



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES, VISION POINTS, PARAMETERS

As Families of Parishes are formed, parish staff, the pastoral council, and other leaders will create a plan through which the parishes will come together as one faith community. Each plan will be unique to the Family of Parishes, celebrating the history, culture, and strengths of each of the parishes in the Family. Principles, vision points, and parameters will guide the development of the plans for all the Families of Parishes, building on the common vision of the parish as a beacon of light.

### *Principles*

Archbishop Schnurr has approved six **principles** that will be the foundation for the plans each Family of Parishes will develop.

### *Vision Points*

**Vision points** will guide leaders to consider what living the principle to its fullest would mean for the Family and to plan toward fulfilling that vision. Parish leaders must keep the **vision** of the parish as a beacon of light in mind as they create the plan for their Family of Parishes.

### *Parameters*

Archbishop Schnurr has approved **parameters** to guide the pastoral planning process, establishing common expectations for each Family of Parishes. These parameters will address things that all Families must or must not do as they come together.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Parameters are only the topline, essential norms to be observed in each area. Below each set of parameters will be other categories such as suggestions, best practices, strategic imperatives, and planning checklists. Also found in each section of the Pathway will be relevant canons, universal and particular Church law, other archdiocesan policies, all to be observed at all times.



## *General Parameters*

- 1.** Families of Parishes must follow canon law, civil law, all universal and particular Church law, and archdiocesan policies.
- 2.** Families of Parishes must develop a pastoral plan for parish vitality, submitted at least annually, reviewed by the dean, to be approved by the archbishop in conformity with the parameters of the Pastoral Planning Pathway according to the published timeline.
- 3.** By September 1, 2022, every Family of Parishes must form a Planning Team, led by the pastor, to coordinate pastoral planning geared toward the unification of the Family by June 30, 2027.



## EUCCHARIST

The Mass is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. Accordingly, the Eucharist 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.

### *Vision Points*

- ***Sunday Mass:*** The Sunday Eucharist is the essential gathering of the parish community each week and is the “paradigm for other Eucharistic celebrations” (*Dies Domini*, 34); therefore life-giving, beautiful, and transformative celebration of Sunday Mass is critical.
- ***Christ’s Presence:*** Sacramental celebrations and other parish and school liturgies are true encounters with Jesus Christ present in Word and Sacrament, in the ministry of the priest and in the gathered assembly. (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 7)
- ***Unity:*** As the sacrament of unity (1 Cor 10:17), celebrations of the Eucharist within the Family are opportunities for members of the parishes to worship together. The cultural traditions of the members of the Family of Parishes are honored and celebrated, particularly on special feasts.
- ***Formation:*** Every Family of Parishes offers liturgical and sacramental formation “with zeal and patience” (*CSL*, 19), deepening an appreciation of the sacred mysteries.
- ***Ars Celebrandi:*** Attention to the art of celebrating the liturgy is important: fidelity to texts and rubrics as well as a prayerful understanding of liturgical texts, feasts, and seasons kindles full, conscious, and active participation among the faithful. (*Sacramentum Caritatis*, 38) Preaching and music are foremost among the liturgical arts and are well-prepared for liturgical celebrations.
- ***Trained Ministers:*** Priests, deacons, and lay liturgical ministers are well-trained and formed for leadership of communities at prayer and are “imbued with the spirit of the liturgy.” (*CSL*, 14)
- ***Sacred Space:*** Churches, chapels, and other sacred buildings should be “truly worthy and beautiful, signs and symbols of heavenly realities,” the house of the Church and the house of God, “suitable for carrying out the sacred action and for ensuring the active participation of the faithful.” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 288)



- **Adoration:** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is readily available within the Family of Parishes with proper catechesis for all.

### *Parameters*

4. The regular Mass schedule for a Family of Parishes may not assume more than two Masses per day per priest.
5. A regularly scheduled Mass for the Sunday precept must have annual average attendance of at least 50% of the church capacity.
6. The regular Mass schedule must provide the opportunity for priests to spiritually prepare for and be present to the community after Mass.
7. There must be a sufficient number of trained and formed liturgical ministers to serve as readers, servers, EMsHC, music ministers, et al. for liturgical celebrations.
8. Sacramental formation must be provided.



## 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.

### *Vision Points*

- **Deaneries:** The archdiocese is organized in canonical parishes, grouped into Families of Parishes, which are gathered into deaneries.
- **Archdiocese:** In communion with the pope, the bishop exercises leadership in the local Church.
- **Subsidiarity:** Deaneries enhance regional subsidiarity; explore cooperative ministries between Families of Parishes.
- **Culture & History:** As they become one Family, the culture and history of the parishes are acknowledged, honored and, where possible, preserved as we move from maintenance to unification in the mission of Christ. Efforts are made to blend cultural differences with compassion and compromise.
- **Local & Universal:** People come to understand the nature of the parish as the people within a given territory and therefore grow in understanding themselves as members of Christ's Body, the Church.

### *Parameters*

9. In pastoral planning and parish life, every Family of Parishes will adhere to the spirit and norms of the Vatican Instruction: "The pastoral conversion of the parish community in the service of the evangelizing mission of the Church." (2020).
10. Families collaborate with other Families within the deanery to provide coordinated pastoral ministry (e.g. hospitals, care facilities, young adult evangelization, high schools, jails, etc.)



## 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.

### *Vision Points*

- **Pastor:** The Family of Parishes is led by a single pastor who is appointed by the archbishop. He is ultimately entrusted with the care of souls and therefore is responsible for the leadership of the parish.
- **Unified:** The Family moves toward becoming one parish led by one pastor.
- **Deacons:** Deacons are part of the diocesan clergy and are appointed by the archbishop to serve the Family of Parishes.
- **Health & Wellbeing:** All members of the Family of Parishes support and foster the health and well-being of all leaders; in doing so, we ensure the well-being of the Church.
- **Co-responsibility:** Pastors, staff, and parishioners share responsibility for bringing all relevant perspectives to the process of discernment, according to their proper roles and gifts.
- **Leadership:** Pastors actively cultivate skill in leadership and draw others into leadership with them.
- **Formation:** Clergy participate in and are accountable for their spiritual and theological formation as well as leadership development. Clergy and laity are well-formed spiritually, theologically, and for leadership in support of their respective roles.

### *Parameters*

11. Every Family of Parishes will have a unified Pastoral Council, with other relevant and necessary consultative groups for specific areas of parish life.
12. The Finance Councils of each parish within the Family will work together to appropriately plan for and monitor the finances of the Family of Parishes.



- 13.** Competent and qualified staff are necessary to serve the Family of Parishes, especially in the areas of worship, evangelization (including love in action), and administration. As is possible, staff will be unified to serve the entire Family.
- 14.** Priests must have a regularly scheduled day off and must be able to take all annual vacation and retreats.
- 15.** Priests, deacons, staff and other lay leaders will participate in ongoing spiritual formation and training for leadership.



## 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.

### *Vision Points*

- ***Everyday Stewardship & Vocation:*** The Family of Parishes forms people to hear and respond to God's call in their lives – from the individual moments of each day to their overall purpose of living out their vocation.
- ***Way of Life:*** More than a program or once a year report to the parish, stewardship is fostered as a spiritual way of life and becomes an expression of discipleship.
- ***Gratitude & Giving:*** Parishioners are formed as disciples who grow in gratitude and become willing to share their time, talents, faith, and resources within the parish and beyond it.
- ***Invitation & Engagement:*** The Family actively invites and engages people of all ages and stages of life and faith to contribute in ministry, service, and giving.
- ***Hospitality & Welcome:*** The Family of Parishes is a community that warmly welcomes newcomers and offers hospitality to everyone.
- ***Meaningful Involvement & Leadership:*** The Family of Parishes seeks to meaningfully involve people as contributing members of the community. Parishioners are encouraged to take leadership roles as appropriate and are offered formation to equip them as leaders.

### *Parameters*

16. Every Family of Parishes will form people to embrace stewardship as a way of life.
17. Every Family of Parishes will actively promote vocational discernment.





## EVANGELIZATION

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

### *Vision Points*

- ***Missionary Discipleship:*** Implement a simple and clear discipleship process for all ages that ultimately equips and commissions missionary disciples for personal apostolate and vocation.
- ***Grounded in Discernment:*** The pastor, staff, and lay leaders prioritize prayer, formation, and discernment in order to allow the Holy Spirit to inspire their evangelization efforts.
- ***Family Partnership:*** The domestic church is the primary place of evangelization of young people and is well supported by the parish.
- ***Prioritize Adult Formation:*** The principal form for evangelization and catechesis is directed toward adults and is given priority.
- ***Effective Schools:*** Parish schools become an essential ministry of the parish by being an “effective vehicle of total Christian formation” for young people and their parents.
- ***A Culture of Vocation:*** Prepare individuals to discern and embrace their vocation. Support parents as they cultivate vocations within the family, help single young people actively discern their vocation, and accompany couples through the marriage catechumenate.

### *Parameters*

- 18.** Every Family of Parishes will create and implement a plan that ministers to all persons in every season of life and every stage in the process of evangelization.
- 19.** Every Family of Parishes will have an Evangelization Team, overseen by the pastor and led by competent and qualified staff.



## 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.

### *Vision Points*

- ***Human Dignity:*** The Families of Parishes seek ways to recognize the human dignity of each person, who is created in the “image of God.” (Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, 12-32) This demands special attention to the poor and vulnerable, including the unborn and their parents; the stranger; persons who are elderly, sick, poor, imprisoned, and marginalized; persons with disabilities; and persons of all ethnicities and cultures. This also entails urgently protecting the integrity of Creation, which has its own intrinsic value and is humanity’s common home. (Pope Francis, *Ladauto Si’*, 139)
- ***Formation:*** Families of Parishes educate and form parishioners, staff, and clergy – utilizing the rich history of Catholic Social Teaching and Scripture – on what it means to be a community of “salt and light” in today’s world. (Mt 5:13-16) The Families are nurtured through liturgy and formation to grow as a people who model mercy, grace, and forgiveness and who accompany the marginalized on their journeys toward empowerment.
- ***Belonging:*** The Family of Parishes actively facilitates the inclusion, affirmation, and meaningful participation of all Catholics in the community of faith.
- ***Charity & Justice:*** Families of Parishes exercise the ministries of charity and justice, which flow necessarily from our sacramental life and radiate as an indispensable expression of the Church’s very being. (Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, 25) Significant numbers of parishioners engage in activities of both direct service to the vulnerable and public advocacy to protect all human life and dignity from conception to natural death.
- ***Presence & Solidarity:*** Families of Parishes inspire all community members to go beyond regular Mass-goers and their buildings to be the light of Christ and to encounter Christ in all, both locally and across the globe. Parishioners practice a firm and preserving determination to commit themselves to the common good, recognizing that “we are all really responsible for all.” (Pope St. John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38)



## *Parameters*

- 20.** Every Family of Parishes must offer support to their communities through the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and promote a culture of life, charity, and justice.
- 21.** Every Family of Parishes will incorporate principles of Catholic Social Teaching into faith formation efforts for youth and adults.
- 22.** Every Family of Parishes will promote intercultural competence and facilitate the participation of all people in the life of the Church.



## ADMINISTRATION

*The six guiding principles address areas largely related to teaching and sanctifying. The parameters below are focused on the governance of Families of Parishes.*

### *Parameters*

- 23.** The parish/school financial ID # cannot be changed unless a new parish is formed or a parish formally changes its name.
- 24.** Each parish must maintain their own financial and sacramental records until parish territories are merged.
- 25.** Families of Parishes must be fiscally accountable.
- 26.** Parishes within each Family must work together to have an agreed upon and signed shared expense agreement annually when planning the yearly fiscal budget.
- 27.** Each parish/school must follow all policies within the Temporal Affairs Handbook.
- 28.** Every Family of Parishes must follow relevant civil law and archdiocesan policies for information (record) retention and location.
- 29.** Every Family of Parishes must work with the Pastoral Center Department of Human Resources to review staffing models.
- 30.** Each school must follow the approved School Change Process when making structural changes or closure decisions.

## COMMUNICATIONS

*Effective communications is necessary to share the Good News within the Family of Parishes and throughout the Archdiocese of Cincinnati*

### *Parameters*

- 31.** Every Family of Parishes will utilize the archdiocese-provided census database for managing parishioner contact information and sacramental records.