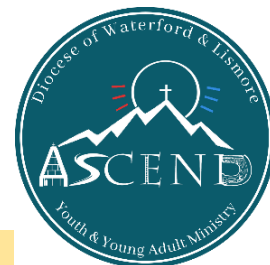


Ascend Strategic Plan for Youth & Young Adult Ministry 2023 – 2026: **FAITH REPRESENTATIVE SUMMARY**



“Intentionally walking with young people on their journey of faith and offering meaningful opportunities to encounter Jesus.”

STRATEGIC TASK FORCE MEMBERS:

Bishop Alphonsus Cullinan, Fr John Harris ADM, Nodlaig Lillis, Maura Murphy, Sr Kathryn Press ASCJ, Shauna McGrath, Olivia Elliott

FOUR STRANDS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

1. Recruiting, training and resourcing a network of parish-based voluntary Faith Representatives
2. Strengthening and promoting existing faith-based initiatives / projects / events
3. A collaborative approach to developing new faith-based initiatives / projects / events, linking diocese, parish, school, home
4. Ongoing consultation with stakeholders to substantiate its content and steer the plan

STRAND 1: WHAT IS A PARISH FAITH REPRESENTATIVE?

- A parish-based volunteer, over age of 18 (any stage of life or walk of life)
- Practicing Catholic, supported by local parish priest / curate
- Can relate to young people
- Adheres to Diocesan policy & procedures
- Supports the Ascend Strategic Vision
- Responsible and reliable
- Can work as a member of a team



WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A PARISH FAITH REPRESENTATIVE?

- Support clergy and post-primary school teachers in enabling young people to form a relationship with God
- Link between parish, school, and home, under the guidance of the Diocese
- Linked to the Pope John Paul II Award, where possible
- Enable / support key Diocesan Youth & Young Adult Ministry Projects and Events
- Circulate information regarding Youth & Young Adult Events / Pilgrimages etc.
- Attend relevant Diocesan Faith Formation Conferences and workshops
- Be a part of the ongoing development of youth & young adult ministry within the diocese, particularly through their feedback / experience on the ground
- Supported, trained and resourced by the Diocese and parish
- Every parish situation is different: collaborative consultation with parish priest is essential
- Encouraged to network with neighbouring parishes

TRAINING, RESOURCING AND SUPPORTING FAITH REPRESENTATIVES

- **TRAINING:** Safeguarding Training, Alpha Youth, Pope John Paul II Awards, Small group facilitation/Mentoring, Walking with Generation Z & Generation A, Social Media & Zoom, Prayer Spaces...
- **RESOURCING:** provided by both the parish and the Youth & Young Adult Ministry Officer, members of the Ascend Strategic Task Force / other experienced facilitators
- **SUPPORT:** In-person and zoom meetings; weekly 15 minute Lectio Divina for faith reps on Zoom (optional); Annual Faith-based retreat / conference; Annual Ascend newsletter; Weekly “To the Heights” newsletter & Ascend resource; one-to-one mentoring; website / email support. Parish Priest / Curate will provide secondary support to the Faith Representative and will involve them in relevant parish committees e.g. pastoral committee / parish leadership team.

KEY DATES:

- **Deadline for this year's Applications:** 16th March 2023 | [**Strategic Plan Launch:** March 20th 2023]
- **Training Session 1:** Sat 1st April | **Training Session 2:** Sat 6th May | **Training Session 3:** Safeguarding training TBC (May/June/July) | **Training Session 4:** Sat 9th September
- **Commissioning Ceremony:** 29th September

Ideas for parishes / Faith Reps to consider in each age bracket:

“Post-Confirmation” (12-14)	Teenager (15-17)	Young Adult (18-35)
<p><i>NOT SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular gatherings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Games or activities Catechesis / formation Lives of saints Prayer Mission! Outings / Hikes Youth choir (+ element of formation) Prayer Spaces Alpha Youth / Nua / Altaration “To the Heights” resources Movie & pizza night (+ element of formation) Adoration / Liturgical Year Links to Holy Family Mission / Pope John Paul II Award participants Family Days Personal invite / advertise / link with LSRs Pilgrimage (local or national) 	<p><i>POPE JOHN PAUL II AWARD</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formation programme Parish & community involvement Diocesan / national events Formation series: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alpha Youth To the Heights Club Altaration The Chosen Youth Group Youth Choir Outings / Hikes / St Declan’s Way Movie & pizza night (+ element of formation) Adoration / Youth Hour / Exam Prayer Services / Liturgical Year Pilgrimage (local / national / international) Prayer Spaces Links: Holy Family Mission / Youth 2000 / Camp Creideamh / Camp Veritas / Campa Mhuire Mháthair 	<p><i>FELLOWSHIP AND FORMATION</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inter-parish collaboration Encounter (for young adults) Hikes / Camino / Pilgrimage (local/national/international) Formation Series <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Run locally / on zoom Alpha, The Chosen, Anima, Sycamore, Life in the Spirit Volunteer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lightfever Christ on the Street Campa Mhuire Mháthair Movie nights (with discussion / formation) Adoration / Lectio Divina Links: Holy Family Mission Cherished / Youth 2000 / Evangelium / Men’s Ministry / national events for Young Adults Personal Invitation

More about the plan...

STRAND 2/3: STRENGTHENING / DEVELOPING NEW INITIATIVES

- YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY:** Encounter | Faith Formation Series | Holy Family Mission | Cherished Women’s Ministry | Men’s Ministry | More outreach to come...
- PILGRIMAGES:** *International:* Medjugorje | Lourdes | World Youth Day | *National:* Knock / Sr Clare Crockett | *Local:* Diocesan Youth Camino: St Declan’s Way | Local Pilgrimage Resource Pack | National pilgrimages



STRAND 3: DEVELOPING NEW INITIATIVES

- RENEWAL** (for post-primary RE teachers / chaplains): Annual Diocesan RENEWAL Day | Workshops for teachers | Promoting Diocesan faith development zoom series | Retreat and/or Pilgrimage options for RE Teachers / Chaplains
- CONTINUITY FOR CONFIRMATION AGE TO JUNIOR CYCLE:** Faith formation, fellowship and fun | promotion of Family Days / Faith Camps | Suitable Resources | Links to Pope John Paul II Award | Practical options for parishes will be piloted by 2026
- VOCATIONS:** Resource pack / module | Possible speakers, videos, podcasts, | Creative ideas to promote awareness of vocations | Support a Diocesan “Holy Hour for Vocations”
- LITURGY:** Support faith development through liturgy | Collaborate with Diocesan Liturgy Commission | Promote Liturgy Days to teachers | Resources for JP2 Participants | Liturgical resources for schools & homes | Spotify Playlists
- USEFUL YOUTH PROGRAMMES AND RESOURCES:** Research | Pilot | Recommend | Train Faith Representatives
- PRAYER SUPPORT:** Formally establish a prayer support network for youth and young adults in the diocese and for the spiritual support of the Ascend Strategic Plan.

