



## Overview

As Catholics, we are called to deepen our relationship with Christ, and as missionary disciples, to invite others to grow in their relationship with Christ. We do this in many ways — one of which is through the local parish community. Our parishes are the primary way most Catholics stay connected to their faith and each other. The model of parish life also allows for great flexibility in meeting the needs of Catholics at different times in history.

Today we face many realities that are impacting parish life and making it difficult to fully live out our mission. We face an urgent — yet exciting — opportunity to transform parish life — and the faith of all those who live here.

**Pope Francis calls us to “read the signs of the times” while adapting to both the needs of the faithful and to historical changes.**

While there is no predetermined outcome for this strategic pastoral planning effort, together we will pray to the Holy Spirit to guide our efforts so that we may better support our mission to encounter Christ, accompany others and live the joy of the Gospel.

We are not the first diocese with the courage and the will to be creative with the structure of parish life. Many dioceses have gone before us and have provided models and lessons for how we too can use our limited resources to enhance the Catholic parish experience in the Archdiocese of Seattle.

Archbishop Etienne has appointed a team to lead this strategic pastoral planning work, which will bring most parishes together into a new family structure with two or more other parishes. The pastor, parish leaders and parishioners of the new parish family will determine how they will best join together to carry out the mission of the Church as one parish.

Here is a timeline of the key milestones for Partners in the Gospel:

- January 2023: Public launch
- Fall 2023: Invitation to provide input on parish families
- Early 2024: Final parish family structures announced
- July 2024: Parish families go into effect with one pastor
- 2024–2027: Parish families journey together to become one parish