Do not let people disregard you because you are young, but be an example to all the believers in the way you speak and behave, and in your love, your faith and your purity.”

1 Timothy 4:12
FOREWORD

I welcome the preparation and publication by the Diocesan Youth Council of its strategic plan. In the Letter to the Ephesians St Paul tells us that God has made known to us the mystery of his will as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in Christ. The plan of God is revealed in its fullness in the coming of Jesus. The time of the Church makes up the final stage of God’s plan. Each one must play a part in carrying out that plan. For to the Church Jesus has confided the mission of bearing witness to Him. It is a difficult task, which demands a deep understanding of what Jesus said and did. That is why Jesus sent and continues to send the Holy Spirit that we may all know Jesus and bear witness to Jesus. This we do by expressing and manifesting in our own lives the values and the virtues of Christ, especially his healing and compassionate love. We cannot separate our faith from commitment to the helpless and poor of the world with whom Jesus so intimately identified himself. The Diocesan Youth Council have tried to be as attentive as possible to the inspirations of the Spirit of the Risen Christ in the preparation of this, its latest plan.

I warmly welcome the aim of forming and training a team of young people to promote the development of faith in parishes and schools. There is a great need to find deeper roots for our faith in our daily experience. This can be done by focussing on what is central to Christian belief, the saving power of God, revealed in the healing love of Jesus and the transforming presence of the Holy Spirit. I hope that this plan will help all of us to co-operate with God in bringing healing to a broken world and in working for the coming of the Kingdom to the poor and the marginalised.

In his homily at the Mass for the Election of the Roman Pontiff, preached on 18 April 2005, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger told his congregation to go to the Lord and pray to Him so that He may help us to bear fruit which remains, for only in this way will the earth be changed from a valley of tears to a garden of God. He had already defined the fruit which remains as that which we have sown in human souls, love, knowledge, a gesture capable of touching the heart, words that open the soul to joy in the Lord. May this plan help us all to bear fruit that will last.

Most Rev. Seán Brady
Archbishop of Armagh

April 2007
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foreword</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision, Mission and Core Values</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priority Areas</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilgrimages</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Development</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gate Magazine</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith Development Team</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Protection Policy</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgements</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction

The old Irish proverb which reads, ‘Mol an óige agus tíocfaidh siad’, roughly translates as ‘Praise the youth and they will flourish’.

As we ‘launch out into the deep’ (Luke 5:4) with a new strategic plan for 2007 – 2010, praise is offered to all those associated with the last one. Among many things, it deserves praise for the excellent running of the many youth pilgrimages which have become over-subscribed. It deserves praise for GATE Magazine which began like the mustard seed and has now grown to being distributed in many countries around the world. Hopefully as the proverb says this will lead to a flourishing of youth ministry in the Armagh Diocese over the next 3 years.

But what does flourishing of youth ministry mean? In my eyes, it means that the young people of our parishes and diocese will be afforded more and more chances to develop in their own faith journeys and be witnesses as disciples of Christ.

This has to be a top priority for us! The young people of this generation are searching – sometimes in places that are neglectful to themselves and others. There is a real desire for authenticity and answers. No message is more authentic than Jesus’ and his answer is Love. This message is life changing and not just for young people, but for everyone.

“You are God’s chosen race, his saints; He loves you” (Col 3:12)

In order for young people to flourish in their journeys of faith, they have to feel respected and welcome – they have to feel included. We have often heard the line, ‘the young people are the future of the Church’. I prefer to look at the young people as the present of the Church. The vibrant, life-giving present of the Church.

The faith development area of this 3 year plan is so important in that regards. To enthuse young people to celebrate their faith and to bring it to light in their own lives and the lives of their churches. Hopefully we can challenge many young people to listen to the words of St. Paul:

“Do not let people disregard you because you are young, but be an example to all believers in the way you speak and behave, and in your love, your faith and your purity.” (1 Tim 4:12)

Fr Brian White
Chairperson ADYC
ARMAGH DIOCESAN YOUTH COUNCIL

VISION

Our vision is of a Church in which young people, motivated by a personal faith in Christ, will feel accepted, valued and empowered to fully participate.

MISSION STATEMENT

Motivated by Christ, our mission is to work in partnership with young people, Church and interested agencies to ensure that young people are encouraged and affirmed on their journey of faith. Through leadership training, school, parish and diocesan initiatives, we seek to enrich the Christian community.

VALUE BASE

In all areas of our work we will strive to meet these core values.

- **Christ-centred** - everything we do is centred in Christ.
- **Transparency** - being honest, caring and trustworthy.
- **Commitment** - as a team giving time and energy; taking ownership of our vision and mission.
- **Accountability** - we maintain professional relationships and boundaries between ourselves, young people and others, with particular concern for child protection.
- **Equity** - an unconditional positive regard towards young people irrespective of gender, social status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and religious or political beliefs while ensuring that resources are targeted at those most in need and working to redress imbalances.
- **Diversity** - exploring and valuing difference without prejudice.
- **Interdependence** - working in partnership with others.
PRIORITY AREAS

From April 2007 to September 2010 Armagh Diocesan Youth Council will develop its services across five areas of work and develop the necessary management and support structures to help it realise its objectives.

PRIORITY AREAS
Communication
Pilgrimages
Leadership development
GATE Magazine
Faith development team – Linking parishes and schools

The diagram below shows our organisational structure

As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. Eph. 4: 16b
COMMUNICATION

OVERALL AIM
The Diocesan Youth Council will communicate diocesan, parish and other youth ministry initiatives within the Archdiocese effectively both internally and with its stakeholders.

WEBSITE
1.0 By the end of December 2007 the new ADYC website will be active.
1.1 The website will incorporate a message forum within the website for young people and those ministering to youth.

Outcomes:
- An up-to-date ADYC website will be in place.
- Support and a forum for information sharing will be available for young people and those working with young people.

NEWSLETTER
2.0 Produce a newsletter three times a year.
2.1 Develop a list of people to email the newsletter to.

Outcomes:
- Regular communication of ADYC and other youth ministry activities in the Archdiocese will be in place.

OTHER
3.0 Develop new methods of promoting the ADYC’s ministry in parish and school through other existing means.

Outcome:
- The ministry of the ADYC will be opened to more people.

Performance Indicators:
The existence of the new website and frequency of updates.
The number of hits it receives.
Number and frequency of newsletters distributed.
Numbers of people on the e-mail list.
New avenues for promoting the ministry of the ADYC.
PILGRIMAGES

OVERALL AIM
By the end of the strategic plan the ADYC will have co-ordinated, planned and implemented annual spiritual and humanitarian pilgrimages both in Ireland and abroad.

LOURDES
1.0 To continue to arrange the successful annual diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes.
1.1 A team will plan and arrange an annual pilgrimage to Lourdes over the next 3 years.
1.2 To have a follow up evaluation of the pilgrimage.

Outcomes:
- A clear programme and agenda before and during each pilgrimage.
- The pilgrimage will develop in areas identified through evaluation.

WORLD YOUTH DAY
2.0 To plan and implement a pilgrimage to WYD 2008.
2.1 Identify a team of leaders who will co-ordinate and implement, attend a pilgrimage to WYD 2008.
2.2 To include preparation and follow-up activities for the group as part of the pilgrimage experience.
2.3 To run a programme for young people not attending WYD 2008 in conjunction with the five northern dioceses.

Outcomes:
- A highly structured and effective team will lead a well-organised pilgrimage.
- A group will represent the Archdiocese of Armagh at WYD.
- More young people will be open to the WYD experience.

HUMANITARIAN PILGRIMAGES
3.0 To co-ordinate and implement a humanitarian pilgrimage in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity in 2007.
3.1 To identify a team of leaders who will plan and implement an annual humanitarian pilgrimage.

Outcome:
- A new pilgrimage experience will be initiated by the ADYC.
LOCAL PILGRIMAGE

4.0 To arrange and implement at least one annual pilgrimage within Ireland.
4.1 To incorporate one local pilgrimage into the preparation programme for all ADYC pilgrimages.
4.2 To put in place a team to promote and oversee pilgrimages within our own country and diocese.
4.3 To have follow up evaluation of these pilgrimages.

Outcomes:
- To make the pilgrimage more accessible to all young people.
- To promote places of pilgrimage in Ireland such as Knock, Croagh Patrick and Lough Derg.
- To increase awareness among young people of the benefits of pilgrimage in their spiritual development.

OTHER

5.0 To promote other youth pilgrimages through the ADYC website and Newsletter and among ADYC members.
5.1 To develop support programmes for teams of young pilgrims wishing to develop youth programmes for young people in their parish setting.

Outcomes:
- Young people will have wider access to pilgrimages.
- Young people and parish will benefit from their involvement in pilgrimage.

Performance Indicators:
Number of young people that attend ADYC pilgrimages and their geographical location.
Feedback from leader and young pilgrims from evaluation sheets and feedback reports.
Number of pilgrims that advance into leadership roles in diocese and/or parish.
Number of young people directed towards other pilgrim programmes.
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

OVERALL AIM
By 2010 the Youth Council will have reviewed and audited its leadership development procedures and implemented ongoing and annual training programmes. Where necessary help and support from external agencies will be employed.

1.1 To identify youth ministry training needs within ADYC and throughout the Archdiocese.
1.2 A team will survey and identify areas for training.

Outcome:
- Training needs and development areas will be identified.

2.0 To provide in-house training for all ADYC volunteers.
2.1 An induction programme will be developed for all new volunteers including child protection awareness.
2.2 An annual training programme will be implemented.
2.3 A team will plan and organise three training weekends.

Outcomes:
- All ADYC volunteers will be adequately trained.
- There will be continuity of practice between activity areas.
- Relationships will be strengthened between activity areas.

3.0 To identify external training agencies and develop a working relationship with them.
3.1 A database of agencies compiled.

Outcomes:
- A clear outline of the ADYC’s training opportunities will be developed.
- Various opportunities for developing skills will be available to young people in the ADYC and in parishes in the Archdiocese.

4.0 To have all leadership training practices, procedures and programmes reviewed and evaluated.
4.1 To develop systems in ADYC activity areas that will ensure that all those interested young people suitable for leadership roles in the ADYC are channelled to the leadership development team.
Outcomes:
- Training programmes will address the needs of the ADYC volunteers.
- New volunteers will be identified through the ADYC.

5.0 To train all current and future ADYC volunteers in good child protection practices as part of an induction programme.

5.1 To develop an induction programme for all volunteers.

Outcome:
- Ensure good child protection practice on all ADYC activity areas.

6.0 To design and distribute a booklet for young people, parishes and schools outlining the training opportunities available through the ADYC.

Outcomes:
- Young people, parishes and schools will be aware of the support offered through the ADYC.
- The training facilities of the ADYC will be better utilised.

Performance Indicators:
Numbers of young people undergoing the ADYC training programmes.
Numbers of young people accessing external training opportunities.
Number and topics of training sessions held.
Booklets distributed to parishes and schools.
GATE MAGAZINE

OVERALL AIM
Gate magazine will continue to present contemporary issues from a Christian perspective relevant to the level of young people. In order to do this young people from within the Archdiocese will be involved as contributors and developers of the magazine’s image.

1.0 Consult and work collaboratively with youth ministry organisations, teachers, and students to ensure that the topics explored are relevant to young people.

Outcome:
- Editorial team would have greater awareness of how GATE can be best utilised in the classroom and compliment other youth ministry initiatives.

2.0 To increase the editorial team.
2.1 To recruit young people for the Gate team through the ADYC activity areas.

Outcomes:
- More young people will be contributing to GATE.
- An induction and training programme for new recruits will be in place.
- Gate will have a wider bank of contributors.

3.0 To mark the 10th anniversary of Gate through the readership and beyond.

Outcome:
- A disc of prayer and liturgy resources included in GATE over the years will be compiled and marketed.

4.0 To link GATE Magazine into the new ADYC website.

Outcome:
- A page advertising GATE will be included in the website.

5.0 Expand the number of advertisers, sponsorship and friends of GATE.

Outcome:
- Ensure financial security to expand the quantity and quality of the magazine.
6.0  Widen the geographic distribution of GATE.

**Outcome:**
- The magazine will be accessible to more people.

**Performance Indicators:**
Level and geography of sales.
Number of evaluation forms returned, satisfaction level of students and teachers.
Number of schools, parishes, individuals interested in GATE.
Number of advertisers, sponsors and friends of GATE.
Number and age profile of the editorial team.
FAITH DEVELOPMENT TEAM – LINKING PARISH AND SCHOOL

OVERALL AIM
By the end of the strategic plan the ADYC will have formed and trained a team who will facilitate faith development initiatives for young people in parishes and schools.

1.0 To establish a team of young people identified through diocesan, parish and school contacts who will deliver faith development initiatives for young people.

Outcome:
- A team will be formed who will support young people, parishes and schools in youth ministry.

2.0 To develop a range of programmes that will encourage and enable the faith development of young people in diocesan, parish and school settings. The range will include:
  - Sacramental preparation of young people and parents.
  - Equipping young people to participate in liturgy.
  - Encouraging and directing young people to serve others through available justice and peace initiatives.
  - Opportunities for young people to explore youth issues from a faith perspective.

Outcomes:
- A range of programmes will be available for parishes and schools to access.
- Young people in the Archdiocese will have the opportunity to explore their faith in a moral, social and faith context.
- Schools and parishes will be aware of the services available through the Faith Development Team.

3.0 To employ the services of a full-time co-ordinator who will initiate, develop and manage this process.
3.1 To secure the remaining funds to employ a co-ordinator for the Faith Development Teams for the period of the strategic plan.
3.2 To secure long term funding for the project.

Outcomes:
- A full-time co-ordinator will be in place.
- The project will become self-financing.
Performance Indicators:
The appointment of a co-ordinator.
The numbers of young people in the Faith Development Team.
The amount of bookings received for the team through school and parish.
The range of programmes available.
The numbers of young people engaging in the project.
The evaluation and review outcomes.
MANAGEMENT

OVERALL AIM
The Diocesan Youth Council will ensure that effective and efficient structures are in place reflecting integrity and accountability through which we will further youth ministry provision in the Archdiocese.

ASSISTING
1.0 The management board will manage and support the Youth Director and co-ordinating teams in their aims by assisting with financial and human resources.

Outcomes:
- Sufficient funds will be sourced and a yearly budget will be set for each of the priority areas.
- The management board will also be responsible for identifying and recruiting personnel, both paid and voluntary, who will carry forward the work of the ADYC.

2.0 The management board will help each of the priority areas to implement ‘good practice’ in regards to their finances, human resources and child protection.

Outcome:
- The ADYC will improve their current practice increasing the support and guidance currently available to volunteers.

APPRAISING
3.0 At the quarterly meetings the management board will review the ministry of the Youth Director and the priority areas to ensure targeted aims and outcomes are met.

3.1 The management board will monitor the financial activity of the ADYC and priority areas through their quarterly reports.

3.2 Procedures will be put in place to ensure that finances can be reviewed with ease and transparency.

3.3 The work of ADYC staff will be appraised by the management board on a regular basis.

Outcomes:
- The ministry of the ADYC and effectiveness of the strategic plan will be reviewed regularly.
- The financial systems within the ADYC will be transparent.
- The agreed financial priorities of the ADYC will be reviewed regularly.
- Clear guidelines will be in place for co-ordinators on how to manage finances.
**DIRECTING**

4.0 As a response to the appraisal the management board will direct operations of priority areas where required.

**Outcome:**
- The management board will take more active responsibility for the ministry of the ADYC.

**DEVELOPING**

5.0 The management board will actively promote and encourage the activities of the ADYC throughout the Archdiocese and beyond.

5.1 Members of the management board will seek opportunities for the ADYC to progress and develop its ministry for the young people in the Archdiocese of Armagh especially those they are in contact with.

**Outcomes:**
- Management structures will be effective, coherent and accountable.
- Members of the management board will contribute to the development and sustaining of diocesan youth ministry provision.

**Performance Indicators:**
Satisfaction of Youth Director and Council members and documented guidelines for the support and management of the Youth Director.
Reports from the quarterly reviews on the progress of the work of the Youth Director and each of the priority areas.
Attendance of assigned members of each priority area at the management board meetings.
A feedback on the amount of young people that each of the priority areas have ministered, or are ministering, to.
Archdiocese of Armagh

Child Protection Policy Statement

The Archdiocese values and encourages the participation of children and young people in all parish activities that enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual and social development. The Archdiocese recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of all children and is committed to ensuring their safety and well-being. Above all the Archdiocese recognises the need to protect children and young people and aims to do this in a way that promotes their human dignity, integrity and worth as children of God.

The Archdiocese recognises that while child protection is everyone’s responsibility, all involved in working with children and young people have a special duty of care towards them. The Archdiocese has committed itself to engaging in a process to work towards putting procedures in place through which this care is put into effect.

Armagh Diocesan Youth Council
Child Protection Policy Statement

Armagh Diocesan Youth Council (ADYC) is committed to ensuring a safe environment for young people to enjoy social contact as well as personal and spiritual development. The guiding principle in undertaking this special ministry incorporates the basic human right that the welfare of the young person is paramount and that as individuals they have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. Whilst this policy refers specifically to the care of young people under 18 years, the ADYC is committed to ensuring a good practice approach to all young people involved in Youth Council activities.
Acknowledgements

Armagh Diocesan Youth Council would like to acknowledge the help and support of youth workers and individuals involved in youth ministry initiatives in the archdiocese. We also thank those who have contributed in any way towards the development of this plan, through listening exercises and the gathering and putting together of material involved in this 3 year strategy. We thank all who have been involved in youth ministry in the past and those who continue to support our work in prayer.

Our appreciation is forwarded to Mr Martin Barlow for his design of our new logo and booklet.
Fr Brian White  Chairperson ADYC

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