

“Behold I Make All Things New” (Rev. 21:5)

1. Introduction:

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Greetings. We would like to thank God for our laity, Clergy and Bishops; upon whose shoulders the Diocesan theme was formed in March 2020, before the Movement Control Order (MCO) was declared on 18th March 2021. The Diocesan Strategy Implementation Commission (DSIC) led by our predecessor, Rt. Rev. Datuk Ng Moon Hing, further worked on this theme, formulated the Mission Statement, and identified three main focus areas; (a) *Discipleship*, (b) *Church Planting*, and (c) *Leadership Development*. On 2nd March 2021, the day that I was installed as the Diocesan Bishop, WE, the Rt. Rev Dr D Steven Abbarow, Bishop of West Malaysia, launched the Diocesan 10-Year Development Plan (2021-2030) with the Theme: **“BEHOLD, I AM MAKING ALL THINGS NEW” (Revelation 21:5)**. It became very clear that we are all called and challenged as Queen Esther was, *“And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14b)*; to respond to the ongoing and post pandemic, economic, political and religious context.

2. Diocesan Vision and Strategy

WE purpose to become more aware of **where we are**, and to intentionally reach out to **where God wants us to be**. This is primarily done on the basis of *God’s word*, the sense of Truth and what the Holy Spirit is saying through the people of God (*Sensus Fidelium*). For this to happen a vital engagement with the Word of God, the people of God, and the Holy Spirit is essential.

- 2.1 Mission Statement: We are a Church, Moving towards making Christ known through Church Planting, Mission, Social Concerns, Environmental Care, Intentional Discipleship and building up of Family units, With the Love, Grace and Fellowship of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- 2.2 Biblical and Theological Basis: The Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:36-40) and the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20), form the biblical and theological basis for the Mission Statement, Vision, and operational mode.
- 2.3 Organisational Adaptation to Align with our Diocesan Vision
 - 2.3.1 The Suffragan Bishops
 - 2.3.1.1 The Rt. Rev. Dr. Jason Selvaraj (+JS); to Chair the *Diocesan Ordination Candidates & Evangelistic Workers Committee* (DOCEWC). A 15-minute slot is allocated for +JS to present a report and recommendations on this.
 - 2.3.1.2 The Rt. Rev. Dr. Stephen Soe Chee Cheng (+SSCC); to chair the *DSIC*. A 15-minute slot is allocated for +SSCC to present a report and recommendations on this.
 - 2.3.2 The Diocesan Standing Committee (DSC)
 - 2.3.2.1 The formation of an ad-hoc *Finance Committee* to advise the DSC on how to have a Diocesan budget that will support the Diocesan Vision.
 - 2.3.2.2 The formation of an ad-hoc *Personnel Committee* to advise the DSC on how to intentionally develop leaders to staff and support the Diocesan Vision.
 - 2.3.3 Our Diocesan Synod and Regional gatherings

Our Diocesan Synod is now a bi-annual affair. The next one is in 2023. The Bishops and Archdeacons will organise the Regional gatherings, to meet in between (2022) to

discuss, evaluate and further sharpen our goals and objectives. WE hope that our next Synod in 2023, will see more discussions based on our Vision and Mission. This WE pray, will empower and prepare for the Special Synod 2025 for the election of the new Bishop, to discuss the needs of the Diocese in their deliberation more robustly.

3. Where We Are

WE have robustly and intentionally engaged our Bishops, Clergy and Laity, in various ways to share the Vision and Mission, listen to their feedback, and to dialogue with all parties.

- 3.1 Through the online and onsite meetings with local church leaders, Missionary District Councils (MDCs), Parochial Church Councils (PCCs), Clergy, ministry Boards, Diocesan Officers, Senior Clergy; WE were able to discern and respond better. These in part will be reported by the Archdeacons, +JS and +SSCC in their respective reports.
- 3.2 The Key Performance Index (KPI) had mixed responses. The DSIC has taken the feedback from all concerned and will respond adequately. WE are glad to note that overall the intention and substance of the KPI is well received, and the DSIC will address the rest.
- 3.3 The Bishop's Circulars (BC): To date WE have sent out 6 BCs since March 2021. WE have ensured that a link with google survey is sent with each BC so that we will get feedback and immediately respond to them. WE are glad to share that this is very positive experience.
- 3.4 Financially: The Hon. Treasurer and the DLPC Chairperson will comment on these matters.
- 3.5 Theological Training: To ensure our Seminarians will be able to have the skill sets necessary for the ministry of Discipleship, Church Planting and Leadership Development; they will undergo a rigorous Programme. St. Paul's Theological College (SPTC) has presented a church planting strategy for the Diocese of West Malaysia. Seminari Theoloji Malaysia and SPTC have collaborated to offer a Church Planting course which is compulsory for all Anglican seminarians. The MICPE and SFP have done a wonderful job to adapt to a special 8-week year-end residential programme for our seminarians to develop pastoral identity and skill sets, and, spiritual formation. WE want to share with Synod that the faithful have stepped up to contribute towards church planting and leadership development initiatives. God bless them.

3.6 Pastoral Care and Church Discipline

WE are grateful that many of our churches and members are responding to the pastoral needs of our community. Some of them want to do it but do not have the means and the know-how to do so. The DWM has launched the Anglican Community Pantry initiative to help these churches. WE thank God for the donors who have stepped up to fund this initiative. The robust engagement to meet individuals and communities at their point of need, providing emotional and spiritual support, basic needs, and exercising church discipline is an ongoing journey which needs much prayer and financial support.

3.7 Appointments of New Archdeacons

- 3.7.1 The Rev. Soon Hoe Pin will be appointed as Archdeacon of the Upper North Archdeaconry on 1st January 2022.
- 3.7.2 The Rev. Joshua Ong will be appointed as the Archdeacon of the Upper Central Archdeaconry on 1st January 2022.

4. Conclusion

It is our priority to navigate the Church through this pandemic and post pandemic period. Pastoral Care, Church Discipline is crucial. We now have been granted a great opportunity to unite by focussing on (a) *Discipleship*, (b) *Church Planting*, and (c) *Leadership Development*. We pray that we will be motivated through the love of God to obey the Great Commission and the Greatest Commandment. ²⁴*To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—* ²⁵*to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.”*

Veni Sancte Spiritus,



The Rt. Rev. Dr. D. Steven Abbarow
Bishop of the Diocese of West Malaysia