



October 31, 2024

Dear Fathers, Deacons and Parish Leaders,

As we enter a season of gratitude, I wish to thank you for your great partnership during this time of transition. For some, the recent changes are overwhelming, while others are relieved and excited for what's to come. While I too experience a mix of feelings, I am thankful for the progress that has been made in the last two years, which gives me great hope for the future.

I'm also grateful for the in-person time we shared together earlier this month at the Intercultural Competency Training. The topic and conversations around the framework for greater integration and inclusion were incredibly fruitful. It was an opportunity for all of us to raise consciousness around who we need to include and to be mindful of who is not at the table. Many thanks to Father Dudek for sharing his rich academic and personal experiences with this critical work.

"Go Slow"

One thing we have continued to say is "Go slow." This does not mean "Don't go!" nor does it mean that you cannot start making some key decisions when necessary. The spirit behind this is to make time to *bring people along* and recognize we have several years to work through the One Parish Planning process.

Staff members should be in the loop and understand where things stand before rolling out changes to parishioners. Make sure discernment and decisions are not made behind closed doors by just a few people, but instead reflect the insights of the staff and the voices of community. Rely on your Parish Family Leadership Team to help drive forward, while accepting the gifts from the volunteers on your Parish Family Advisory Council.

If you have not yet started forming your consultative leadership, please begin that discernment. Here are links to simple guidance around:

- [Overview of Consultative Bodies](#)
- [Parish Family Advisory Council Overview](#) (NEW!) - This document can be shared with lay people who are considering your request to be part of this council.

Right now, all parish families should be working towards getting to know each member of the parish family. Some families have already combined some faith formation programs and outreach ministries. Others have slowly introduced their ministries at all the Masses in

the family. Many councils and commissions are planning their first meet 'n greet meetings. These are all great ways to embrace the open and welcoming spirit of this first phase.

Clear Communication

One issue that has surfaced for several parish families is the challenge of communication. Communicating well is a cornerstone of this effort - and despite best efforts, people report there is never enough. Regular updates for staff, volunteers and the parish at large are key for success. Some staff have reported feeling overwhelmed keeping up with the various bulletins and websites. Please know that combining into one main bulletin is a great way to simplify this work. More guidance can be found in the [Handbook Communication Section](#).

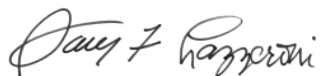
We heard you!

We recognize there is a lot going on. Based on your feedback, we have postponed the upcoming Partners in the Gospel trainings. Specifically, we cancelled the trainings in November and December and will pick up again in the new year with:

- **January:** Mission and Outreach in a Parish Family - webinar
- **February:** Consultative/Discernment-based decision making (part 1) - webinar
- **March:** Consultative/Discernment-based decision making (part 2) - webinar
- **April:** One Parish Planning and discernment-based decision making for Consultative Leaders - webinar

Please reach out to me or the team at partners@seattlearch.org with any questions or concerns. Again, thank you for your partnership in this renewal effort. I continue to pray for you, for the people of God and for our local Catholic Church. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide and inspire us to seek the renewal this effort offers us.

Sincerely in the Lord,



Fr. Gary Lazzeroni

For all Partners in the Gospel parish materials

<https://archseattle.org/for-parishes/forparishespartners/>

Monthly Intercessions

November

For all our faith communities, that as we implement Partners in the Gospel, we may learn to welcome each other as Christ has welcomed us.