

## Notes from the 2016 Bishop's Forums

Six forums were held in the diocese, five in the city and one in Te Tai Tokerau:

### **10 May- Western Region**

Holy Cross Parish, Henderson (7.30-9.30pm)

Attendees: c. 45

### **11 May- North Shore Region**

St. Thomas More, Glenfield (7.30-9.30pm)

Attendees: c. 60

### **14 May- Te Tai Tokerau Region**

Oturei Marae, Dargaville (10.00am-2.00pm)

Attendees: c. 50

### **17 May- South Auckland Region**

St. Anne's Manurewa (7.30-9.30pm)

Attendees: c. 100

### **18 May- Eastern Region**

St. Mark's Pakuranga (7.30pm-9.30pm)

Attendees: c. 70

### **24 May- City and Central Regions**

Christ the King, Owairaka (7.30-9.30pm)

Attendees: c. 140

## **1. Bishop Patrick led the attendees in praying the Angelus followed by his presentation on "Spirituality and Religion in A Secular Age".**

### **A] ELEPHANT IN ROOM – Kiwi Drift**

Matt Heath: NZ HERALD Monday 28 March 2016

- "Why I'm sick of being an atheist: it's stressful."

My Family

- Parents were daily mass goers but now only 3 of 7 siblings are practicing Catholics and significant number of grandchildren will not be practicing.

Holy Cross Seminary March 2016

- 8 NZ born, 19 from overseas

2013 Census

- No Religion, Objects and No Reply now 50.82%

Auckland "significantly deceived"

- Church attendance is high because of immigrants

### **B] COLLAPSE OF CHRISTENDOM**

*Source:* 'This Time of the Church' by Fr. Frank O'Loughlin [Garratt Publishing, Melbourne, 2012]

AD 313, Conversion of CONSTANTINE

- Christianity and Culture now conjoined.

MEDIEVAL EUROPE: No Religious Education necessary

- As people grew within their culture, so they absorbed Christianity

Protestant Reformation: CUIUS REGIO, EIUS RELIGIO

- Whatever the king/ruler was then that was the religion (e.g. France- Catholic, England- Anglican, Sweden- Lutheran)
- There arose different forms of “Christendom”

Collapse of “Christendom” rapid from 1960s

- T.V, Sexual Revolution, Anti-War Protest, Drug Use, Student Revolts.

Not entirely bad news

- Change of Era rather than simply an era of change -Pope Francis

## **C] GROWTH of SPIRITUALITY & DECLINE of RELIGION**

David Tacey, Latrobe University Melbourne.

*I am a spiritual person, but not religious.*

SPIRITUALITY & RELIGION seem to be on SEPARATING CONTINENTS

SPIRITUALITY once meant VERY religious

SPIRITUALITY now means NOT very religious

RELIGION once LARGE CIRCLE with Spirituality within

SPIRITUALITY now LARGE CIRCLE with Religion optional

RELIGION associated with HYPOCRISY, HOMOPHOBIA, ABUSE, TERRORISM

SPIRITUALITY associated with INNER SELF, NATURE, CULTURES, COSMOS

Carl Jung: *The bridge from dogma to the inner experience of the individual has broken down.*

WEST took EXTRAVERTED ROUTE: GOD in Revelation.

EAST too INTRAVERTED ROUTE: GOD in Experience

Karl Rahner SJ [d.1984]: *The Christian of the future will be a mystic, or will not be at all.*

- *By mysticism we mean a genuine experience of God emerging from the very heart of our experience.*

The MOST CHALLENGING Mission Field of present time.

- The modern ‘developed’ or ‘western’ world!

## **D] SIGNS OF HOPE**

- POPE FRANCIS – the most trusted world leader in 2016!
- John Paul II Funeral 2005: 1.5 BILLION – largest TV event ever
- Catholic school system with 65k children
- WORLD YOUTH DAYS.
- VOCATIONS TO PRIESTHOOD

Growing interest in Faith among children of secularized parents

English poet Sally Read:

*"I was brought up an atheist. The creed of non-creed was in my blood...*

*I will admit now that as a young woman I had tried to believe in God. I had been to church and Quaker meetings a few times. But by this point in my life I was adamant: there is no God....*

*"I remember the dull sadness that came with this realization, something of the colour grey".*

Sally Read baptised Catholic December 2010.

*"It's been said before: being Catholic is like being in love. As a poet from a most secular culture, I have come to know the Church as the ultimate poem. An intricate composition of allegory and reality, that tries to give image to God's presence on earth".*

## **E] THE FUTURE CHURCH**

John Allen: FUTURE CHURCH - 10 Trends [2009]

For 1,500 years, Christianity was associated with Europe.

Largest Catholic countries now:

2000	2050 (Projected)
Brazil [149M]	Brazil
Mexico	Mexico
USA	Philippines
Philippines	USA
Italy	<b>CONGO</b>
France	<b>UGANDA</b>

Pope Benedict XVI: Council for "NEW" EVANGELIZATION

- NEW as opposed to FIRST Evangelization

## **F] KEEPING FAITH IN NZ TODAY**

- Consciously nourish one's own Faith.
- Note importance of INSTITUTIONAL RELIGION.
  - How else do we pass on Faith?
- LEARN FROM HISTORY: always EBB & FLOW of Faith.
  - Times of opposition are also times of renewal such as the significant growth of Religious Order out of the French Revolution and Reign of Terror [1789-1799].
- NZ is not Europe
  - We are a melting pot of European, Maori, Polynesian, Asian, and so many other cultures.
- Keep a HOPE FILE!

## **BUZZ QUESTIONS**

- In this new mission field what signs of hope are you aware of?
- How can we face this challenge?

*Forum attendees spent some time discussion the buzz questions in small groups and write their feedback on papers that were distributed.*

## **2. Presentation from ALPHA by Executive Director Jonathan Hesp (except in the Western and Te Tai Tokerau Forums)**

Alpha is a tool for evangelization that is being used by thousands of Catholic parishes in over 70 countries around the world. Alpha is also run by churches of many other denominations to introduce people to the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

Video link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B92KJlpkBVA>

Alpha is a series of interactive sessions that explores the basics of the Christian faith. It is a parish tool for evangelization based on welcome and hospitality, sharing and prayer. Each session includes a meal, a talk and small group discussion, where no question is too simple and no answer pre-packaged.

It runs over 10 weeks and gives the guests who come along a chance to get a practical introduction to the Christian Faith. Each week covers a different topic including:

1. Who is Jesus?
2. Why did Jesus die?
3. How can I have faith?
4. Why & How should I pray?
5. Why and How should I read the bible?

Alpha is designed primarily for individuals who do not go to church. However, it also provides a fresh opportunity for everyone to look at the basics of the Christian faith. It has benefitted:

- Individuals who are baptized, but have lost connection with the Church
- Engaged couples preparing for marriage within the Church
- Parents who have children receiving baptism or confirmation but have lost contact with the Church themselves
- Those who only come to church on occasions such as Christmas, Easter, weddings or funerals and
- Those within the Church who feel they want to get back to the basics of their faith.

Alpha helps the parish to become an evangelizing community. The structure of Alpha and the training available make it easy for lay leaders to run the course under the supervision of the parish priest. Parishioners can be involved in evangelization in a simple and effective way, even if they feel inexperienced or ill equipped.

Parishes around the world have seen significant growth in numbers and missionary zeal. New members of the parish, having come to faith during Alpha, frequently join the local parish activities and bring with them the freshness and joy of their renewed faith.

The Alpha Youth Film Series is targeted at young people aged 11-18 years old. It covers the same topics but in a way that engages young people. It is fronted by two young men from Canada and I would like to show you the promo video for the Alpha Youth Film Series.

Video link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNnagAo1ns4>

In New Zealand last year we had 246 downloads of the course and had over 5000 young people go through the course. We've heard many stories of how the course is being used.

Alpha is not the only course we promote. We have quite a range including, The Marriage Course, The Marriage Preparation Course, The Parenting Children Course and The Parenting Teenagers Course. These we have seen used to connect between our outward focused community groups and ministries and the church.

Video link for The Parenting Children Course:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BY8thZ\\_W2gY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BY8thZ_W2gY)

And finally we have a number of courses that are designed for church goers. These include, The Prayer Course, Life Worth Living, Jesus Lifestyle and one that we have launched this year called God at Work.

God at Work is a course designed to help people of all ages, no matter where they work, to realise that their workstation is their worship station. The idea is to help people take God out of their Sunday and put Him in their whole week. It is a great course, free to download and fronted by Ken Costa who has worked in finance for 40 years.

Link to the promo video for God at Work.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBDH2rhd7sM>

Other information:

Marriage and Parenting website: [www.marriageandparenting.org.nz](http://www.marriageandparenting.org.nz)

Alpha website: [www.alpha.org.nz](http://www.alpha.org.nz)

Youth Alpha: [www.youthalpha.org.nz](http://www.youthalpha.org.nz)

The Prayer Course: [www.prayercourse.org](http://www.prayercourse.org)

God at Work Course: [www.godatwork.org.uk](http://www.godatwork.org.uk)

Creating a culture of invitation: [www.glow.alpha.org.nz](http://www.glow.alpha.org.nz)

### **3. Introduction of Diocesan Pastoral Council Members and Diocesan staff members.**

#### **Western Region**

*Diocesan Staff:* Pat Lythe (Leader- Pastoral and Evangelisation Office), C.J David (Associate Pastoral Coordinator), Mary Betz (Justice and Peace), Sr. Jane O'Carroll (Bishop's Pastoral Assistant), Sr. Siân Owen (R.E) and Mike Hill (I.T)

*DPC Members:* Robb Donzè (North Shore), Gino Pimentel (Youth rep)

#### **North Shore Region**

*Diocesan Staff:* Pat Lythe (Leader- Pastoral and Evangelisation Office), C.J David (Associate Pastoral Coordinator), Rowena Orejana (NZ Catholic), and Joey Bonnevie (Youth Ministry)

DPC Members: Monica Grimshaw (North Shore)

### **Te Tai Tokerau Region**

Diocesan Staff: Pat Lythe (Leader- Pastoral and Evangelisation Office), C.J David (Associate Pastoral Coordinator), Wiga Autet (R.E- Northland) and Darragh O’Riordan (Catholic Caring Foundation)

DPC Members: Loraine Elliot (Chair), Robb Donzè (North Shore), Joe Clarke (Maori- Te Tai Tokerau), Eva Morunga (Maori- Tamaki Makaurau), Bryan Johnson (South Auckland), Dori Handa (City), Sr. Jo Gresham (Religious), Lami Burke (Eastern), and James Nyssen (Taitokerau)

### **South Auckland Region**

Diocesan Staff: Pat Lythe (Leader- Pastoral and Evangelisation Office), C.J David (Associate Pastoral Coordinator), Erin Fa’au (R.E-Katorika Maori), Kerry Coleman (General Manager), Teresa McNamara (Youth Ministry), Von Cassidy (Schools Adviser), and Philip Hadley (Liturgy Office)

DPC Members: Ana Paea (Tongan Community), Br. Lewis Harwood (Religious), Loraine Elliott (Chair), Bryan Johnson (South Auckland)

### **Eastern Region**

Diocesan Staff: Pat Lythe (Leader- Pastoral and Evangelisation Office), C.J David (Associate Pastoral Coordinator), Sr. Siân Owen (R.E), Lyndsay Freer (Media and Communications), Mike Dorn (I.T), Rochelle Dias (Youth Ministry) and Mary-Anne McKay (Bishop’s Secretary)

DPC Members: Loraine Elliott (Chair), Eva Morunga (Maori- Tamaki Makaurau), Lami Burke (Eastern), and Dominique Au (Chinese Community)

### **City and Central Regions**

Diocesan Staff: Pat Lythe (Leader- Pastoral and Evangelisation Office), C.J David (Associate Pastoral Coordinator), Tina Coll (Liturgy Office), Teresa Wackrow (Liturgy Office) Dianna Fouhy (R.E and Education), Lyndsay Freer (Media and Communications), Sr. Jane O’Carroll (Bishop’s Pastoral Assistant), Mary-Anne McKay (Bishop’s Secretary) and Dinesh Perera (Accountant)

DPC Members: Loraine Elliott (Chair), Dori Handa (City), Gino Pimentel (Youth rep), Monica Grimshaw (North Shore), and Fr. Peter Tipene (COP)

Diocesan Administration Board: Richard Agnew

**4. Fit for Mission Update** (Sr. Siân- West and East, C.J- North Shore, Te Tai Tokerau and South, Lyndsay- City/Central)

Affirmation on past and on-going Fit for Mission outreach such as:

**Young People-** variety of outreach around the diocese.

**Papakura-** Mary Thorne (a parishioner) is working for a rehabilitation centre for released prisoners. They need housing for clients.

**Otara-** Parishioners are visiting homeless in cars and containers and offer them essential needs.

**Grey Lyn-** 'Feed the Needy' outreach.

**Possible Fit for Mission Projects to consider:**

Sponsor a school or classroom

Resource centre for senior programmes, etc.

Offer your community a Halloween alternative

Celebrate community heroes

Offer your community a Christmas nativity tour

Build a prayer labyrinth

Offer a parents' night out;

Offer a mothers' morning out

Thanksgiving for singles, seniors, and others

Day trips for seniors,

Offer to clear garden, change lightbulbs

Host a community senior adult programs with lunch

Make a difference day: Invite a lonely person for a meal.

English as a second language for those who need to practice, refugees, new migrants

Computer or phone training

Grief workshop

Rest home ministry

Christmas parties for seniors, kids, families, refugees, target groups

Host an election forum

Volunteer recognition and thanks

Social services, community action partnerships recognition

Literacy programme

Health screenings, exercise classes

Diet and cooking classes

Book discussions, book swap

Open sanctuary or prayer room

Pray the daily office open to all

Food, clothing, and cleaning supplies pantry/storage

Taize services open to all

Helping resource inventory and volunteer directory

Clean up neighbourhood exercises; parks, coastlines, shopping centres

Plan regular ecumenical services: World Day of Prayer (March): Good Friday processions,

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (Around Pentecost); Advent and Lenten joint prayer.

Prayers for Peace.

Prison visiting

## 5. Issues raised at the forums

### Local input at Te Tai Tokerau Forum 2016

Issue: Where is an accessible meeting place? Kaikohe has been chosen as being central for Forums, but TTROPC meetings are hosted by various parishes. The remaining TTRPC meetings will be held this year at Kaikohe.

Diocese to offer petrol vouchers for travel to these meetings on request.

The people who come to the TT meeting are all related we are all one we have ancestors buried close by.

The group praised the success of the Coopers Beach camp; 17 parents were involved. The young people really enjoyed it.

Katekita progress: Fr Kerry said there was supposed to be a programme about working together as a team – it hasn't got off the ground yet. The katekita need to take it seriously.. There is a meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> May to formalise the Katekita Association, and to work out how to move forward.

Wiga spoke about a trial pilgrimage with a small group of people around the north, beginning at Tane Mahuta, visiting Motukaraka, Motuti, Totara Point and Russell. If it is successfully it might be a template for further self directed pilgrimages. (The trial began Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May.) Rawene is 100 years a parish in November

Ossie Peri was worried that the insistence on Church rules drives people away they are often too strict. We need compassionate leaders.

## 6. Bishop Patrick's Report

- **Year of Mercy**
  - "I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security."
  - AUCKLAND DIOCESE: Fit for Mission
- **St Vincent de Paul Society**
  - Founded by Frederick Ozanam in May 1833 (aged 20)
  - Young Vinnies
  - Please support
- **Catholic Social Services**
  - Housing, addictions, domestic violence, marriage counselling, family therapy, prison chaplaincy
  - Ponsonby and Otara
  - Seeking closer collaboration with parishes
- **Catholic Caring Foundation**
  - Assist many NZ suffering from effect of poverty
  - Food banks
  - Emergency Housing
  - Budgeting Services
  - Even funeral expenses

- **Employment Opportunities for Former Prison Inmates**
  - Seeking support from Christian employers to give former prison inmates a second chance
  - Only thoroughly screened applicants recommended
  - Full support from Corrections Department
- **Safe Church Protocols**
  - Regional seminars being offered
  - Focus is to protect our church workers, precious volunteers, children and vulnerable people
  - Covers volunteers such as those taking Holy Communion to sick, counting collections, youth group activities, catechism, sacramental classes, etc.
- **Copyright Issues**
  - Diocese has contract with LicenSing
  - For use of hymns and church music
- **Priestly Ordinations**
  - 8 seminarians
  - Austin Fernandes and Marchellino Park to be ordained 16 July
  - Justin Glyn SJ (6 August)
- **St. John Vianney House Extension**
  - Increasing accommodation from 10 to 17
  - Appeal for \$1 million has reached \$880,000
  - Completion date 9 December
- **New Schools**
  - Monte Cecilia Primary – HILLSBOROUGH (opened this year)
  - Holy Trinity Primary – TAKANINI (February 2017)
  - St Ignatius Loyola Secondary – DRURY (ca. 2020)
- **Parish Based Religious Education Priority**
  - 30% NZ Catholic children not in Catholic schools
  - 50% in Auckland
  - 2016 initiative **Explore Together** fortnightly family based activities – in Family Faith section Religious Education diocesan website
- **Cathedral Centre Plans**
  - Presbytery needs seismic strengthening and upgrading
  - Pastoral Centre to be built on the same level as Cathedral
  - Underground carparks
- **NZ Catholic**
  - \$4.00 each fortnight (Please support)
  - Church door sales
  - 30% approaching Catholic Enquiry Centre are young Catholics
- **General Manager: Kerry Coleman**
  - Leaves 30 June after 15 years
  - Remarkable achievements
  - Hope to confirm a replacement by end May

- **Amoris Laetitia (19 March 2016)- Pope’s Post-Synodal Exhortation**
  - The joy of love experienced by families is also the joy of the Church
  - Echoes Vatican II Constitution on Church in Modern World
  - 240 pages!
  - 4 sources of Theology:  
Scripture, Tradition, Experience, Reason
- **Amoris Laetitia (contents)**
  1. IN THE LIGHT OF THE WORD (Scripture)
  2. EXPERIENCES & CHALLENGES OF FAMILIES (Reality)
  3. LOOKING TO JESUS (Teaching)
  4. LOVE IN MARRIAGE (1 Corinthians 13)
  5. LOVE MADE FRUITFUL (Parenting)
  6. PASTORAL PERSPECTIVES (Pastoral)
  7. BETTER EDUCATION OF CHILDREN (Education)
  8. ACCOMPANYING, DISCERNING & INTEGRATING WEAKNESS (Weakness)
  9. SPIRITUALITY OF MARRIAGE & FAMILY (Spirituality)

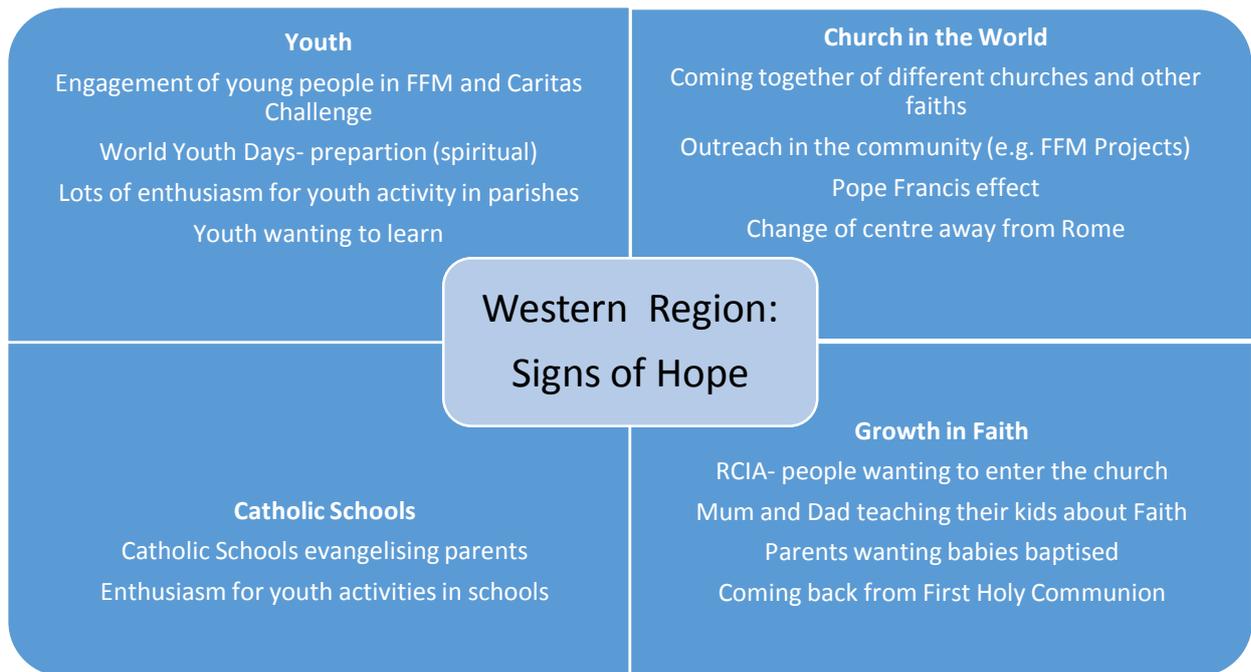
### **Concluding Prayer: Year of Mercy Prayer**

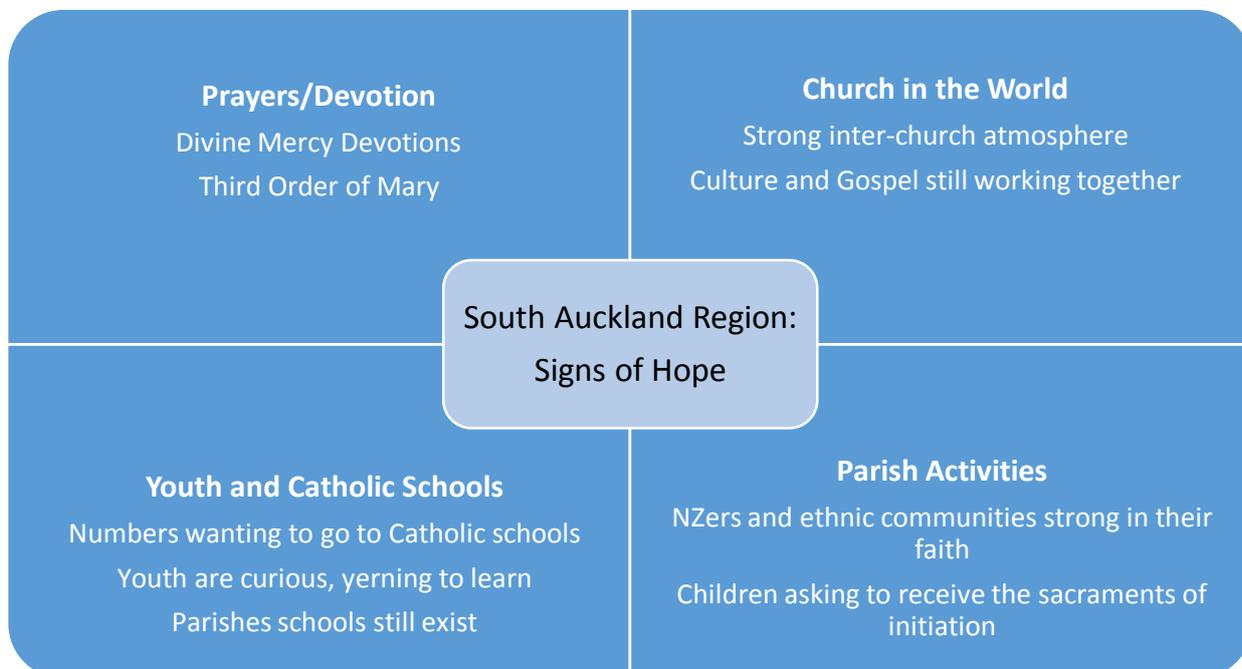
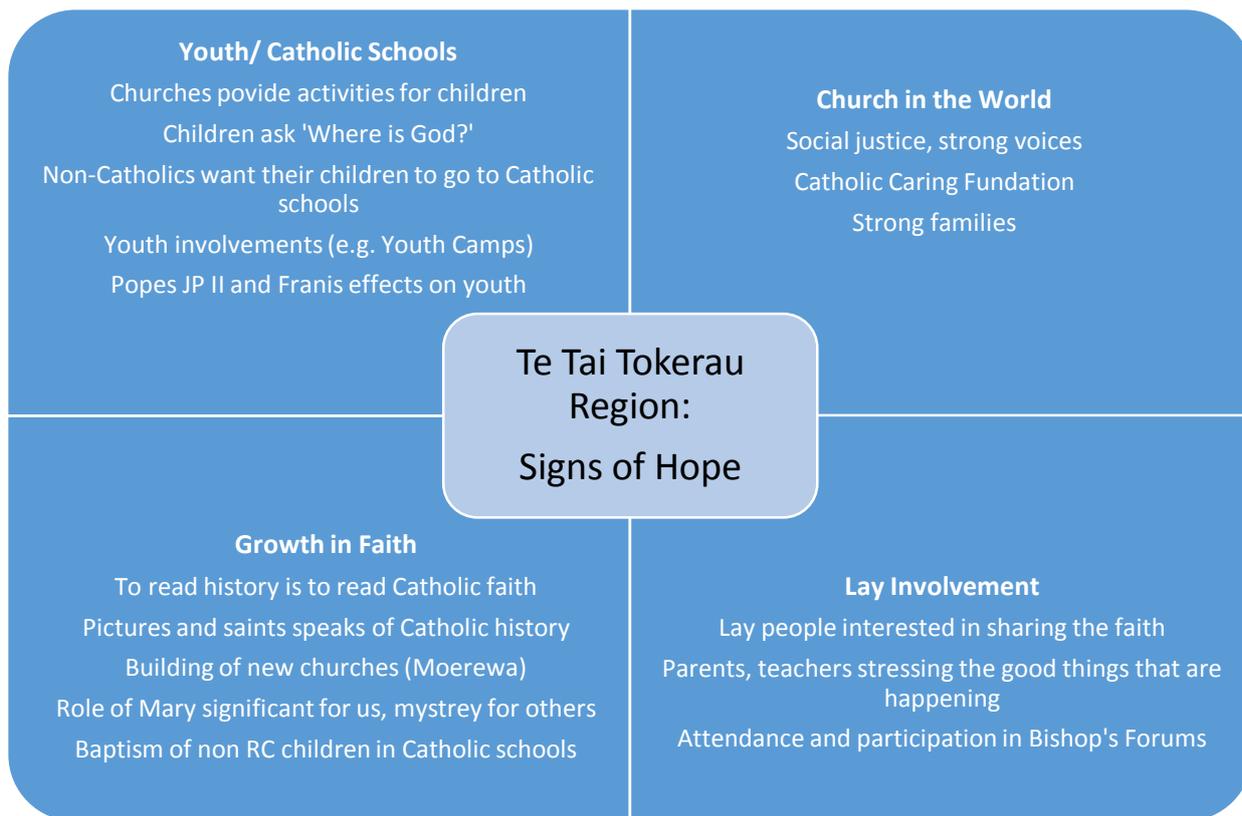
Lord Jesus Christ,  
 you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father,  
 and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.  
 Show us your face and we will be saved.

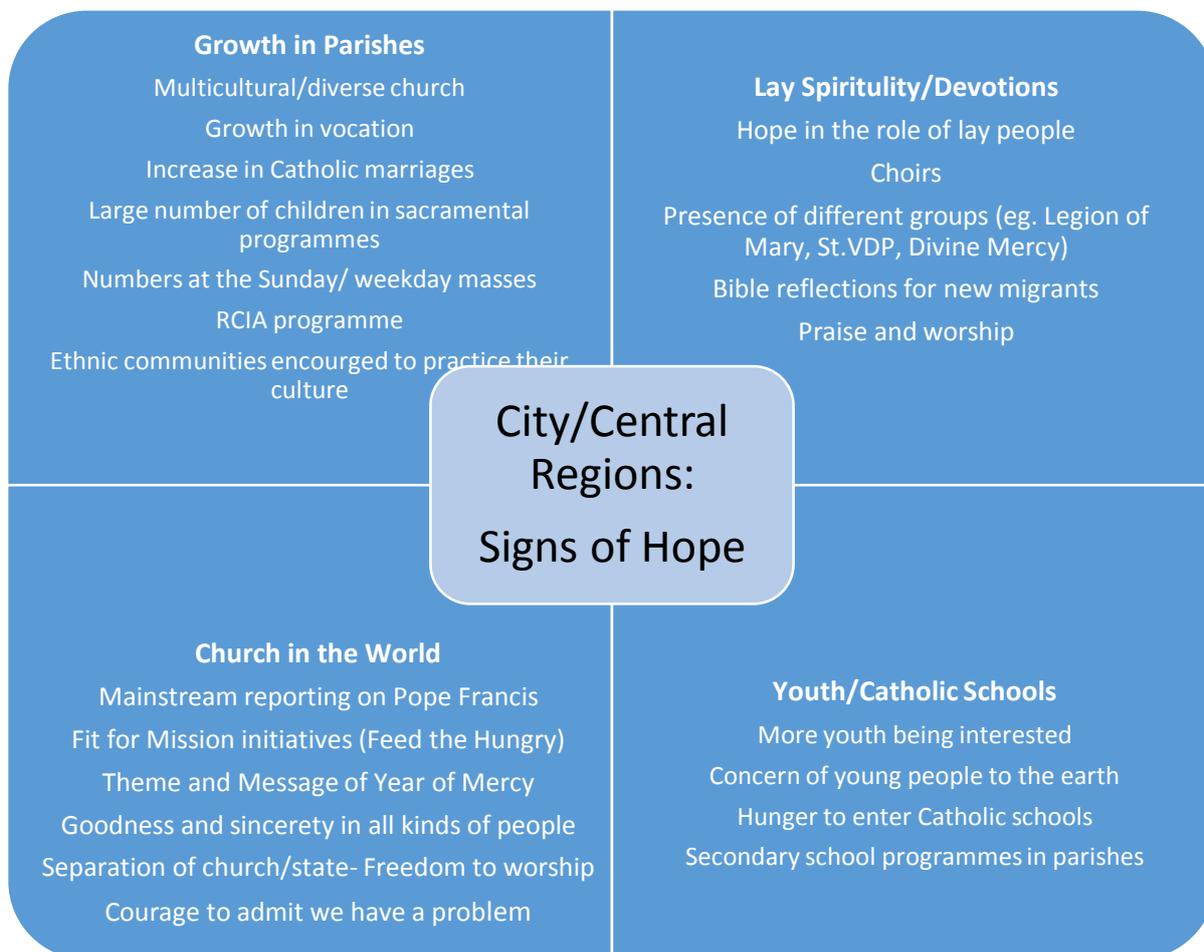
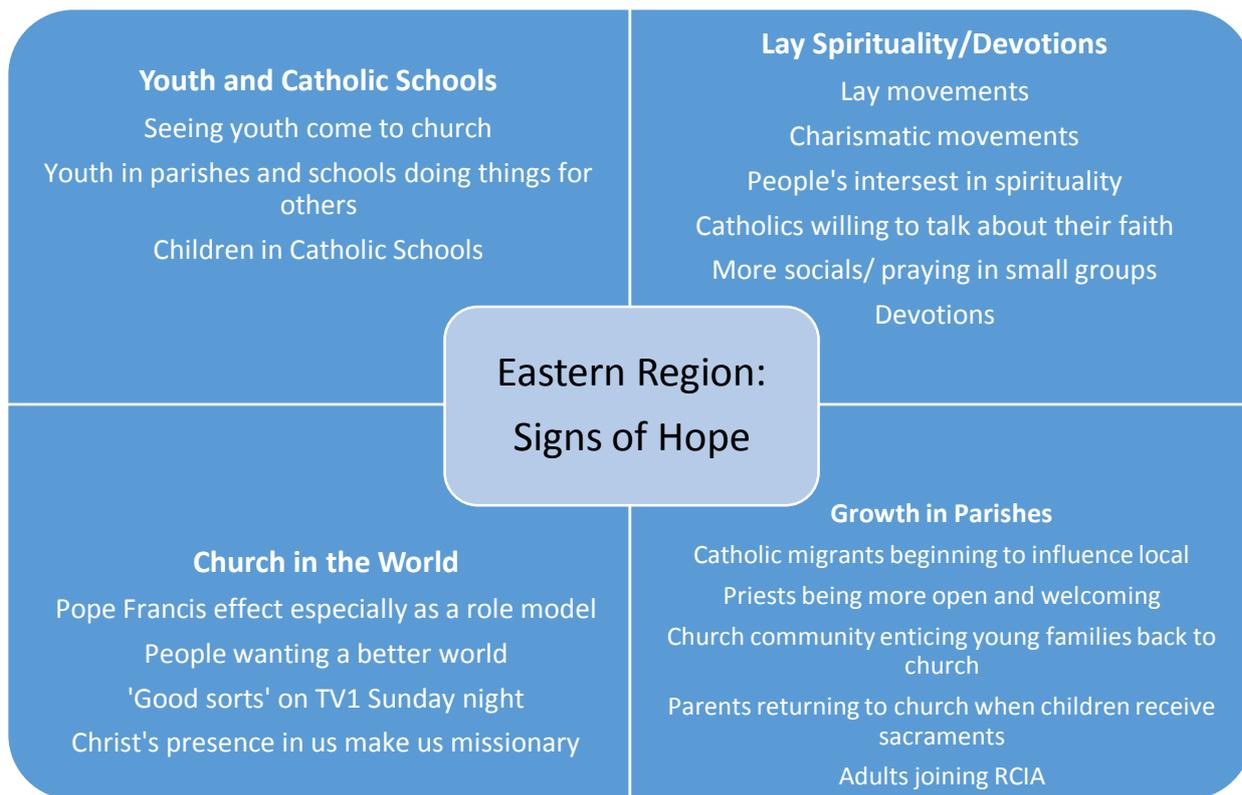
You are the visible face of the invisible Father,  
 of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy:  
 let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.  
 You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness  
 in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error:  
 let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with His anointing,  
 so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord,  
 and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor,  
 proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed,  
 and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of  
 Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and  
 ever.  
 Amen.







Please find below a conflation of the responses made at the recent Bishop's forums to the question:

**"How do we respond to the challenge of living our faith in this secular society?"**

Firstly the responses which are aimed at **the individual, each one of us:**

Each of us needs to be strong in our faith, be vocal about our faith, ready to share it, but not aggressively, but open to listen and meet people where they are and reach out to the needy – witness by our actions as well as our words. Be role models.

We need to be joyful and happy, non-judgemental, welcoming, friendly, living Gospel values

We need to pray more, and if we are parents of children we need to pray with them

We need to deepen our own relationship with God – old beliefs & practices not enough

Secondly for **parishes and communities:**

Run Alpha in every region, either with other Catholic parishes or with other Christian Churches

Make greater use of technology, social media to reach out, promote our message

We need to support, encourage young people to take up leadership in our parishes, communities and to take on roles in the liturgy

Need to encourage, support parents to attend sacramental preparation programmes and as first educators in faith of their children take an active part in them

Find ways to involve families in parish activities and ways to be inclusive of all cultures

More specific, one offs

More explanations of the Mass, and other Sacraments and funerals during the rituals

Have a Catholic Mass on TV on Sundays for shut-ins, and those too far away to get to Mass

Encourage inter-church gatherings, Good Friday processions

Re-look at the issue of marriages

Improve the relationship of ethnic and parish youth groups

Better music at masses, youth friendly activities, liturgies

Try some different programmes, Renew (Updated again); Life Teen, Catholicism.....

Paid youth workers

Teach spirituality in Catholic schools

Suggestion boxes for parishioners

Approachable, friendly priests who are able to home visit