

## Planning Goal

To promote flourishing faith communities by renewing and aligning *all* our people, resources, and actions on the mission of Jesus Christ.

## Four Planning Principles

1. Flourishing, mission-oriented faith communities
2. Flourishing priests in support of mission
3. Stable environment for mission
4. Sustained, integrated, and systematic support from the curia to promote fruitful implementation

## Parameters: Common expectations for all priests and parishes in support of our Planning Principles

**1. Archdiocesan Priest Availability:** To promote equity as One Church, and to provide for priestly flourishing through their mutual support and fraternity in support of mission, we project 27 archdiocesan priests will be available for assignment in the rural area in 2033, and 54 archdiocesan priests will be available for assignment in the urban area.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Priestly Flourishing--Two-by-Two Assignments:** Priests in rural assignments will be assigned in groups of at least two, with one pastor and one or more associates. This approach has Gospel origins, and also supports economies of scale for administration.

- a. Serious efforts should be made to allow priests who wish to live with another priest to do so where possible.
- b. In all parishes and families, pastors are to schedule at least weekly times of non-business fraternity (e.g., meals, prayer times, visits) with the other priest(s) in the parish or family.

**Key Parameters:** To help create the conditions for sustainable, mission-oriented faith communities that align our available priests with the needs of the faithful by:

1. guiding the creation of Families of Parishes where our faith communities and priests can flourish.
2. beginning to clarify expectations for:
  - a. where and when Masses can be celebrated
  - b. the scope of duties for our priests, and

<sup>1</sup> Priest availability for 2033 reflects projected population shifts within the archdiocese, and estimates a 23 percent decrease in archdiocesan priests when compared with current numbers. For accounting purposes, our non-archdiocesan priests will provide a reserve.

- c. how parishes will be structured in support of mission.

**I. Family of Parishes:** The Archdiocese of Omaha is adopting the *Family of Parishes* approach, where two or more parishes collaborate in intentional ways in support of the mission of Christ. Each parish in a Family retains its own unique identity, similar to how each sibling has a unique role in a family. Wherever possible, each Family of Parishes will build on natural affinities and existing relationships within faith communities. The depth of collaboration and resource sharing will exceed what we've generally experienced in our parish groupings thus far. The Family of Parishes establishes a stable and sustainable mission field that aligns our priests and parish resources for mission in support of the needs of the faithful through June of 2033. Each Family takes a different form depending on local conditions.<sup>2</sup>

## II. Celebration of Masses

### 1. Sunday Masses<sup>3</sup>

- a. **Driving Distance--About 20 Miles for Sunday:** People should generally not need to travel more than about 20 miles for a Sunday Mass.
- b. **Sunday Masses Per Priest:** Each priest in a parish or family may celebrate:
  - i. up to four Sunday obligation Masses at up to two locations per weekend **OR**
  - ii. up to three Sunday obligation Masses at up to three locations per weekend
- c. **Sunday Masses Priest:** For each priest, no more than four Sunday obligation Masses can be scheduled per weekend.
- d. **Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest:** These celebrations (e.g., Sunday Communion services) are not permitted except for emergency and without prior authorization from the chancery.

### 2. Daily Masses

- a. Priests can celebrate no more than two Masses per day on weekdays.<sup>4</sup>
    - i. In a Family of Parishes with two priests, up to three daily Masses may be regularly scheduled each day.
    - ii. In a Family of Parishes with three priests, up to four daily Masses may be regularly scheduled each day.
  - b. Daily Mass schedules should preference Catholic schools such that schools have at least one school Mass per week.
3. **Mass Cancellations:** Masses can be cancelled without substitution for priests' funerals, family of priests' funerals, clergy conferences, priest convocations, days off, and retreats. A Communion service on these days would be optional.

<sup>2</sup> Our *Family of Parishes* approach is adapted from the Archdiocese of Detroit's pastoral planning concept, and echoes implementation efforts in other dioceses such as Cincinnati, Buffalo, and London (Ontario). Each parish – like each member of our Church – has unique gifts to contribute to our flourishing.

<sup>3</sup> There are interplay and flex in the application of these parameters. For example, driving distance may need to trump the total locations parameter.

<sup>4</sup> Exceptions include Ash Wednesday and concelebrations with the archbishop.

4. **Non-English Masses:** The addition of future Masses in languages other than English should not take place in a parish without prior permission of the archbishop or his delegate.

### III. Priest Workload

#### 1. Time Priorities

- a. First Priority: Things only priests can do:
  - i. Preside over Masses: Sundays, Weekdays, & Funerals
  - ii. Confessions
  - iii. Anointings
  - iv. Sacramental visits to the sick and homebound
  - v. Priestly support of the Pastoral Vision
- b. Additional things *pastors* must do:
  - i. Leadership for Evangelization
  - ii. Oversight of temporal goods administration
  - iii. Oversight of school support<sup>5</sup>

2. **Typical Work Week:** A full six-day workweek is standard.

#### 3. Time Away

- a. Standard vacation of 24 weekdays and three weekends
  - i. Note: Priests get only one day off per week, where most laypersons get two.
  - ii. Non-archdiocesan ministerial events, e.g., pilgrimages, retreats for non-archdiocesan groups, count as vacation.
- b. One week of annual retreat
- c. Weekly day off, non-accruable
- d. Priests' funerals, family of priests' funerals, clergy conferences, priest convocations

**IV. Family of Parishes Structures:** A Family of Parishes establishes a stable and sustainable mission field that aligns our priests and parish resources for mission in support of the needs of the faithful through June of 2033.

#### 1. Obligatory Parish/Family Staff or Volunteers

- a. Evangelization Coordinator: All families and parishes must have a designated evangelization coordinator who assists the pastor in the pursuit of the Big Goal. This person will be the point of contact for the archdiocesan Office of Pastoral Services
- b. Facilities Manager: All families and parishes must have a designated facilities manager who reports to the pastor and oversees site maintenance. This person will be certified by the archdiocesan finance office.
- c. Business Manager/Bookkeeper: All Single Pastor Families must have a single office for bookkeeping and business services. This person will be certified by the archdiocesan finance office.

<sup>5</sup> See pages 6-8 of this document for details.

## 2. Optional Parish/Family Staff or Volunteers<sup>6</sup>

- a. Parish Life Coordinator: appointed by the archbishop and acts as a delegate of the supervising priest in all pastoral and administrative matters not reserved to the supervising priest.<sup>7</sup>
- b. Education or Executive Director: As needed, families or parishes with multiple schools may designate an Educational or Executive Director who will assist the pastor in interfacing with schools and the archdiocesan Catholic Schools Office (CSO). This person will be approved by the CSO. Depending on the needs of the parish or Family of Parishes, the Educational or Executive Director's qualifications and role may vary:
  - i. Professional Educator and Administrator
  - ii. Business Administrator and Fundraiser

## Family Governance Models

### 1. Family Model One—Single Pastor: Grouped, separate parishes and centralized family team:

This model would be most suitable where the central parish team can manage the operations of satellite parishes. Centralization eases the administrative workload of our priests and promotes the mission.

- a. All Together:
  - i. Family Clergy Team led by a single Pastor
  - ii. Family Leadership Team
  - iii. Family Pastoral Council
  - iv. Family Finance Council<sup>8</sup>
  - v. Family Staff, Including:
    1. Family Evangelization Coordinator
    2. Family Facilities Manager
    3. Family Business Manager/Bookkeeper
    4. Family Education Director, as needed
    5. Family Sacramental Preparation Coordinator
- b. Separate:
  - i. Parish Life Coordinators in Satellite Parishes, as needed
  - ii. Individual Finance Council<sup>9</sup>
  - iii. Individual Parish Trustees

### 2. Family Model Two—Single Pastor: One canonical parish with multiple sites:

This model would be most suitable where all operations can be handled centrally and formerly separate parishes are willing to collaborate almost entirely as one unit.

- a. All Together:
  - i. Parish Clergy Team led by a single Pastor
  - ii. Parish Leadership Team
  - iii. Parish Pastoral Council

<sup>6</sup> The concepts for these positions are under development.

<sup>7</sup> Source: Diocese of Superior. Accessed at <https://catholicdos.org/parish-life-coordinators-and-directors> on 7 February 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Each Family of Parishes will have a Family Finance Council made up of two members from each parish in the family. This council will guide the pastor in the overall financial management of the Family of Parishes.

<sup>9</sup> This group serves the traditional role of a Parish Finance Council. Two of members will participate in the Family Finance Council.

- iv. Parish Finance Council
- v. Parish Staff, including:
  - 1. Parish Evangelization Coordinator
  - 2. Parish Facilities Manager
  - 3. Parish Business Manager/Bookkeeper
  - 4. Parish Life Coordinator, as needed
  - 5. Parish Education Director, as needed
  - 6. Parish Sacramental Preparation Coordinator
- vi. Parish Trustees
- b. Separate: None

**3. Family Model Three—Single Pastor:** Clustered, separate parishes and one pastor, with parish life coordinators as needed:

**This model is generally not recommended because of administrative complexity associated with managing multiple dispersed staffs and councils.** It would be most applicable for groupings of parishes where management by one pastor is not reasonably possible, but where satellite parishes can be managed day-to-day by a volunteer or paid parish life coordinator.

- a. All Together:
  - i. Pastor
  - ii. Other Clergy
  - iii. Group Council
- b. Separate:
  - i. Individual Leadership Teams
  - ii. Individual Parish Life Coordinators in Satellite Parishes
  - iii. Individual Parish Staffs, including individual Sacramental Preparation
  - iv. Individual Parish Councils
  - v. Individual Finance Councils
  - vi. Individual Parish Trustees

**4. Family Model Four—Multiple Pastors:** Designated Families of Parishes will align parish life as practicable by collaborating in terms of liturgy, staffing, and ministry, but they will be led by separate pastors and will not share governance. Collaboration allows parishes within a Family to more effectively serve their broader community through complementary scheduling of parish liturgies and activities, resource pooling to achieve economies of scale, and more intentional invitation to increase awareness of opportunities to know, love, and serve the Lord and one another. Collaboration also allows parishes to benefit from one another's strengths and charisms. Some examples of collaboration follow:

- a. Liturgy Coordination/De-confliction, e.g., Mass and Confession scheduling
- b. Backup for priest absences
- c. Staff Sharing Opportunities
  - i. Parish Staff: e.g., Communication Coordinator, Youth Coordinator
  - ii. School Staff: e.g., Counselor, Nurse, Art Teacher, Special Education, Music, Campus Minister
- d. Ministry Coordination Opportunities

- i. Pastoral Care and Service, e.g., Food Drives, Community Service Projects, Visiting those in need
- ii. Parish Missions
- iii. Religious Education
- iv. Youth Ministry
- v. RCIA
- vi. Adult Faith Formation Opportunities—Equipping disciples, e.g., Workshops, TMIY!, Holy Hours, Shared Alpha Weekend Retreat
- vii. Evangelization Initiatives

## School Governance Models

Each of the four governance models outlined below can function with a board of limited jurisdiction<sup>10</sup> or with the pastor remaining as the administrative authority of the school.<sup>11</sup>

1. **Single Parish-Owned Elementary School.** The Catholic school is a ministry of the parish. This school is legally – under both civil and canonical laws – a part of the parish; is owned and operated by that parish.
  - a. Administrative responsibility falls to the pastor.
  - b. The school principal is responsible for the day-to-day operational decisions of the school.
  - c. Example: Most of our elementary schools are owned by a single parish. All currently function without a Board of Limited Jurisdiction.
2. **PK-12 School System.** A PK-12 Catholic school system is a single parish or a unified cluster of schools (several elementary schools and one high school) covering a specified geographic area. This Catholic school system aligns participating schools into one corporate system providing a seamless PK – 12 education for a defined region.
  - a. Administrative responsibility falls to members of an appropriately trained board of limited jurisdiction, a policy making body (recommended).
  - b. An executive director or the principal is responsible for the day-to-day operational decisions of the school.
  - c. Reserved powers will be vested in the pastor in a single parish setting and in the archbishop in the corporate setting.
  - d. Examples in the archdiocese: several schools resemble this model but are not formally set up as such.
3. **Inter (Joint) Parish School.** An inter-parish school – also called a regional school – is a school operated and financed by multiple parishes that are geographically contiguous.

<sup>10</sup> A **board with limited jurisdiction**, also called a policy-making board, is a body that participates in the policy-making process by formulating, adapting, and enacting policy. The board has been delegated final authority to enact policy regarding certain areas of institutional operation, although its jurisdiction is limited to those areas of operation that have been delegated to it by the constitution and/or by laws and approved by the Pastor. The Pastor appoints members, who can include parents (no more than 40% of membership); alumni/parents of alumni; leaders within the civic, business and professional communities; and parishioners. It is strongly recommend that at least 80% of members shall be practicing Catholics in good standing with the Church.

<sup>11</sup> An exception is the Consortium Model.

- a. Administrative responsibility falls either to the pastor(s), or the pastor(s) may delegate administrative authority to members of an appropriately trained board of limited jurisdiction, a policy making body.
  - b. An executive director or the principal(s) is responsible for the day-to-day operational decisions of the schools.
  - c. Examples in the archdiocese: St. James/Seton and St. Pius/St. Leo
4. **Consortium School Model.** A consortium is a cluster of Catholic elementary schools within a diocese that are linked through shared administration, policies, finances, resources, and practices. Consortium schools are incorporated as one school with multiple campuses in areas where individual parishes are not able to support a school.
- a. The corporation is under the administrative authority of an appropriately trained board of limited jurisdiction.
  - b. An executive director and the principal(s) are responsible for the day-to-day operational decisions of the schools.
  - c. Examples in the archdiocese: Consortium and CUES schools.

## School Financial Models

A parish and school that work together create a dynamic that positively impacts the parish community.<sup>12</sup> Lack of mission support for Catholic education eventually results in diminished funding from the parish. Parish and school both suffer in the long run. Possible school financial models include:

1. **Parish Supported.** Parish subsidy from the parish to the school for use in the general operations of the school or in the underwriting of deficits generated by the school. The bulk of the school's income comes from tuition and fees.
2. **Inter-Parish (Joint) School.** The individual parishes continue to provide financial support for the school. This represents a redrawing of school boundaries without redrawing parish boundaries in hopes of generating enough students and/or affluence to support the school. The bulk of the school's income comes from tuition and fees.
3. **Cost-Based Tuition.** Redirects parish subsidy to tuition aid given directly to the family with demonstrated need instead of to the school directly. Aid amounts could be determined by a third-party service provider in order to ensure confidentiality. Tuition costs gradually move toward the actual cost to educate a child, accounting for building costs, facilities and maintenance costs, staff costs, materials, and other miscellaneous costs.

<sup>12</sup> Canon 794 §1. - The duty and right of educating belongs in a special way to the Church, to which has been divinely entrusted the mission of assisting persons so that they are able to reach the fullness of the Christian life.

Canon 794 §2. - Pastors of souls have the duty of arranging everything so that all the faithful have a Catholic education.

4. **Negotiated Tuition.** Similar to the cost-based tuition that is based on a family's need. Instead of the needs being determined by a third-party provider, the model suggests a negotiation between the student's parents and the principal, pastor or a committee. Requires persons who are trained to properly negotiate in a manner that respects and honors the human dignity of the families with whom they negotiate. An annual meeting with the family is recommended.
5. **Considerations in a Multi-School or Consortium Governance Model.** The schools that were once autonomous parish schools now form a collective system that share the same salary schedule, tuition rates, and have no boundaries for attendance. The multi-school model demonstrates that centralizing payroll, tuition management, budgeting, purchasing, development, professional development planning, and other administrative duties across a number of schools or an entire diocese yields a number of benefits. Each supporting parish to the school model is assigned a percentage of their average monthly collection as determined by the pastors of the supporting parishes and the school board.

### **Requirement for Locally Generated Family Pastoral Plans**

1. Each Family Pastoral Planning Team will create a written Family Pastoral Planning Proposal **by 15 November 2022** following a template from the Office of Pastoral Planning. **Each plan will create the structural conditions for flourishing.**
2. Archbishop Lucas will personally review and must sign off on all plans prior to finalization. The required elements of the plan are still in development, but will likely include:
  - a. Family Governance Model selected, including detailed plan for
    - i. Clergy Team(s)—Priests and Deacons
    - ii. Leadership Team(s)
    - iii. Rectory Site(s)
    - iv. Staff Site(s)
    - v. Staff Positions
      1. Staff positions filled
      2. Unfilled staff positions and timeline for filling them
    - vi. Councils
  - b. Sites where Sunday Mass will be celebrated
  - c. School Governance & Financial Models selected