



BEACONS of LIGHT

Pastoral Planning for Our Third Century

“

The parish is a beacon that radiates the light of the faith and thus responds to the deepest and truest desires of the human heart, giving meaning and hope to the lives of individuals and families.

— POPE EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI, DECEMBER 10, 2006



ARCHDIOCESE OF
CINCINNATI

ANNOUNCING BEACONS *of* LIGHT

Beacons of Light is a multi-year process of pastoral planning for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Groupings of parishes will come together as one faith community. These new “Families of Parishes” will be stronger, with the resources to focus more on mission than on maintenance.

Through Beacons of Light, 50-60 parish groupings will become Families of Parishes throughout the cities and towns, suburbs and rural communities of the 19 counties in western and southwestern Ohio. Pastors and parish leaders will then plan for the future of their Family of Parishes.

OUR VISION:

PARISHES THAT ARE BEACONS *of* LIGHT

In Families of Parishes, we will grow closer to God, follow Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit and radiate Christ throughout our lives. Rooted in prayer, each Family of Parishes will be guided by six principles:

“The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration.”

— POPE FRANCIS,
EVANGELII GAUDIUM



EUCCHARIST

The Eucharist is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. Accordingly, the Mass is the essential moment for building up and strengthening the parish community, along with the sacraments and other celebrations of the paschal mystery – the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.



CHURCH

Each of us is called to actively participate as a member of a parish, the Universal Church and our local Church, led by our archbishop. Parishes continually deepen the bonds of communion with other parishes.



LEADERSHIP

Pastors, in collaboration with parochial vicars, deacons and lay ministers, according to their proper roles and charisms, share responsibility for pastoral leadership. The spiritual, physical and mental health and ongoing support of ordained and lay leaders is vital for Families of Parishes.



STEWARDSHIP

Families of Parishes are communities of grateful disciples. Recognizing God’s gifts, they use their talents, skills and resources to build up the Church and live as Christ’s body in the world.



EVANGELIZATION

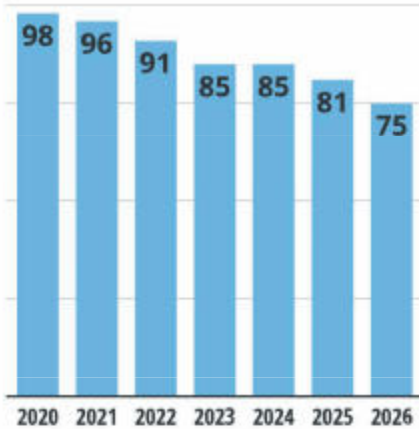
As centers of missionary outreach, Families of Parishes find new ways to foster discipleship among all the baptized. Schools, parishes, and indeed Church itself are centers of this essential work.



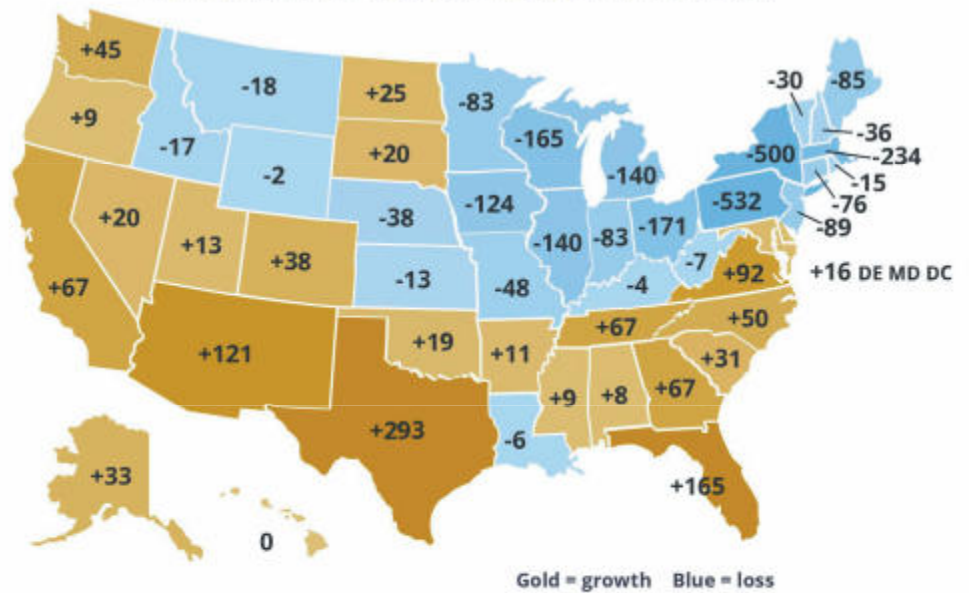
LOVE IN ACTION

Families of Parishes will be communities of charity and justice, serving those most in need and working to change systems that oppress and marginalize.

DIOCESAN PRIESTS AVAILABLE FOR ASSIGNMENT AS PASTORS



NET CHANGE IN CATHOLIC PARISHES BY STATE, 1971 TO 2018



ACTIVE DIOCESAN PRIESTS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

25 of our 149 priests are 70 or older

9 of the 149 priests are 75 or older

19 of our 102 pastors are 70 or older

7 of our 102 pastors are 75 or older

3 ordinations in 2020

8 retirements in 2020

52 possible retirements in 2021-2025

*7 religious order priests serve as pastors in 2020

Why now?

Many factors lead us to recognize an urgent need to organize parish life more effectively for our future. Our parishes need to be vibrant communities of faith in order that we might fully grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. We face the decline of religious practice in the United States and changing demographics in the Midwest. And, while we are blessed with an increased number of men who have been ordained to the priesthood in the past few years or who are currently in seminary formation, we have even more still serving as pastors who are at or beyond retirement age or who will be eligible to retire in the next few years.¹

BEACONS of LIGHT: From Surviving to Thriving

Beacons of Light will be a unique experience of pastoral planning for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. There are two essential elements of the process, which will take place simultaneously and will lead us to move from maintenance to mission, from surviving to thriving. **Strategic Planning:** involves data gathering, analysis, and the identification of the best possible parish groupings throughout the Archdiocese. **Pastoral Planning:** includes meetings and processes through which parish leaders will discern the shape of parish life for their grouping and create a pastoral plan for the future.

What's Next? Prayer and Planning

We invite you to join us in prayer as we enter into this new phase of pastoral planning. Monthly prayer and reflection resources, as well as updates on the process, will be available at www.catholicaoc.org/beacons



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

¹ Map: CARA, <https://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2019/02/where-parish-doors-have-closed-and.html>

TIMELINE

KEY STEPS ON THE ROAD FROM MAINTENANCE TO MISSION

FALL 2020:

Beacons of Light project launch announced. Data gathering from parishes and schools begins.

WINTER 2020/21:

Six principles of Beacons of Light are established. Design of parish planning process (including vision points and parameters) begins.

SPRING 2021:

Parish and school data is analyzed. Current reality is assessed.

SUMMER 2021:

Families of Parishes modeling begins. Draft of parish planning process is completed.

FALL 2021:

Draft models of Families of Parishes are published for comment. Parish planning process (including vision points and parameters) is finalized.

WINTER 2021/22:

Families of Parishes are finalized and announced.

SPRING 2022:

Pastors and parish leaders begin preparing for the parish planning process.

SUMMER 2022:

Families of Parishes implementation begins. Each Family starts its parish planning process.



JUST IMAGINE ...

People united on a journey of missionary discipleship. Full churches. Joyous liturgies. Priests who have the time to be present and attend to the needs of their people.

*Parishes that are alive in faith, filled with vitality,
ready to form people to radiate Christ.*



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