



“The parish is a beacon that radiates the light of the faith and thus responds to the deepest and truest desires of the human heart, giving meaning and hope to the lives of individuals and families.”

— Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, December 10, 2006

RADIATE CHRIST

“Radiate Christ. These two words summarize God the Father’s hope for humanity on this earth. The words contain both a reality and a mission: the reality of the person of Jesus Christ as the Savior of all people and the mission of each Christian to participate in the Son’s redemption of the world.”

— Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr

Becoming People Who Radiate Christ

We are people on a journey of faith in relationship with Jesus, called to grow as disciples who are ready to be part of Christ’s mission in the world. We are formed as missionary disciples in many ways, especially through the Eucharist, sacraments, and in the life of our parish communities. If each of us is called to radiate Christ, we must be rooted in a strong, vital parish that forms us as disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ at every stage of life and faith.

Announcing **BEACONS of LIGHT**

Beacons of Light is a pastoral planning process through which the parishes of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati will come together in new ways, forming communities of faith that are united as members of Christ’s Body, the Church. The beacon shines in the midst of darkness and points the way toward a bright future filled with hope. Over the next few years, Beacons of Light will result in stronger parishes that will form us to live and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ in our homes, workplaces and schools, local towns and cities and in the world.

“The whole People of God must urgently embrace the Holy Spirit’s invitation to begin the process of ‘renewing’ the face of the Church.”

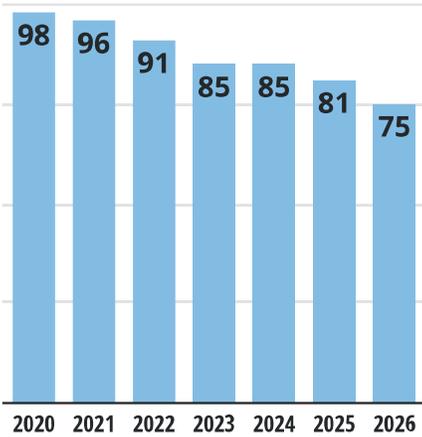
— The pastoral conversion of the parish, 10

Through Beacons of Light, parish groupings will be identified and parish leaders will come together to discern the shape of parish life for their grouping. People will be invited to share their hopes and dreams for the future as their parishes are drawn together as a community of faith.

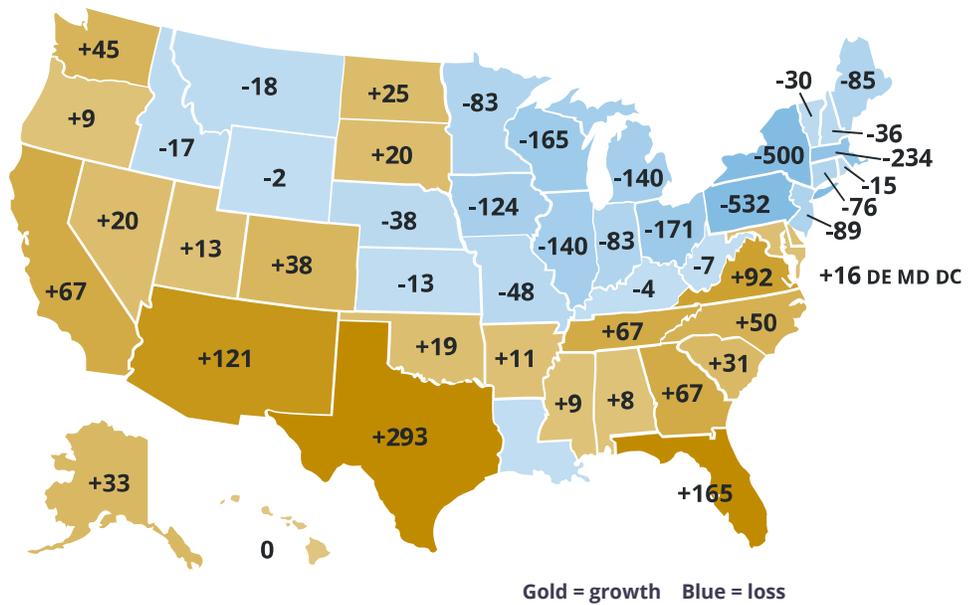
Our Call: Form Parishes as **BEACONS of LIGHT**

People on a journey of missionary discipleship. Priests who have the time to be present, attend to the needs of their people, and lead their parish to fulfill Christ’s great commission. Parishes that are alive in faith, filled with vitality, ready to form people to radiate Christ at home, in their neighborhoods and workplace, towns and cities, and in the world. Pastoral life of this depth requires strategic, pastoral planning for a bright future for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

DIOCESAN PRIESTS AVAILABLE FOR ASSIGNMENT AS PASTORS



NET CHANGE IN CATHOLIC PARISHES BY STATE, 1971 TO 2018



ACTIVE DIOCESAN PRIESTS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

25 of our 149 priests are 70 or older

9 of the 149 priests are 75 or older

19 of our 102 pastors are 70 or older

7 of our 102 pastors are 75 or older

3 ordinations in 2020

8 retirements in 2020

52 possible retirements in 2021-2025

*7 religious order priests serve as pastors in 2020

Why now?

Many factors lead us to recognize an urgent need to organize parish life more effectively for our future. We face the decline of religious practice in the United States and changing demographics in the Midwest. And, while we are blessed with and increased number of men who have been ordained to the priesthood in the past few years or who are currently in seminary formation, we have even more still serving as pastors who are at or beyond retirement age or who will be eligible to retire in the next few years. We must address this situation through thoughtful strategic and pastoral planning in order to form vital parishes that lead us all to embrace Christ and the call to missionary discipleship.¹

BEACONS of LIGHT: From Surviving to Thriving

Beacons of Light will be a unique experience of pastoral planning for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. There are two essential elements of the process, which will take place simultaneously and will lead us to move from maintenance to mission, from surviving to thriving. **Strategic Planning:** involves data gathering, analysis, and the identification of the best possible parish groupings throughout the Archdiocese. **Pastoral Planning:** includes meetings and processes through which parish leaders will discern the shape of parish life for their grouping and create a pastoral plan for the future.

What's Next? Prayer and Planning

We invite you to join us in prayer as we enter into this new phase of pastoral planning. Monthly prayer and reflection resources, as well as updates on the process, will be available at www.catholicaoc.org/beacons.



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

¹ Map: CARA, <https://nineteensixty-four.blogspot.com/2019/02/where-parish-doors-have-closed-and.html>