



February 20, 2025

Dear Faithful,

During Advent 2022, our Catholic Diocese of Memphis, under the leadership of The Most Reverend David P. Talley, initiated a two-year Strategic Pastoral Planning process. As described by Bishop Talley, the purpose of this initiative was to provide a clear, strategic direction on bringing Jesus Christ to all in West Tennessee.

This program of pastoral revitalization sought to respond to three fundamental questions:

- **Where are we today?** What are the challenges and opportunities we face as the Church of Jesus Christ in West Tennessee in the third decade of the 2000s? (Attentive Listening)
- **Where is God calling us to be?** Where is the Holy Spirit leading us? (Prayerful Discernment)
- **How will we get there together?** What concrete actions must we take to arrive at the destination planned for us in God's Providence? (Collaborative Engagement)

All members of the Catholic community in West Tennessee were encouraged to participate in this process in English or Spanish by attending area listening sessions, responding to an online survey and/or participating in a personal interview based on the three overarching questions.

Where are we today?

In general, Catholics in West Tennessee describe our Diocese as a vibrant Local Church that recently celebrated its 50th Anniversary, held its first Eucharistic Congress, survived a worldwide pandemic, and is still in the process of healing from wounds suffered during the past decade. A strong desire was expressed for spiritual renewal and increased Eucharistic devotion.

The “changing face” of the Church in West Tennessee was noted as parishes welcome new members from Latino, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, and other ethnic communities. Parents of young children and youth expressed concerns about education and faith formation in the face of secular influences dominating our culture, especially through social media. Inflation, unemployment, and other economic challenges are placing significant stress on families and communities throughout West Tennessee—increasing the need for the Church’s social ministries at both the Diocesan and Parish levels.

A successful United in Faith Capital Campaign—the first diocesan-wide campaign in more than 20 years—is seen as a sign of the resilience and generosity of the Catholic people in spite of the many challenges the Diocese has faced in recent years.

Where is God calling us to be?

A Strategic Pastoral Planning Committee chaired by Bishop Talley, with diverse representatives from clergy and lay leaders from across our Diocese, spent many hours engaged in attentive listening and prayerful discernment. As a result, Vision and Mission Statements, along with six Pastoral Priorities, were developed in response to the question: Where is the Holy Spirit leading the Church in West Tennessee?

The Vision, Mission, and six Priorities provide a clear, strategic direction for our Diocesan, Parish, and School leaders as they carry out their pastoral ministries over the next three years.

How will we get there together?

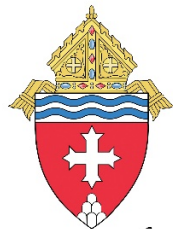
The Strategic Pastoral Planning Committee was charged with the responsibility to provide clear guidelines for Diocesan and Parish ministries as they seek to pursue the Vision, Mission, and Pastoral Priorities referenced above.

Task Teams were appointed to develop strategies for each priority. These were then submitted to Bishop Talley who worked with a group of senior advisers to integrate the various recommendations of the Task Teams and relate them to Sacred Scripture and to Church teachings. As a result, the Diocese's three-year Strategic Pastoral Plan is grounded in the Word of God and in the wisdom of the Universal Church.

Each priority is defined and lists one main strategy each year for the next three years: 2025, 2026, and 2027, providing a manageable focus for our Diocese, Parishes, and Schools. (see Plan Summary)

Kingdom of God

Our Diocese, guided by the Holy Spirit, is announcing a Strategic Pastoral Plan from 2025-2027 that can help bring Jesus Christ to all of us in West Tennessee. By living a Christ-centered fellowship, on fire with the love of God and neighbor, and by sharing with others the fruits of an anointed life in Word and Sacrament, our Local Church sees individuals, families, parishes, and our schools working together as One to build up the Kingdom of God in West Tennessee.



Catholic Diocese of Memphis

Strategic Pastoral Plan
Summary
Living the Anointed Life
2025-2027

Our Vision

To live a Christ-centered fellowship, on fire with the love of God and neighbor, to see individuals, families, parishes, and our schools working together to build up the Kingdom of God in West Tennessee.

Our Mission

Living the anointed life in Word and Sacrament.

Our Priorities

Eucharistic Life: Living a life of prayer, worship, and thanksgiving, and celebrating the Sacraments of Christ with reverence and fervor, born of the Holy Spirit's presence within us.

- **Year 1:** Increase communal opportunities to pray our Catholic devotionals, especially Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Rosary, and the Stations of the Cross.
- **Year 2:** Emphasize Catholic devotionals through new opportunities for our families, assisting and forming the domestic church in the Sacramental presence of Christ.
- **Year 3:** Prepare for our next diocesan-wide Eucharistic Congress in our 46 parishes and 13 Catholic schools.
 - **Scripture:** Acts 2, Ephesians 1:3-14, 4:5-6
 - **Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 1271, 2031, 1996-2000

Formation: In the fruitfulness of Eucharistic Life, we commit ourselves and our families to lifelong formation in the apostolic traditions of our faith.

- **Year 1:** Create weekly opportunities for on-going faith formation of adults, teens, and children in our 46 parishes and 13 Catholic schools.
- **Year 2:** Provide formation for parish and school leaders on best practices of evangelization that create pathways for missionary discipleship.
- **Year 3:** Implement these newly found pathways of formation within missionary discipleship as integral to parish and school life.
 - **Scripture:** John 1:18; John 14:6; John 15:5
 - **Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 1785, 2685, 2221

Evangelization: Born of a Eucharistic Life, we will proclaim the Good News to all in every part of West Tennessee.

- **Year 1:** Strengthen the understanding of missionary discipleship of our Risen Lord, and how this speaks to evangelization in our families, schools, and parishes.
- **Year 2:** Create and implement programs that integrate evangelization into the life of our parishes and schools.
- **Year 3:** Invite and accompany neighbors to join our community of faith.
 - **Scripture:** Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 1:35-38; Luke 4:42-44
 - **Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 863, 864, 865

Unity: Revealed through our Eucharistic Life, we, though many, are one Body of Christ.

- **Year 1:** Compare and contrast secular notions of “diversity” with the diversity seen in the Body of Christ.
- **Year 2:** Implement activities in our parishes and schools that underscore the rich diversity seen in all who are created in the image and likeness of God.
- **Year 3:** Assess and continually renew our response to Christ’s call for unity.
 - **Scripture:** John 17: 20-23; 1 Corinthians 12-31; 1 John 4:16, 19-21
 - **Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 361

Steeped in Mercy: Bound through our Eucharistic Life, we follow the Lord Jesus in sharing sacrificially, especially with the least, and the last, and the lost.

- **Year 1:** Create parish-based resources and processes to care for those seeking mercy within your community.
- **Year 2:** Develop relationships with other Christian churches in your parish area to deepen resources in the care of the Lord’s poor.
- **Year 3:** Give voice to those ministries who are doers of the Word in our on-going formation and all aspects of living the anointed life.
 - **Scripture:** Matthew 5:1-12; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 10:29-37; James 1: 22-25; James 2:14-17
 - **Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 1397

Stewardship: We manifest the Eucharistic Life through our generous and intentional stewardship of all God’s gifts.

- **Year 1:** Develop a “spirituality of stewardship” within families, our schools, and parish organizations.
- **Year 2:** Form parish-level leadership to embody the call to a “spirituality of stewardship” in the use of our time, the talents we are given, and the treasure we offer.
- **Year 3:** Magnify the fruitfulness of a “spirituality of stewardship,” recognizing God’s abundant generosity in both family and parish life.
 - **Scripture:** Luke 9:12-17; Luke 21:1-4; 1 Peter 4:10; John 10:10
 - **Catechism of the Catholic Church:** 1832