

# Message from Bishop Gregory Parkes



## Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

Shortly after I was installed as the fifth bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg, I was asked about my vision for our diocese. As your shepherd, I set out to hear from you about the blessings and opportunities in our local Church. Through the listening sessions and gatherings and through online surveys, I heard common themes emerge about what we are doing well, areas where we need to improve, and about additional ministerial opportunities. This feedback has helped to shape our Mutually-Shared Vision that I am sharing with you today. The Vision for our diocese is **Courageously Living the Gospel**. It includes our sacred purpose, priorities and nine goals that will help us to achieve this vision. Together, we have put forth a vision to guide us as we move forward as a diocese over the next three years.



## SACRED PURPOSE

We, the Catholic Diocese of St Petersburg, are a joyful community of disciples **proclaiming** the Good News and **inviting** all people to **encounter** the love and mercy of Jesus Christ.



The Diocese of St. Petersburg includes all the people in the counties of Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco, Hernando and Citrus. While many people identify as Catholic, it is also our “mission territory.”

## WE WILL LIVE OUR PURPOSE BY:

**PROCLAIMING:** **Knowing** and **sharing** the Gospel of Jesus. *This gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world.* Matthew 24:14

**INVITING:** **Welcoming** and **accompanying** others as Jesus did. *“Welcome one another, then, as Christ welcomed you, for the glory of God.”* Romans 15:7

**ENCOUNTERING:** **Growing** in relationship to Jesus and one another. *“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.”* James 4:8



# COURAGEOUSLY

## *Living the Gospel*

### Goals that will help us achieve our vision:

#### **WE BELIEVE THAT WE SERVE CHRIST BY SERVING OTHERS. THEREFORE...**

- Each deanery will launch a Catholic Impact Initiative that addresses one local community issue and parishes throughout the deanery are invited to combine their creativity to establish the desired outcomes. Implementation will be initiated by December 31, 2019.
- The Diocese will establish 8 - 10 new locations of affordable housing facilities for families and/or singles managed by Catholic Charities throughout the Diocese by the end of 2021.

#### **WE BELIEVE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE CHURCH AND TO INCREASE THEIR ENCOUNTERS WITH CHRIST...**

- One hundred percent of parishes will establish and/or enhance youth ministry opportunities by July 1, 2020.
- In support of this initiative, the Diocese will hire three diocesan regional associate directors of youth and young adult ministry by July 1, 2019.
- The Diocese will establish a new Catholic elementary school (location to be determined) to open for the 2021-2022 school year.
- We will increase student participation by 1000% (4,000 individuals) at established campus ministry communities, and create new Catholic student communities for all local colleges and universities in the Diocese by Easter of 2021.

#### **WE BELIEVE OUR BAPTISM CALLS US TO LEAD OTHERS TO NEW OR INCREASED FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST. THEREFORE...**

- The Diocese will partner with pastors and parishes for successful assessment, training, and implementation of effective evangelization and family ministry strategies, including hospitality and intercultural competency by Pentecost 2019.
- Every parish will equip parishioners as Missionary Disciples who are inspired to invite and accompany others by Pentecost 2020.
- All parishes will enhance or establish family ministries to respond to the diverse needs of families by Pentecost 2020.



For more information about our Mutually-Shared Vision, visit:

[www.dosp.org/CourageouslyLiving](http://www.dosp.org/CourageouslyLiving)