

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## BEACONS OF LIGHT

### Pastoral Planning Pathway

### Family of Parishes Vision Assessment Tool

#### Introduction

A vision encapsulates inspiration and provides a rallying cry, a clear goal, for parish leadership and members. A clear vision helps prioritize allocation of parish resources, facilities, and funds. This tool is designed to help parish leaders prepare to create a vision for their Family of Parishes by assessing current and future state of parish life measured against the Pathway principle vision points. A separate visioning tool and process will build on this vision assessment as part of Phase 2 of the Pastoral Planning Pathway.



As individual parish communities join together into one a shared vision within the Family Leadership Team, Family Pastoral Council, and entire Family of Parishes is integral to building on the foundation of traditional maintenance efforts to becoming a mission-oriented parish, a community of people who live and share the Gospel. Similarly, single-parish Families can use this tool to assess and prepare for their continual movement “from maintenance to mission.”

#### Recommendations/Process

This tool works best if you have completed your parish inventories to clarify a comprehensive current state of each parish in the family. The inventories may quickly point out some gaps within parishes from current practice but comparing your current practice to the vision points will point out possible areas for strategic focus.

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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This tool could be completed by small groups that focus on specific principles such as having the Pastoral Council focus on Church, the Worship Commission focus on Eucharist, Stewardship Commission on Stewardship, etc. The pastor need not be part of these principle focused assessments but could have parish staff related to that function as well as members of the Pathway Planning Team participate. Use this worksheet completely as is, or adapt for your own use.

Once each principle is assessed, the Family Leadership Team can consolidate the vision assessments using the form on page 13 and review with the pastor and pastoral council.

This Vision Assessment Tool is to help the Family of Parishes plan for the future. *They are not for use by the Pastoral Center, nor should they be submitted to the Pastoral Center!* Optionally, you may want to include your Beacons Liaison as a resource.

## How to use the Vision Assessment Tool

Using teams as described above, for each Principle, review your parish inventories and summarize an assessment of each Vision Point as follows:

| Assessment Component   | Current Situation   | What Doing Well/Do More  | Replicate from Others  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <b>Definition</b>  | A summary of current practice for this vision point.  | Notes about how current practice meets or exceeds the vision point. Notes about practices that could be expanded or initiated to meet this vision point. | Practices that can be easily initiated by leveraging practice or personnel from other parishes in the family, deanery, or archdiocese.   |
| <b>Example</b><br><br><b>Adoration:</b> Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is readily available within the Family of Parishes with proper catechesis for all | Adoration is available in 3 of 4 parishes: 24/7 in one parish and for weekly Exposition in 2. | 24/7 is well received. Exposition is well attended at 1 parish, not the other.   | Parish without Exposition is far away from the other 3 and would benefit from at least weekly Exposition. Parish with 24/7 adoration has excellent resources and an adoration team. Leverage that adoration team to promote adoration in all parishes. |

This tool is available as a word document for download at this url: <https://pathway.catholicaoc.org/pathway-tools#vision>.

**REMEMBER: this visioning tool is for YOU!**

Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## Eucharist Principle

The Mass is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. Accordingly, the Eucharist is the essential moment for building up and strengthening the parish community, along with the sacraments and other celebrations of the paschal mystery — the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### *Vision Points:*

**Sunday Mass:** The Sunday Eucharist is the essential gathering of the parish community each week and is the “paradigm for other Eucharistic celebrations” (*Dies Domini*, 34); therefore life-giving, beautiful, and transformative celebration of Sunday Mass is critical.

**Christ’s Presence:** Sacramental celebrations and other parish and school liturgies are true encounters with Jesus Christ present in Word and Sacrament, in the ministry of the priest and in the gathered assembly. (*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, 7)

**Unity:** As the sacrament of unity (1 Cor 10:17), celebrations of the Eucharist within the Family are opportunities for members of the parishes to worship together. The cultural traditions of the members of the Family of Parishes are honored and celebrated, particularly on special feasts.

**Formation:** Every Family of Parishes offers liturgical and sacramental formation “with zeal and patience” (*CSL* 19), deepening an appreciation of the sacred mysteries.

**Ars Celebrandi:** Attention to the art of celebrating the liturgy is important: fidelity to texts and rubrics as well as a prayerful understanding of liturgical texts, feasts, and seasons kindles full, conscious, and active participation among the faithful. (*Sacramentum Caritatis* 38) Preaching and music are foremost among the liturgical arts and are well-prepared for liturgical celebrations.

**Trained Ministers:** Priests, deacons, and lay liturgical ministers are well-trained and formed for leadership of communities at prayer and are “imbued with the spirit of the liturgy.” (*CSL* 14)

**Sacred Space:** Churches, chapels, and other sacred buildings should be “truly worthy and beautiful, signs and symbols of heavenly realities”, the house of the Church and the house of God, “suitable for carrying out the sacred action and for ensuring the active participation of the faithful.” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal* 288)

**Adoration:** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is readily available within the Family of Parishes with proper catechesis for all.

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



*EUCHARIST*

| Vision Point             | Current Situation | What Doing Well/Do More | Replicate from Others |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Sunday Mass</b>       |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Christ's Presence</b> |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Unity</b>             |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Formation</b>         |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Ars Celebrandi</b>    |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Trained Ministers</b> |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Sacred Space</b>      |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Adoration</b>         |                   |                         |                       |

Parish Family: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## Church Principle

Each of us is called to actively participate as a member of a parish, the Universal Church and our local Church, led by our archbishop. Parishes continually deepen the bonds of communion with other parishes.

### *Vision Points:*

**Deaneries:** The Archdiocese is organized in canonical parishes, grouped into Families of Parishes, which are gathered into deaneries.

**Archdiocesan:** In communion with the pope, the bishop exercises leadership in the local Church.

**Subsidiarity:** Deaneries enhance regional subsidiarity; explore cooperative ministries between Families of Parishes.

**Culture & History:** As they become one Family, the culture and history of the parishes are acknowledged and honored and, where possible, preserved as we have moved from maintenance to unification in the mission of Christ. Efforts are made to blend cultural differences with compassion and compromise.

**Local & Universal:** People come to understand the nature of the parish as the people within a given territory and therefore grow in understanding themselves as members of Christ's Body, the Church.

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



*CHURCH*

| Vision Point                 | Current Situation | What Doing Well/Do More | Replicate from Others |
|------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Deaneries</b>             |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Archdiocesan</b>          |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Subsidiarity</b>          |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Culture &amp; History</b> |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Local &amp; Universal</b> |                   |                         |                       |

Parish Family: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## Leadership Principle

Pastors, in collaboration with parochial vicars, deacons and lay ministers, according to their proper roles and charisms, share responsibility for pastoral leadership. The spiritual, physical and mental health and ongoing support of ordained and lay leaders is vital for Families of Parishes.

### *Vision Points:*

**Pastor:** The Family of Parishes is led by a single pastor who is appointed by the archbishop. He is ultimately entrusted with the care of souls and therefore is responsible for the leadership of the parish.

**Unified:** The Family moves toward becoming one parish led by one pastor.

**Deacons:** Deacons are part of the diocesan clergy and are appointed by the archbishop to serve the Family of Parishes.

**Health & Wellbeing:** All members of the Family of Parishes support and foster the health and well-being of all leaders; in doing so, we ensure the well-being of the Church.

**Co-responsibility:** Pastors, staffs, and parishioners share responsibility for bringing all relevant perspectives to the process of discernment, according to their proper roles and gifts.

**Leadership:** Pastors actively cultivate skill in leadership and draw others into leadership with them.

**Formation:** Clergy participate in and are accountable for their spiritual and theological formation as well as leadership development. Clergy and laity are well-formed spiritually, theologically, and in leadership in support of their respective roles.

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## LEADERSHIP

| Vision Point                  | Current Situation | What Doing Well/Do More | Replicate from Others |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Pastor</b>                 |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Unified</b>                |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Deacons</b>                |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Health &amp; Wellbeing</b> |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Co-responsibility</b>      |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Leadership</b>             |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Formation</b>              |                   |                         |                       |

Parish Family: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## Stewardship Principle

Families of Parishes are communities of grateful disciples. Recognizing God's gifts, they use their talents, skills and resources to build up the Church and live as Christ's body in the world.

### *Vision Points:*

**Everyday Stewardship & Vocation:** The Family of Parishes forms people to hear and respond to God's call in their lives – from the individual moments of each day to their overall purpose of living out their vocation.

**Way of Life:** More than a program or once a year report to the parish, stewardship is fostered as a spiritual way of life and becomes an expression of discipleship.

**Gratitude & Giving:** Parishioners are formed as disciples who grow in gratitude and become willing to share their time, talents, faith, and resources within the parish and beyond it.

**Invitation & Engagement:** The Family actively invites and engages people of all ages and stages of life and faith to contribute in ministry, service, and giving.

**Hospitality & Welcome:** The Family of Parishes is a community that warmly welcomes newcomers and offers hospitality to everyone.

**Meaningful Involvement & Leadership:** The Family of Parishes seeks to meaningfully involve people as contributing members of the community; parishioners are encouraged to take leadership roles as appropriate and are offered formation to equip them as leaders.

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## STEWARDSHIP

| Vision Point                                   | Current Situation | What Doing Well/Do More | Replicate from Others |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Everyday Stewardship &amp; Vocation</b>     |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Way of Life</b>                             |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Gratitude &amp; Giving</b>                  |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Invitation &amp; Engagement</b>             |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Hospitality &amp; Welcome</b>               |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Meaningful Involvement &amp; Leadership</b> |                   |                         |                       |

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## Evangelization Principle

As centers of missionary outreach, Families of Parishes find new ways to foster discipleship among all the baptized. Schools, parishes, and indeed the domestic Church itself are centers of this essential work

### *Vision Points:*

**Missionary Discipleship:** Implement a simple and clear discipleship process for all ages that ultimately equips and commissions missionary disciples for personal apostolate and vocation.

**Grounded in Discernment:** The pastor, staff, and lay leaders prioritize prayer, formation, and discernment in order to allow the Holy Spirit to inspire their evangelization efforts.

**Family Partnership:** The family is the primary place of evangelization of young people and is well supported by the parish.

**Prioritize Adult Formation:** The principle form for evangelization and catechesis is directed toward adults and is given priority.

**Effective Schools:** Parish schools become an essential ministry of the parish by being an “effective vehicle of total Christian formation” for young people and their parents.

**A Culture of Vocation:** Prepare individuals to discern and embrace their vocation: cultivate within the family, actively discern as single young people, and accompany couples through the marriage catechumenate.

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## EVANGELIZATION

| Vision Point                      | Current Situation | What Doing Well/Do More | Replicate from Others |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Missionary Discipleship</b>    |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Grounded in Discernment</b>    |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Family Partnership</b>         |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Prioritize Adult Formation</b> |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Effective Schools</b>          |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>A Culture of Vocation</b>      |                   |                         |                       |

Parish Family: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



## Love In Action Principle

Families of Parishes will be communities of charity and justice, serving those most in need and working to change systems that oppress and marginalize.

### *Vision Points:*

**Human Dignity:** The Families of Parishes seek ways to recognize the human dignity of each person, who is created in the “image of God.” (Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*, nos. 12-32) This demands special attention to the poor and vulnerable, including the unborn and their parents; the stranger; persons who are elderly, sick, poor, imprisoned, and marginalized; persons with disabilities; and persons of all ethnicities and cultures. This also entails urgently protecting the integrity of Creation, which has its own intrinsic value and is humanity’s common home. (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, no. 139)

**Formation:** Families of Parishes educate and form parishioners, staff, and clergy – utilizing the rich history of Catholic Social Teaching and Scripture – on what it means to be a community of “salt and light” in today’s world. (Mt 5:13-16) The Families are nurtured through liturgy and formation to grow as a people who model mercy, grace, and forgiveness and who accompany the marginalized on their journeys toward empowerment.

**Belonging:** The Family of Parishes actively facilitate the inclusion, affirmation, and meaningful participation of all Catholics in the community of faith.

**Charity & Justice:** Families of Parishes exercise the ministries of charity and justice, which flow necessarily from our sacramental life and radiate as an indispensable expression of the Church’s very being. (Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, no. 25) Significant numbers of parishioners engage in activities of both direct service to the vulnerable and public advocacy to protect all human life and dignity from conception to natural death.

**Presence and Solidarity:** Families of Parishes inspire all community members to go beyond regular Mass-goers and their buildings to be the light of Christ and to encounter Christ in all, both locally and across the globe. Parishioners practice a firm and persevering determination to commit themselves to the common good, recognizing that “we are all really responsible for all.” (St. John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, no. 38)

# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool



*LOVE IN ACTION*

| Vision Point                   | Current Situation | What Doing Well/Do More | Replicate from Others |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Human Dignity</b>           |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Formation</b>               |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Belonging</b>               |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Charity &amp; Justice</b>   |                   |                         |                       |
| <b>Presence and Solidarity</b> |                   |                         |                       |

Parish Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Family of Parishes: Vision Assessment Tool

## Vision Assessment Summary

For each of the principles, summarize your notes from the previous pages.

| Vision Point   | Current Situation | What Doing Well/Do More | Replicate from Others |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Eucharist      |                   |                         |                       |
| Church         |                   |                         |                       |
| Leadership     |                   |                         |                       |
| Evangelization |                   |                         |                       |
| Stewardship    |                   |                         |                       |
| Love In Action |                   |                         |                       |

Parish Family: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_