



Office of the Bishop
Diocese of Toledo

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Letter to the Faithful Presenting Our New Diocesan Strategic Plan

18 February 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings to you and Peace in Christ Jesus! “Do you have a plan?” “What’s the vision?” “Where is our Diocese heading?” Since I first arrived as your bishop, I have frequently been asked these questions. Many are anxious to know the future of the diocese and whether we have a common vision. Now, after some time of making every effort to be personally present throughout the nineteen counties of our Diocese, formulating a diocesan wide focus of our prayers, addressing and reorganizing our diocesan pastoral center and making great strides at getting our financial house in order, we are now ready to answer those questions!

Today, our future is clearer than ever before because, through the broad input and efforts of so many good folks from throughout the Diocese, and by God’s grace, we are now in a position to present a new milestone: a strategic plan for our diocese. With the collaboration of our Senior Staff and our valuable strategic planning team members, we have devised a plan to help us focus our pastoral energies and resources toward short and long-range goals that will move us toward our diocesan vision: “to become a more faith-filled, united and vibrant Diocese of Toledo, through fostering Holy Disciples, Holy Families and Holy Vocations.”

This pivotal [guiding document](#) is the next step in an effort that began when I first became your bishop. I made no secret of the financial challenges the Diocese faced in 2015, and after a thorough review of operations in February 2016, we started this journey by focusing intently to become better stewards of the assets of our diocese. In November 2017, we initiated a new organizational and managerial structure to improve the governance, transparency, security and oversight of the assets of the diocese by separating the temporal affairs (financial and administrative departments) from our pastoral and ministerial programs.

In October 2018, we partnered with the Spitzer Center of Ann Arbor, Michigan to assist us with the next step of our journey, the creation of a strategic plan that will focus our pastoral and temporal efforts, establish goals and build upon the valuable work already accomplished.

The strategic planning process commenced with sending a survey to priests, deacons, religious and laity involved in various leadership roles throughout the whole diocese. We then identified individuals with varied experience from a broad diocesan demographic to form a strategic planning team. That team, together with Senior Staff,

reflected on input from the survey and articulated a new vision, mission and set of values for our diocese. We also formulated six strategic “pillar” goals and related actions which focus our energies to pursue and accomplish these priorities in the next three years.

Our newly formed Diocesan mission is something I hope we can all rally around: “We, the faithful of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Toledo, are called by Jesus Christ to proclaim the Gospel, celebrate the Sacraments and serve those in need, revealing to all the merciful face of the Father. Through prayer, fasting and almsgiving, we, the members of our parishes, schools and communities, strive with the help of the Holy Spirit, the intercession of Our Lady of the Rosary and fidelity to the Church, to be joyful witnesses to the love of God and neighbor.”

Our newly defined “Core Values” will guide all our efforts at every level throughout the diocese. We also created what we call “Strategic Pillar Goals.” This is where we will be concentrating our energies for the next three years. Please see the [full strategic plan](https://toledodiocese.org/images/uploads/page_assets/strategic%20plan%20document%20Boded%20Final.pdf) at https://toledodiocese.org/images/uploads/page_assets/strategic%20plan%20document%20Boded%20Final.pdf.

Each of the Pillar Goals has key actions associated with it that will serve as the practical steps to reach each goal. A broad multidisciplinary team has been created for each of the Pillars, led by a Senior Staff member, to manage executing the actions toward achieving our goals.

I am profoundly grateful to all the Strategic Planning team members who gave of their time and talent to help us arrive at our Strategic Plan; as well as to our Pillar Team members who have committed to leading our future efforts in fulfilling our plan.

It is my sincere hope that this new strategic plan for the diocese will ignite excitement and interest throughout the diocese around a united vision, mission, values and pillars; and I invite your prayers and active participation so that together, we can make it a reality.

I encourage you to integrate our strategic plan into the life of your parish, school or institution. And I ask you all to make every effort to allow this plan to serve as a source of inspiration for our lives together in living out the Gospel as faithful Catholics in our nineteen counties of Northwest Ohio. Together with me and all our brothers and sisters throughout the diocese, I pray you will “Embrace the Vision.” May the Lord Bless you! And may he bless all our efforts so that as St. Paul writes, we may be “taken possession of by Christ... forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead” in our “pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God’s upward calling, in Christ Jesus.” (Phil 3:12-14)

With the pledge of my prayers for you and your intentions, and depending on your good prayers, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,



Most Reverend Daniel E. Thomas
Bishop of Toledo