



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Communication & Mission Promotion

PRESS RELEASE

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Immediate Release: Monday, Feb. 14, 2022

Priest Assignments Announced as Part of Beacons of Light

The assignment plan for the priests in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati is complete. The complete list of assignments is available at BeaconsAOC.org. Assignments include the pastors and parochial vicars for the Families of Parishes that were announced in December 2021. The priest assignments will take effect July 1, 2022, upon the implementation of Families of Parishes.

This announcement is the culmination of the Priests' Personnel Board's many months of discernment and work. This process included input from each priest regarding his own desires, skills and (where applicable) retirement plans; an assessment of each Family of Parishes and its priest staffing and pastoral leadership needs; and a prayerful determination of best fit between priest candidates and the various Families. Recommended assignments were then submitted to Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr for his evaluation and acceptance. Regarding those Families of Parishes to be staffed by religious order priests, each order followed its own internal discernment process in recommending their priest(s). These recommendations were accepted by Archbishop Schnurr.

The assignments announcement aids leaders who are preparing for the implementation of Families of Parishes. The first six months of 2022 is a preparatory period with trainings, workshops, and resources for priests, deacons and parish staffs. Some of this work has included:

- **Beacons Roundtable Meetings:** Monthly webinar series for parish leaders across the archdiocese that includes an overview of the Pastoral Planning Pathway and presentations on the Guiding Principles.
- **Pastoral Planning Pathway:** Fleshing out the five phases of the six principles that will guide each Family of Parishes on the path to becoming an evangelizing Beacon of Light. This work includes building a digital platform to assist Families of Parishes in the work of each phase of Beacons of Light. This platform will be aimed at assisting Families in creating their individual pastoral plans

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- Liaisons: Identifying and training “liaisons” who are faithful Catholics with organizational leadership experience – who will work to assist Families of Parishes in their pastoral planning.
- Priest Formation & Training: Three important in-person conferences are planned for priests: Dan Cellucci, Executive Director of the Catholic Leadership Institute, will speak about priestly ministry and parish life in a time of chaos; Father Donald Senior will speak on the role of administrative services in priestly life; and Father James Mallon will speak on the *Divine Renovation* process.
- Lay Parish Leaders Formation & Training: Events planned in the spring for lay parish leaders, include a building skills workshop and a one-day retreat offered in four different locations around the archdiocese.
- Journeying Together Study Guide and Videos: These resources will help parish teams understand and reflect on the theological foundations of Beacons of Light.

More information about Beacons of Light, including frequently asked questions and downloadable resources are available at BeaconsAOC.org. A review of information from previous press releases regarding Beacons of Light:

Why is Beacons of Light happening?

- The status quo is no longer an option. At this point a comprehensive pastoral planning process is a necessity in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati to garner stability and position the diocese for growth.
- Our resources are largely consumed by efforts to maintain the status quo and are spread too thin to be truly effective. In particular, our priests are stretched to the limit, and we will have fewer priests who can serve as pastors over the coming years. The number of archdiocesan priests available for assignment is projected to decline by approximately 20% over the next five years.
- Religious practice has been declining in both the United States and in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. From 2010 to 2019, sacramental practice (including baptisms, first communions, confirmations and weddings) in the archdiocese declined by 23%.
- Our current infrastructure and schedules were built for a different era. In many cases, our church buildings are grossly underutilized. In the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, the average Sunday Mass is about one-third full.

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati is the 44th largest Catholic diocese in the country, with more than 450,000 Catholics, and has the fifth largest Catholic school system in terms of enrollment with more than 40,000 students. The 19-county territory includes 211 parishes and 111 Catholic primary and secondary schools.

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Pastoral Center



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