



"Families of Parishes"

– Frequently asked questions

Why are we creating Families of Parishes? Before the pandemic, the local and universal Church were already facing significant challenges, including the shortage of priests to care for parish communities. The coronavirus pandemic and its associated health and economic crises accelerated these problems.

We now have fewer resources to keep our mission active. Archbishop Vigneron, in consultation with clergy and lay advisors, has determined that now is the time to act.

Our mission to unleash the Gospel hasn't changed, but how we approach that mission must shift in response to our circumstances. We must move forward with greater collaboration and better stewardship of our resources.

With this shift, we take inspiration from the early Church. From the beginning, Christ knew the mission he gave his disciples would be difficult and that they would face many challenges, so he sent them to preach the Gospel two-by-two (Mk 6:6-7 and Luke 10:1). Like us, the early disciples knew what was asked of them but not necessarily how to accomplish it or what the end result would be. St. Paul himself was shipwrecked three times (2 Cor 11:25) but wherever he ended, he remained committed to the same mission with which we are entrusted today. Because of St. Paul's commitment and the commitment of the early apostles, the Gospel was heard across the world.

Like the disciples, we have been asked to unite and go on mission together, enhancing each other's strengths and working collaboratively to Unleash the Gospel around us. And while the impact of the pandemic may feel like a shipwreck – like St. Paul, this is not what we planned or wanted – we know that God wants us to continue his mission with the same zeal and dedication of the early apostles. He will be with us every step of the way.

Does this mean our mission to unleash the Gospel has changed? Not at all. Through Synod 16, we discerned that God was calling us to transform our archdiocese into a band of joyful missionary disciples, sent on mission to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in southeast Michigan. God continues to send us on this mission