

FAMILIES OF PARISHES

announcement



**UNLEASH
THE GOSPEL**
SENT ON MISSION

November 21, 2020

Dear parishioners -

As brothers and sisters in Christ, we are made to be in communion with God and with one another. We - along with other Catholics - make up a *spiritual family* bound together by our shared faith and discipleship. It is through our communion with each other that we respond to our vocation and fulfill our mission of "bringing people to the Lord and answering the call to holiness."

In the new year, the Archdiocese of Detroit will be launching an initiative called "Families of Parishes" designed to link each and every parish in the Archdiocese with 3-6 neighboring parishes as a larger faith community. These groups of parishes will share resources - primarily clergy and the talents of lay staff - while remaining independent faith communities (these are not mergers or clusters of parishes).

This new model for organizing parishes in the Archdiocese will allow for greater collaboration and stronger stewardship of our resources and ensure that all parishes are united in order to *Unleash the Gospel*. No one is on this journey alone, and with these structural changes, we will be better equipped to lead all souls to Jesus as one family.

While we know this transition will bring challenges, we must be confident that the Holy Spirit is moving us in this direction. Sometimes it is easy to follow Jesus, making Him the Lord of our lives. Sometimes it isn't. Sometimes we are challenged in our discipleship in ways that we don't understand, or even in ways that we don't think we can accomplish. Jesus never said that it would be easy. But He promises that if we are faithful to the end, we will enjoy eternal life with Him.

A formal announcement of which parishes will be joined together as a family will be shared by the Archbishop on Wednesday, December 9, 2020; however, the transition to this new structure will not begin until July 2021 and will be conducted in waves.

As we prepare for this opportunity to further *Unleash the Gospel*, I invite each of you to join me in prayer and thanksgiving. Let us be one in communion with our Catholic brothers and sisters and answer this call to holiness.

In Christ's peace,

Fr. Bob McCabe

Fr. Bob McCabe



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How will *Families of Parishes* groupings be chosen and when will they be announced?

A: Each family will consist of parishes that are geographically contiguous, meaning they border at least one other parish in the family. A preliminary list of families was prepared by the vicars of the Archdiocese of Detroit in collaboration with parish priests. These families were shared with Archbishop Vigneron for his consideration and approval. The Archbishop will be announcing the final list of parish families on December 9, 2020.

Q: How are *Families of Parishes* different than mergers and clusters?

A: Unlike mergers and clusters, in a family each parish maintains its individual identity and integrity, while allowing all priests within the family to share their ministry to the faithful of several parishes.

Q: How will priests be impacted by *Families of Parishes*?

A: This new model fosters a collaborative "team approach" to priests' ministries and allows them to extend their ministry to more Catholics within the family. Priests will now have the opportunity to share their unique charisms - talents and experiences - with all parishioners within the family.

Q: How will each family be structured and who will lead the family?

A: The family as a governance model replaces the former "vicariate" structure which included too many parishes to allow collaboration between priests. Two leadership models are possibilities for a family and will be decided upon between the pastors of all parishes within the family: A "one pastor" model which allows a single priest to serve as pastor with the help of other priests; or, a "in solidum" model, in which multiple pastors work together as a team with a single pastor acting as the moderator of the group. When established, each family has the flexibility to switch between leadership models based on what is most realistic and practical for the family.

Q: How will parishioners be impacted by *Families of Parishes*?

A: In addition to becoming part of a larger faith community (meeting more Catholics!), parishioners will be presented with greater opportunities to encounter Christ and deepen their relationships with Him through increased access to the Sacraments, Christian service and faith formation programs.

Q: How will moving to *Families of Parishes* impact parish finances?

A: Each parish in the family will remain unique and financially distinct entities. They will each be responsible for the financial stewardship of their individual parish.

We understand you may have more questions about how *Families of Parishes* will impact Divine Child. For more information, visit www.familiesofparishes.org.



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familiesofparishes.org