

Talking Points for the Road to Renewal for Pastors/Administrators

When did the Road to Renewal begin?

The Road to Renewal began when Bishop Scharfenberger called a committee together to begin looking at how to help our Diocese move forward amidst present challenges, and respond to the COVID pandemic.

What are the objectives of the Renewal?

1. Strengthening our parishes for ministry. We must recognize that the People of God are the Church and that our parishes are the place where the people encounter Jesus.
2. Foster an encounter with Jesus in the sacraments! Every family of parishes needs to be a center of prayer, spiritual nourishment and a safe place to encounter Jesus.
3. Respond in love to the brokenness of the world, caring for the poor, vulnerable and wounded.
4. Develop a model of continuing formation of clergy and laity to help the church respond to the signs of the times.
5. Demonstrate fiscal responsibility of the gifts that have been entrusted to us as parishes and as a Diocese, making sure we are prudent stewards.

What is a Family of Parishes?

A family of parishes will be a grouping of parishes that come together to form a family. Each family will contain 3 – 6 parishes that will make up their family.

What are the advantages of the Diocese moving into the Family of Parishes model?

1. We recognize that each parish has gifts and talents that can benefit other parishes. This model allows parishes to bring their best to the family, so all parishes in the family can benefit.
2. Collaboration between parishes is important for a strong future. This model allows for a collaborative approach between parishes and ministries. Parishes can work together towards a common goal.
3. Priestly ministry becomes shared within the family. With the declining number of priests available, this model has parishes collaborate by sharing mass schedules and sacramental life. This means priests can focus their attention on sacramental ministry, working more closely with their brothers within the family of parishes.
4. Better utilization of financial resources. With parishes working together in a family, shared staff and resources will contribute to financial stability and savings.

Will parishes close?

The goal of families of parishes is to strengthen parishes! There is no plan to close parishes.

Will all of our money be taken by the 'family'?

Each parish will maintain its own identity. Therefore, each parish will still have its own name, trustees, finance council, etc. so that it can function. The assets and liabilities of a parish are the responsibility of that parish. There will not be a pooling of assets or liabilities within a family.

