



Parish Families Form Across the Archdiocese of Seattle

Partners in the Gospel planning effort moves into implementation phase

SEATTLE, July 1, 2024 – After two years of planning, extensive consultation and discernment, the Archdiocese of Seattle formed 60 parish families today as part of Partners in the Gospel, a strategic pastoral planning process designed to reinvision parish life.

“Imagine full Sunday Masses, people engaged in the sacraments, growing youth and young adult groups, and people excited about their Catholic faith. That’s what we’re trying to achieve with Partners in the Gospel,” said Archbishop Paul D. Etienne. “Ultimately we are working to better carry out our mission of helping people deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ.”

“One way we hope to achieve this is by changing how we’re structured to more effectively use our resources – our people, our structures, and our finances – so that we can recalibrate our focus on achieving this mission,” he added.

Starting today, the 136 parishes in the Archdiocese of Seattle will become 60 parish families, of which eight are stand-alone parishes. The parish families will be led by a pastor or pastoral coordinator, and many will also have at least one parochial vicar assisting. Together, over the next three years, the parish family will work to form one new canonical parish, while creatively re-envisioning how they will serve their community.

“It’s important for people to understand that a parish refers to the community of people – not a church building,” said Archbishop Etienne. “As a larger community, the parish family has a great opportunity to combine gifts and talents to better evangelize and share the joy of the Gospel with others.”

Consultative teams of staff and parishioners will form within each parish family to help lead the process of coming together over the next three years. During this time, the parish family will work on a pastoral plan called the One Parish Plan, which will outline how the parish family will become one parish. Specifically, the plan will address how the parish family will be structured, its ministry offerings, its liturgical life, its outreach to the margins, and how the parish family will use its campuses and much more.

“While we have set the process and vision for Partners in the Gospel, the future of the parish family is up to the parish family leadership and the people of God who will discern, with the help of the Holy Spirit, how to reinvigorate parish life,” said Archbishop Etienne. “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.”

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 73 Catholic schools, 60 parish families, four associated cemeteries, a retreat center and two camps. 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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