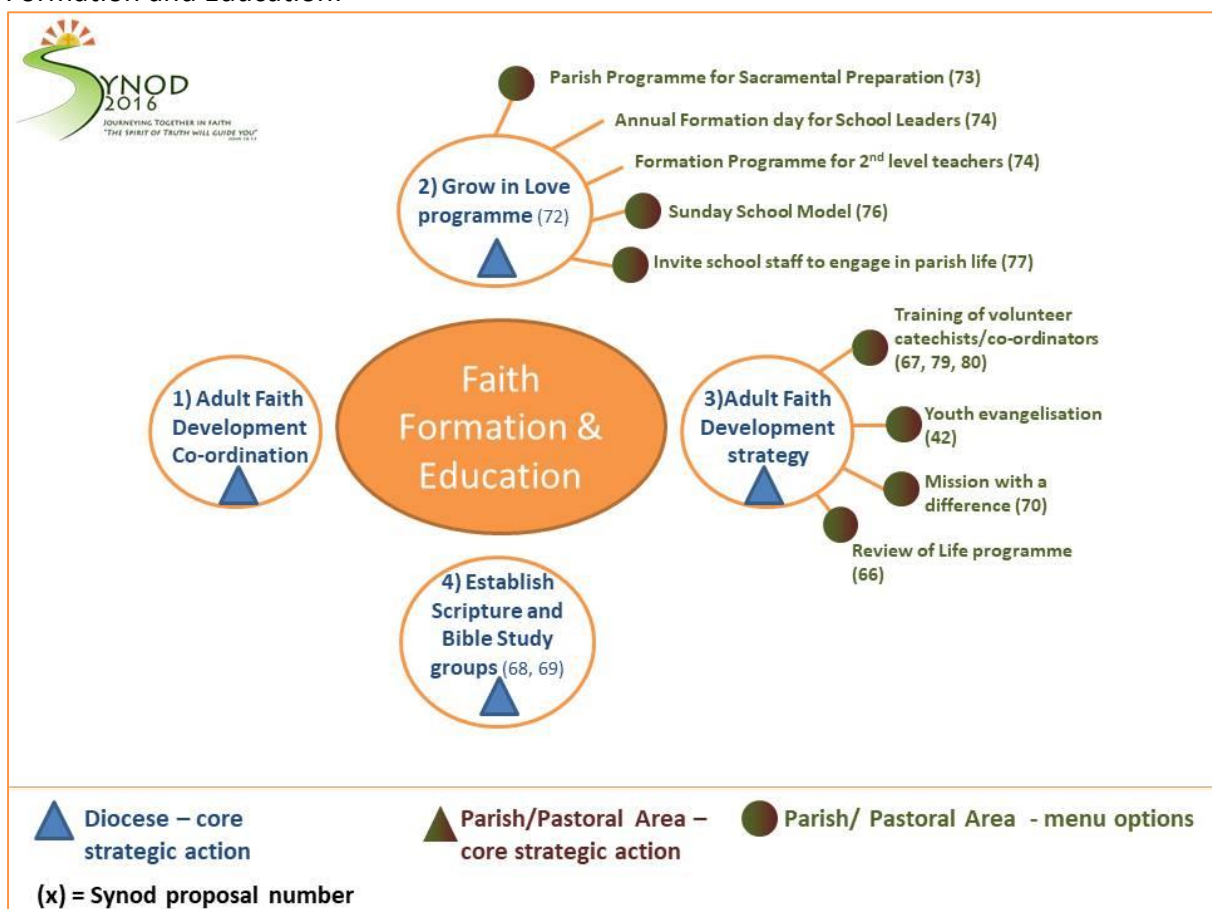
## Vision

In Ireland, a systematic or formal approach to faith formation has largely been the remit of Catholic schools and focussed on children/young people. While this is important, we also need to be mindful that faith formation is a lifelong process and that adult catechesis ‘is considered the chief form of catechesis.’ In our local context, we are exploring new models of leadership for a Church in a changing reality, where the lay faithful are being entrusted with particular tasks in their faith community. In approaching faith formation, a core question is how do we meet people where they are at in their own lives, at their starting point, and accompany them on their faith journey?

While the voting here was more wide-ranging than the other areas we saw that the core concerns coincided with the two proposals that received the strongest vote in the whole Synod – an intentional faith formation initiative to share the Good News and the equipping of local volunteers to lead that initiative.

We believe that the core intention here is for a multi-layered approach to faith development – one that would succeed in connecting with people across the course of their lives rather than just at particular moments of sacramental preparation.

The following figure provides an overview of the actions proposed under the theme of Faith Formation and Education:



Core Strategic Action One	Progress Report
<p>Increase capacity to respond to the needs of adult faith formation in the Diocese.</p>	<p><i>Bishop Brendan will be establishing a Diocesan Faith Development Commission with responsibility for developing a multi-layered faith development programme for the Diocese.</i></p>
Core Strategic Action Two	Progress Report
<p>September 2015 saw the introduction of a new religious education curriculum and programme, <i>Grow in Love</i>, for Catholic primary schools. The Diocese will implement this programme in all its dimensions. <i>Grow in Love</i> offers a unique opportunity to renew the partnership between home, school and parish, actively involving families in the faith formation of their children. The vision is that the parish community and parents will take a more prominent role in the future preparation of children. The strategy will include ongoing work in the schools and the promotion of home-school-parish links and will develop a parish programme for children’s sacramental preparation.</p> <p>Similarly, the Diocese will encourage our Secondary schools to engage with the Catholic Schools Partnership’s process entitled ‘<i>Understanding and Living the Ethos in a Catholic Voluntary Secondary School.</i>’</p> <p>Third Level education will be engaged through chaplaincy teams.</p>	<p><i>The Diocese has a team of two Diocesan Advisors, Sr Rose Miriam and Veronica Behan supporting Primary Schools. In-service days have been held with primary schools throughout the Diocese in the month of September. These will be followed by a schools visitation programme.</i></p> <p><i>Carmel Plant is the Diocesan Advisor for Secondary Schools. Carmel will be holding an in-service day for RE teachers and chaplains of secondary schools on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October. A visitation programme and ongoing provision of resources will be continued throughout the year.</i></p>
<p><b><u>Further Actions:</u></b>  <b>This core strategic action will in turn enable subsequent delivery of the following proposals:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish support programme for children preparing to receive sacraments</li> <li>• Develop a strategic approach to supporting Religious Education and the characteristic spirit of Catholic Primary Schools – annual formation day for school leaders</li> <li>• Design a formation programme for 2nd level teachers</li> </ul>	<p><i>These proposals will be delivered over the course of the lifetime of this Plan.</i></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The parish to take responsibility for the evangelisation of children by means of a Sunday School Model</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The staff of our Catholic schools are a wonderful resource to our communities. As an outcome of the Synod we will encourage and support this resource in the life of our local parishes.</li> </ul>	

Core Strategic Action Three	Progress Report
<p><b>The Diocese will commit to a faith development strategy prioritising adults. A central element of that strategy will be the training of volunteer lay ‘catechists’, ‘animators’ or ‘coordinators’ to deliver this strategy at a local level.</b></p>	<p><i>A Programme of Catechesis is being rolled out across the country in Autumn 2017 with most of the implementation after Christmas as part of the preparations for WMOF 2018. Martin Kennedy has been spearheading the design and development of this programme and leaders will be trained at local level. The Diocese will avail of this opportunity to identify and begin training lay catechists, using an apprenticeship model with specific training for specific tasks building over time towards competent and qualified lay catechists/animators at local level.</i></p>
<p><b><u>Further Actions:</u></b>  <b>This core strategic action will in turn enable subsequent delivery of the following proposals:</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To form committee / working group to evaluate existing catechesis and religious education of young people and look at ways of introducing a Parish / Pastoral Area based evangelisation of youth.</li> </ul>	<p><i>2018 ongoing</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek creative ways to engage with people, through a ‘Mission with a Difference’, a ‘festival of faith’ with open air events.</li> </ul>	<p><i>From 2018</i></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That a programme for Faith Formation be rolled out using a ‘Review of Life’ to support those who have had positive experiences to articulate not just what happened but their faith experience and journey.</li> </ul>	<p><i>From 2018</i></p>

Core Strategic Action Four	Progress Report
<p><b>Establish Scripture &amp; Bible Study Groups across the Diocese enabling us to rediscover who we are.</b></p>	<p><i>From 2018. This action is linked to the creation of Basic Christian Communities under the Community &amp; Belonging Theme. The Irish Institute for Pastoral Studies at MIC, Thurles has been developing scripture initiatives in other Dioceses; this experience will be reviewed to inform the work in Limerick.</i></p>



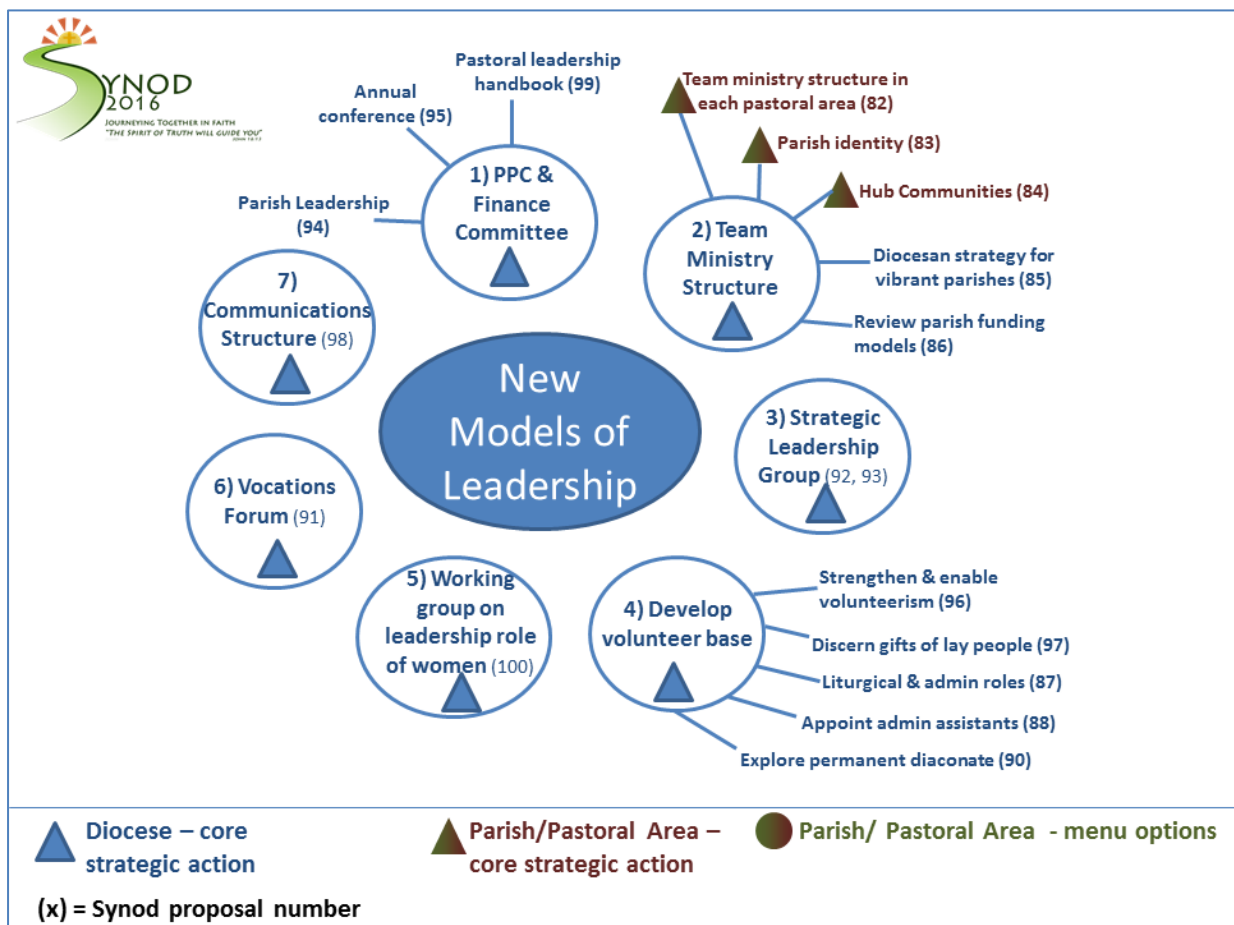
# Theme 6: New Models of Leadership

## Vision

We need to look at new models of leadership for two reasons. Firstly, because we are living in a very different world from the one most of us grew up in. We also need to look at new models because the concept of a leadership which depends almost exclusively on the priest cannot continue. That is what leadership, and not just the leadership of priests, should mean in the Christian community, discovering, recognising and fostering one another's gifts.

There was a very high proportion of strong votes in this section – there was very strong support from the Synod for the proposed actions on new models of leadership. At the core of this we saw an affirmation of the shared baptism of all members of the church – priests, religious and laity – and a desire that the gifts of all be brought into fruitful and collaborative service of the gospel.

The following figure provides an overview of the actions proposed under the theme New Models of Leadership:



Core Strategic Action One	Progress Report
<b>The Diocese is committed to action that will copper fasten a Pastoral Council and a Finance Committee in every single parish. In this way the following proposals will be delivered:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parish Leadership: develop the role of parish pastoral councils regarding parish leadership</li> </ul>	<i>Parish Pastoral Councils met in February 2017 at Regional levels to discuss ways of engaging with the Pastoral Plan.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An annual Conference for Parish Pastoral Councils</li> </ul>	<i>A Diocesan Assembly will be held on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2017</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A handbook will be provided for Pastoral Leadership in Limerick Diocese</li> </ul>	<i>This action is scheduled for launch going forward.</i>

Core Strategic Action Two	Progress Report
<p><b>We accept the current structure no longer meets the needs and the challenges of our time. We commit to working together to ensure the establishment of a Team Ministry structure in each of the pastoral areas in the Diocese. We will do this in dialogue with priests and people, building on the principles of co-responsibility and collaboration aware that we all share in the priesthood of the faithful.</b></p>	<p><i>Throughout 2016 and to date in 2017 a variety of Team Ministry models are developing. At this stage there are eight different examples at different stages of development. Each is unique and all are evolving and developing.</i></p> <p><i>The intention is that lay leaders at parish level will become much more engaged and involved in the working out of these Team Ministry models.</i></p> <p><i>A review of funding models and issues around finance is underway.</i></p>
<p><b><u>Further Actions:</u></b>  <b>This core strategic action will in turn enable subsequent delivery in our parishes of the following proposals:</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of a Team Ministry Structure in each Pastoral Area.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide and grow a model of leadership to enrich the life of individual parishes maintaining parish identity.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forming Hub Communities through open communication/dialogue and consultation with all individual parishes through their pastoral council.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop a Diocesan strategy for enabling communities to become vibrant parishes, so that these parishes can be safeguarded and not suppressed.</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the funding models / sources for Parish Income - clergy income and parish personnel salaries.</li> </ul>	

Core Strategic Action Three	Progress Report
<b>We will commit to the establishment of a strategic leadership group for the Diocese, one with the mix of expertise to engage with the range of challenges arising from the Synod.</b>	<i>A Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) has been established representing different aspects of life in the Diocese. The DPC will be extended as required to meet the ongoing needs of the Diocese.</i>

Core Strategic Action Four	Progress Report
<b>We will commit to initiatives to develop and sustain a strong volunteer base in the parishes and in the Diocese who will work alongside paid staff to further the mission. We see this as having two elements. A ‘structure’ of support in terms of description of roles, provision of training etc. But also we saw that for volunteerism to be sustained it needs a ‘spirit’ – a nourishment of faith and vision that Basic Christian Communities (BCC) can offer. We will commit to supporting the development of appropriate models of BCC taking into account the potential that groups such as <i>Muintearas</i> can offer. Thus the following proposals will be developed:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening and enabling Volunteerism in the Diocese.</li> </ul>	<i>The concept of a holding volunteering fair in the Diocese will be explored going forward.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discernment of the Gifts of Lay People.</li> </ul>	<i>This action is scheduled for launch going forward.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To move towards the employment of Lay People to fulfil both liturgical and administrative roles in parishes, in clusters and/or in pastoral areas.</li> </ul>	<i>This action is scheduled for launch going forward.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Parish/Cluster Administrative Assistants.</li> </ul>	<i>Current practices throughout the Diocese have been researched, some training in Accounting software and Parish Computer programmes has been provided. Further training and support will be provided.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the introduction of the permanent diaconate into the Diocese.</li> </ul>	<i>This action is scheduled for launch going forward.</i>

Core Strategic Action Five	Progress Report
<b>We will as a matter of urgency establish the proposed working group on a leadership role for women in the life of the Diocese.</b>	<i>This Working Group has been established, an initial meeting has been held; work will begin imminently.</i>

<b>Core Strategic Action Six</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
<p>Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life are something that the Diocese will continue to promote. In the last few years a number of initiatives to promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life have been developed.</p> <p>A Forum will be established drawing representatives from each pastoral Area.</p>	<p><i>This work is ongoing.</i></p> <p><i>A Vocations Forum will be established going forward.</i></p>
<b>Core Strategic Action Seven</b>	<b>Progress Report</b>
<p>Establish a working group to examine the current communications structures in this Diocese.</p>	<p><i>A Communications scoping group has been established.</i></p>