



Archbishop Paul D. Etienne Announces Final Parish Families

Archdiocese of Seattle Reaches Milestone in Partners in the Gospel planning effort

SEATTLE, February 5, 2024 – This weekend Archbishop Paul D. Etienne announced the final parish families, a key milestone of [Partners in the Gospel](#), an effort aimed at restructuring and renewing parish life in the Archdiocese of Seattle. After more than a year of research, consultation and discernment, the 136 parishes in the Archdiocese of Seattle will be placed into 60 parish families, including eight standalone parishes, which will go into effect July 1, 2024.

“Across the archdiocese we have an important opportunity to change how we’re operating as Church, to better utilize all our resources – our people, our properties, our finances – so that we can reinvigorate parish life and ultimately carry out our mission of helping others encounter Jesus Christ,” said Archbishop Etienne.

Starting July 1, these parish families will go into effect under the leadership of one pastor and one or more parochial vicars. The parishes in the family will work together over a period of three years to form one new canonical parish, while creatively re-envisioning how they will serve their community.

“While some immediately conclude that this means we’re closing churches, that is simply not the case,” added Archbishop Etienne. “The future of the parish family is up to the parish leadership and the people of God who will discern, with the help of the Holy Spirit, how to reinvigorate parish life. Together they will reflect on their liturgical life, their ministry offerings, their outreach to those on the margins, how to manage their campuses and much more.”

Eight parishes remain standalone because they are led by religious orders or serve a specific ethnic community like St. Paul Chong Hasang in Fife, which operates in Korean. These parishes will still participate in Partners in the Gospel, specifically focusing on re-envisioning parish life along with all parishes in the archdiocese.

The Planning Process

After researching how other dioceses restructured, the Partners in the Gospel planning team selected the parish family model, which allows parishes to share resources and invites parish leaders and parishioners to collaborate on the future of their parish family. The people of God are able to re-envision new ways to carry out the mission of the Church rather than following a pre-determined outcome.

Once this strategy was in place, the team began more than a year of consultation on the parish family structure with priests, deacons, parish leaders and staff, principals, archdiocesan employees, and parishioners. In fall 2023, more than 3,000 pages from parish input sessions were submitted to the planning team. This consultation led to new recommended changes that impacted 25 parish families comprised of 78 parishes. These 78 parishes were invited to hold a second round of listening to gather more input from parishioners and staff. All feedback was shared with the planning team, the Oversight Committee and Archbishop Etienne, who ultimately discerned the final recommendation and announced the final parish families this weekend.

“I am so grateful to the thousands of people who engaged in the consultation process by providing insights during the input phase, sharing new ideas and praying for this renewal effort,” said Archbishop Etienne. “This re-envisioning work could not be accomplished without you. My hope is that parish families will benefit from the shared gifts of time, talent, and treasure so that we, as partners in the Gospel, can truly renew parish life.”

To view the final parish families [click here](#) or visit archseattle.org/partners.

About Partners in the Gospel

To proactively address the need for change, the Archdiocese of Seattle began the Partners in the Gospel effort aimed at reinvigorating parish life in 2022. The goal of Partners in the Gospel is to engage more people in their faith life, strengthen local communities of faith and help Catholic parishes advance their mission of bringing the Gospel to everyone. To learn more, please visit archseattle.org/partners.

About the Archdiocese of Seattle

The Archdiocese of Seattle encompasses all of Western Washington, stretching from Canada to Oregon and from the Cascade Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. There are 72 Catholic schools and 136 parishes, with more than 500 weekly Masses celebrated in eight languages. Archbishop Paul D. Etienne leads the archdiocese with his auxiliary bishops, Bishop Eusebio Elizondo and Bishop Frank Schuster. For more information about the Archdiocese of Seattle, visit archseattle.org.

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