



BEACONS *of* LIGHT
**PASTORAL
PLANNING**
PATHWAY

Family Visioning Process Overview

Now that you have completed Visio Day, what are the next steps to create a formal vision statement, build consensus within your Family of Parishes leadership and communicate that vision to your Family?

There are many ways that this could be accomplished. The important thing to the Beacons of Light process is that your Family's vision is not dictated by your pastor alone but is developed with input and buy-in from your Family's staff and volunteer leadership. Collaboration will support broad adoption, foster co-responsibility and increase the impact of your vision statement on the direction and ecclesial culture of your Family of Parishes.

This document outlines *one recommended way* to create a vision statement for your Family of Parishes that is both focused and collaborative. This approach can be a guide or simply a starting point for your Family to customize an approach to visioning that works for you. As always, the Center for Parish Vitality is available to assist in any step of this process.

Remember: Whether you use this approach or another of your choosing, this should be a Holy Spirit-driven process! Frequently incorporate prayer throughout the process, and rely on divine inspiration more than perspiration to be your guide.

Overview

Our recommended approach to family visioning is a synodal approach that brings Family Leadership Team (FLT) to Visio Day and ends with initiation of an ongoing process of vision communication. Each of these steps is summarized in the chart and table below.



#	Session	Who	Effort/Duration	What	Outcome
0	Preparation	FLT, CPV Facilitator		Planning session	Schedule, Invites
1	Leadership Visioning	FLT, PPT, FPC, Most Staff, Commissions, CPV Facilitator	1 Day	“repeat” Visio Day process	Draft Vision Statement
2	Principle Vision Reviews	Same as above, split out by Principle, FLT or PPT member facilitator	2 hours each, may spread over weeks	Apply draft vision statement to Vision Points	Document impacts of Vision on each principle
3	Vision Convocation	Same as above	Up to 1 Day	Teams present back Confirm/revise Vision	Vision Statement List of Principle Impacts
4	Vision Confirmation	FLT revises if necessary FPC approval	Could be multiple sessions	FLT revises if necessary FPC approval	
5	Vision Communication	FLT/Pastor	Ongoing	Communicate and educate Parish	



Preparation

After Visio Day and before the leadership visioning session, the following planning and scheduling tasks need to be accomplished to prepare for conducting family visioning at your site:

1. Family Leadership Team (FLT) reviews the vision drawn up at Visio Day. Perhaps post that chart somewhere in the parish office(s).

2. Designate a coordinator to work with the Center for Parish Vitality (CPV) to schedule and prepare for your family visioning sessions. This coordinator may likely be your Pathway Lead.
3. Coordinator reaches out to the CPV (Vitality@catholicaoc.org) to designate a CPV facilitator for your Family Visioning Process. This could be your Beacons liaison or another member of CPV staff. The CPV facilitator will work with you to customize the approach and timing if necessary.
4. Coordinator and CPV facilitator review the meeting definitions below to define a list of attendees and room requirements for these meetings.
5. CPV facilitator shares additional materials, as well as prayer resources, to support these meetings.



Leadership Visioning

Leadership visioning will be much like Visio Day only executed on site at your Family of Parishes and with a broader group of Family Leadership attending.

- A. Participants:
 - a. Family Leadership Team that attended the Visio Day
 - b. Family Pastoral Council
 - c. Family Finance Council
 - d. Family Pathways Team
 - e. Representatives from Worship, Stewardship, Love In Action/Outreach, and Evangelization commissions. If you don't have commissions like these perhaps with a different name, select additional parishioners who could represent these principles.
- B. Like Visio Day, these participants will be separated into teams (but NOT by Beacons principle), that all meet at once. The meeting will likely take most of a day (i.e. 9am to 3pm)
- C. Materials: CPV will provide a Facilitator as well as scripts, slides, and videos to help run the session at your site.
- D. Follow the basic outline for Visio Day below.
 - a. Welcome and Prayer
 - b. Vision Stories (using video of Mercy Health from XU Vision Day)
 - c. What is Vision
 - d. Application and Deep Dive (starting with the vision picture from Visio Day)
 - e. Gathering Concepts

- f. Review Next Steps and Closing Prayer
- E. Outputs: vision concept statements as input to drafting.



Review and Drafting

Your Family Leadership Team will meet shortly after Family Leadership Visioning Day to review the proposed vision concepts gathered at Family Visioning Day.

FLT DRAFTING

Your Beacons liaison (or a member of the Center for Parish Vitality staff, if you don't have a liaison) can facilitate this process.

Before the meeting, share the proposed vision concepts with everyone on your drafting team. Ask them, as homework, to write out two or three draft Family vision statements.

We recommend doing the actual drafting meeting off-site, keeping each session to no more than four hours. This may require several sessions to brainstorm specific vision statements, but could be completed in one. We recommend starting with 15 minutes or more of prayer.

During the meeting, hang up your list of vision concepts and have everyone in the room propose vision statements they think capture the vision for your Family. Remember, this is a short, aspirational vision statement that describes a future state; the simpler the better. This is brainstorming, so do not criticize or even provide feedback on each proposal at this time.

Once all the proposed statements are on the board, have everyone place a Post-it Note next to the words or phrases that best match their discernment of your Family's vision. This will give everyone input and provide a visual indication of priority.

Pause for prayer again to call on the Holy Spirit for inspiration.

Now have the team review these phrases, discuss and come to a consensus around one to three vision statements. Your pastor should then discern which of these vision statements to present to your Family Pastoral Council (FPC). Optionally, your FLT and pastor can come to a consensus on one. The important distinction here is that your pastor, as the ultimate leader of your Family of Parishes, must believe in and own the final vision statement.

There are many ways to present a vision statement to the FPC. We recommend a presentation that starts with prayer and then follows a format described in the next section below.



Family Pastoral Council Confirmation

As part of a regular Family Pastoral Council (FPC) meeting or in a special session, review the proposed vision statement with the FPC. If part of a regular meeting, allow 70 minutes in order to follow a prayerful process.

Before the meeting, share the [Beacons guiding principles, vision points and parameters](#) with everyone. Ask them to read the principles, vision points and parameters before the meeting.

Here is a sample meeting agenda with estimated time allotments. [Use Family Visioning 2-FPC Confirmation Slides.pptx](#) for slides and notes on how to run the meeting.

- Prayer: Radiate Light prayer, with Lectio Divina on the words of the prayer (15 minutes)
- What is vision, and why is it important? (25 minutes)
- Recommended vision (5 minutes)
- Discuss and confirm the draft vision statement (15 minutes)
- Next steps for family visioning and closing prayer (20 minutes)



Principle Vision Review

The principle vision review is conducted by the FLT, the FPC, staff and lay leadership representatives for the six Beacons principles and one additional team for administration and communication. (Please be sure that ranges of ages, ethnic cultures and even ecclesial preferences are represented on the teams.) These teams use the draft Family vision statement to evaluate each principle and flesh out how that draft vision statement impacts what is done in each principle. The teams should document vision impacts and any questions or issues that need to go back to the overall team.

The following participants are involved in the principle vision review:

- Family Leadership Team (FLT) that attended the Visio Day

- Family Pastoral Council (FPC)
- Family Finance Council (FFC)
- Family Pathways Team
- Representatives from Church (worship), Stewardship, Love in Action (outreach), and Evangelization commissions. If you don't have commissions like these (perhaps they have different names, as noted in parentheses), select additional parishioners who could represent these principles. Be sure to include representation from your school(s) if applicable.

The participants will be separated into teams by Beacons principles, plus one additional team for administration and communication. A representative from the FLT should be on each of the teams.

Below is a suggested agenda for the meetings(s) with estimated time:

- Prayer (15 minutes)
- What is vision? (15 minutes)
- Principle vision review process overview (5 minutes)
- Vision impact review in team (45 minutes)
- Break (10 minutes)
- Report out by team (40 minutes)
- Group review of impacts (30 minutes)
- Review of next steps (5 minutes)
- Thank you and closing prayer (5 minutes)

For the meeting(s), use [Family Visioning 3-Principle Vision Review Slides.PPTX](#) and [Principle Vision Impact Form.docx](#). Both of these are available in the Phase 2 Leadership 1.2 [\[Link to Phase 2 Leadership 1.2 materials\]](#) materials. Capture input and team feedback using the Vision Principle Vision Impact Form. These will be input into the vision confirmation step.



Vision Confirmation

After the principle vision review, your pastor, FLT and perhaps FPC will meet. In this meeting, the FLT representative from each team presents the feedback gathered on each Vision Principle Impact Form. Your FLT (and FPC, if present) then discusses how the vision will potentially alter, over time, the day-to-day life, activities and

culture of your Family of Parishes. After prayer, you pastor and FLT (and FPC, if present) then confirm the vision statement and make plans for future communication.



Vision Communication

For a vision statement to truly affect the behavior and future success of your Family of Parishes, it must be continuously communicated and referenced. A communication strategy should include initial announcements and incorporation into all social media and future homilies, as well as reinforcing your vision in Family meetings). We recommend using the following five P's:

- **Publish**

Roll out your vision statement with a full explanation of how your vision statement was created, why your vision statement was chosen, how it will be used going forward and how you anticipate the vision will impact your Family's activities and ecclesial culture. Much of this language can come from the earlier steps in this process. This explanation should follow the Kotter five-minute rule, meaning that, in five minutes or less, someone should be able to explain your vision statement in a way that the listener understands and can accept it.

Add your vision statement to your website(s) (with explanation from above), bulletin(s), business cards, letterhead and any other Family communications.

- **Promote**

As part of the initial rollout of your vision statement, meet with and explain your vision statement to as many people in your Family of Parishes as possible. Start with all councils and commissions, all Family staff, ministry leaders and in-Family town hall meetings. All Family staff and leaders should eventually be able to explain and refer to your vision statement.

Incorporate your vision statement into future meetings. We recommend starting all meetings with not only prayer but also an open discussion of your vision statement or a core value for your Family of Parishes. This can be done simply by showing a slide of your vision statement and asking meeting participants the following questions:

- How are we living out this vision as a Family of Parishes?

- How are we not living out this vision, especially in the area of this particular group?

This is a proven method to reinforce a vision within any type of organization.

- **Preach**

The single best place your pastor, as the leader of your Family of Parishes, can communicate with parishioners is from the ambo in a homily. As part of rolling out your new vision statement, we recommend sharing your vision statement at all Masses and explaining its importance and impact on the future activities of your Family. But this cannot be done only once. The theme of your vision statement, if not the specific words, should be part of future homilies from that point on. When preaching duties are shared, this can be done by defining key themes from your vision statement that all preachers will incorporate into future preaching.

- **Persevere**

This process will take time, as it takes years to change hearts. Preach regularly from your vision statement. Refer to your vision statement in bulletin announcements, in meetings with staff and lay leaders and when announcing changes within your Family.

- **Patience**

Expect resistance! Change won't happen overnight.