



Framework Considerations | Status Update ,March 2021

Archbishop Schnurr approved the Framework Considerations recommended by the Priestly Life Committee in September 2019. The Framework was presented to the priests of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati at the Presbyteral Convocation on October 30, 2019. The points of the Framework are listed below with a status update as of March 2021.

- An Office of Parish Vitality and Mission would be established.
 - The Pastoral Center department formerly entitled “Pastoral Services” is now titled “Pastoral Vitality” and is focused entirely on supporting vital parish life in the archdiocese. Beacons of Light has been named by Archbishop Schnurr as the top priority for the Pastoral Center in the coming years.
- A Director of the Office of Parish Vitality and Mission would be appointed to supervise an in-house staff of qualified organizational change consultants who would work directly with the pastoral region pastors and pastoral staffs, assisting them in leading the change process in their regions. The Director and consultants would assist in the development of the “Change Plans,” the development and training of regional leadership, the development and utilization of evaluative instruments to gauge the effectiveness of implementation, and other support needed to affect quality pastoral ministry. It is essential the necessary research and statistical analysis be central to any support developed and offered; the Director would have direct responsibility in overseeing research and development.
 - The Office of Pastoral Planning was established in 2019 within the Dept of Pastoral Vitality and is at the heart of the Beacons of Light process. The office works directly with pastors and other parish leaders on their planning needs.
 - Consultants with expertise in data gathering and analysis have been contracted to model the formation of new Families of Parishes. These consultants have demonstrated expertise in diocesan strategic and pastoral planning efforts.
 - Processes, training, facilitators, and support will be made available for the establishment of pastoral plans (change plans) for each Family of Parishes as it is established.
- The language regarding pastoral regions, chapels etc., would be standardized and clearly defined so that misunderstandings are reduced, especially for new pastors of regions that are being consolidated into one parish.
 - All such terminology is being clarified as part of the Beacons of Light process.
- The stability of pastors is essential for the effective implementation of any further parish/region reorganization and restructuring of ministries, staff and facilities. The current policy regulating term limits for pastors should be subordinate to the good of such parish/region organization, structure, and pastoral life.
 - This policy is among the many policies expected to be reviewed and potentially modified within the Beacons of Light process.
- All pastoral regions would be expected to draft a “Change Plan,” identifying ministries to be provided and facilities, staffing, and resources needed to realize those ministries. Such “Change

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Plans” should also address the current configuration of pastoral regions, with the possibility of reconfiguration, as necessary, to effect better pastoral life and ministry.

- One primary outcome of the Beacons of Light process will be a pastoral plan developed by each Family of Parishes, with assistance from the Beacons team, for approval by Archbishop Schnurr. Such a plan would continually be updated and reviewed at the deanery and archdiocesan levels in subsequent years.
- A Pastoral Region Review Commission, including respective Deans, would be established, whose purpose would be to review and approve the “Change Plans” for the pastoral regions. The Commission would look at the proposed changes in personnel, physical plants and worship schedules, with a view to providing archdiocesan reception and acceptance of any proposed reorganization. Continuity in implementation would be assured by requiring any future revisions to be “resubmitted” to the Commission.
 - The pastoral plans developed by the Family of Parishes would be reviewed at multiple levels, including the dean, before submission to Archbishop Schnurr.
- The ministerial and office staff of each pastoral region would begin to centralize, in terms of staffing and location, as soon as practically possible.
 - These kinds of decisions will be made at the local level under the direction of the pastor of each Family of Parishes, with support from appropriate Pastoral Center staff. It is expected that the Pastoral Councils, Finance Councils, and staff of the parishes will come together in the early stages of implementation of the Families of Parishes.
- Multiple sites of parish life (i.e., chapels, schools, religious education centers, sports facilities, etc.) may exist in one parish region, but they should be reduced in number, especially if there is unnecessary, unsustainable duplication.
 - In consultation with the lay leadership of the Family of Parishes, the pastor may make such decisions, seeking the permission of Archbishop Schnurr when required (e.g. closure of church buildings, sale of property, etc.)
- Communication and preparation of the lay faithful is paramount for the easing of the inevitable pain of this transition. The Communication and Mission Promotion Department, working with the Director and staff, would be critical to keeping the plan and process before the people of the archdiocese, in all the many forms of communication under its purview.
 - The Dept of Communications is integrally involved in the leadership of Beacons of Light and will continue to communicate both directly to the faithful of the archdiocese as well as provide support and materials to assist pastors and parish leaders in communicating with their parishioners.
- All pastoral regions of the Archdiocese would move toward a one parish-one pastor arrangement within the next three to five years.
 - One stated goal of the Beacons of Light process is that each Family of Parishes would ultimately become one parish led by a single pastor. [See the FAQ on the Beacons website here.](#) The timeframe will vary for each Family, but measuring progress towards that goal will be part of the periodic review of the Family’s pastoral plan.