



Towards 2020

The most recent Diocesan Strategy has been up and running since 2015. The aim has been to foster an atmosphere where we all learn to know, love and follow Jesus.

The three goals set by Archbishop Rowan and adopted by us in 2015 provided a framework for our activity as we have sought to grow numerically and spiritually, re-imagine ministry and contribute to the common good.

These goals were supported by our annual focused projects: The Year of Mercy, Year of the Bible, Year of Prayer and the current Year of Vocation.

The resources at Church House Hove have been fully employed encouraging parishes as they have worked to implement this vision in their own settings.

As the five-year period draws to a close, it is time to take stock and look forward to the next five years in our household of faith.

The next phase of our strategy will build on that which has gone before, focussing more clearly on needs, challenges and opportunities that have come into focus as we have travelled together since 2015.

The theme of the next phase is 'more'! We have made a start, but we need to be more effective in a number of areas if we are to be faithful in proclaiming the faith afresh to our generation.

The four mores, explained below, are manifestations of the Nicene Creed conviction that the Church is to be one, holy, Catholic and apostolic. They are not the exclusive manifestation of these qualities, but they are areas in our life to which we need to give serious attention.

The four mores are:

More Open:

- “We have a vision for congregations with age and other profiles reflecting the communities they serve. We want to see the church as a family of all ages, loving, serving, contributing and receiving together at a level appropriate for their age and maturity.”

More converted to Jesus Christ

- We have a vision for a church which communicates the Gospel effectively, so women, men and children come to a living, personal faith in Jesus Christ and join their local church family on the journey to know, love and follow Jesus. We want to be a church where people are valued and nurtured, finding support through the difficulties of life. We envisage a wide open front door to a community where people feel at home and want to stay. We want to see our life flow out of prayer and worship, rather than see these things as one amongst other activities that we do.”

More Generous

- “We have a vision of a diocese where there are ‘no needy among them’ Acts 4: 34; where wealthier parishes contribute joyfully to sustain ministry in deprived areas and where economically deprived parishes don’t feel a liability to the rest. We envisage a diocese with a balanced budget and financially sustainable parishes by 2025.”

More Engaged

- “We have a vision for a church where people have a sense of vocation to love, expressing itself in service; and a church family that nurtures and encourages that vocation. We long to see a church whose reputation in the community is one of bringing blessing and transformation; a church which works with all those of good will to contribute to the common good.”

We plan to launch the next phase of the strategy at Diocesan Synod this November (2019).

In 2020 we will be focussing on further embedding this vision and conviction into the lifeblood of our diocese. Over the next few months we will be adding some specific strategic goals. Watch this space for more information.

Best wishes

+Richard

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Bishop of Lewes