

ARCHDIOCESE OF JOHANNESBURG
SYNOD

2008

PURPOSE OF THIS SYNOD

“The faithful should be afforded the opportunity of expressing their needs, their desires and their opinions with regard to the topics being dealt with in Synod”

ARCHDIOCESE OF JOHANNESBURG

Our Internal Strengths

- The presence & activity of the Holy Spirit
- The faith, hope & love of the people of God, expressed in Eucharistic worship, personal prayer & responsible action in pursuit of the common good of society
- Apostolic authenticity of Catholicism
- Anti-apartheid record
- Number of Catholics (many committed & active clergy, religious & laity) in the Archdiocese
- Established infrastructure
- Financial strength

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Our Internal Weaknesses

- Number of priests insufficient (ageing & too few vocations)
- Many “modern” Catholics do not agree with or understand the Church’s position on some issues (i.e. contraception, divorce/remarriage, male priesthood, response to sex scandals)
- Inability to retain attention & participation of youth & young adults (alienating)
- Inadequate communication/teaching/homilies from the pulpit
- Insufficient communication between priests/deacons & laity
- Many lay Catholics are denied participation in the life of the Church by entrenched parish structures
- Challenges relating to the size of the archdiocese
- Lack of direction & priorities in response to RSA society
- Out of touch with the issues of the laity in their daily lives

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Our Internal Weaknesses (cont)

- Too complacent & slow to respond to issues within & beyond the Church
- Too much on formal religion & not enough on spirituality
- Challenged to respond to technological, social & economic changes
- Caught between principles & history, while needing to adapt to the future.
- Gap between Church's teachings & modern world
- Sexist
- Priest issues
 - Priests not taking their commitment seriously
 - Racial division
 - Sex scandals

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External Opportunities

- Satisfy the human quest for meaning in the face of moral degeneration and a secular society
- Address the many un-served communities (poverty, demographic change, new higher socio-economic residential nodes)
- Respond appropriately to changing societal norms within the teachings of the faith
- Better utilise technology to foster community, inform & teach
- Utilise lay talent
- Explore more mature vocations
- Catholics spearheading South Africa's societal change
- Increasing cultural diversity
- Ecumenical outreach

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External Threats

- Secular, materialistic society
- Dramatic change in family life
- Competition for peoples attention
- Alternative, more entertaining “religions”
- Shifting residential nodes

KEY TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

- Spirituality
- Ongoing Christian Formation
- Youth
- Committed Personnel
- Communication/Profile
- Physical Development of the Church

WHAT IS A VISION?

A definition of VICTORY

or

How we will know we have achieved our
objectives

PROPOSED VISION

A Eucharistic community comprised of the children of God, incorporated into the Body of Christ through Baptism, who worship the Father in Spirit and truth and who are actively serving humanity in view of fostering the
Reign of God

A thriving diocese; comprising a sufficient number of accessible, self-reliant, interacting, interdependent, growing parishes; where priests, deacons, religious & an increasing cadre of lay leaders collaborate; to evangelize, deepen the faith, enhance the communion, & satisfy the spiritual needs, of multi-ethnic, multi cultural, multi-lingual Catholic congregations; who reach out as individuals & a Church to make a societal impact, & to provide moral leadership, consistent with the teachings of Christ & the Church; with particular emphasis on youth & the family, & the poor & the marginalised.

WHAT IS A MISSION?

A definition of PURPOSE

or

What are the assets, competencies & capabilities we will use to achieve our Vision?

PROPOSED MISSION

The Catholic Archdiocese of Johannesburg comprises 160 priests, 40 deacons and 38 religious orders, who provide pastoral ministry & leadership to a very diverse congregation of at least 1m lay Catholics, who adhere to the tenets of their faith to various degrees in 125 very differently resourced parishes & 50 schools predominantly in the Gauteng province.

In accordance with the Magisterium, we the Church seek to evangelize ourselves and respond to spiritual & human needs (through catechetics, contextual mission, education, pastoral work, the sacraments, lay movements & the nurturing of Parish communities) while providing moral guidance in a predominantly secular, increasingly youthful society, experiencing the challenges of dramatic societal change.