

Christi simus, non nostri

We belong to Christ, not ourselves

ST COLUMBAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

A Parish of the
Archdiocese of Seattle



September 24, 2023

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

St. Columban Church

506 First St. S | Yelm, WA 98597

Sunday Mass: 10:30 AM

Saturday 5:00 PM

Daily Mass 9:00 AM (*Tuesday-Friday, Except First Fridays*)

Eucharistic Adoration First Fridays 6:30 PM

Confessions Saturday 3:30-4:30 PM

Anointing of the Sick By request

Baptism & Wedding Preparation

Contact the Parish Office

Parish Office Hours at St. Columban Mon.-Thurs. 9:30 AM - 2:00 PM Friday by appointment

St. Peter Mission

149 Keithahn St S | Tenino, WA 98589

Sunday Mass 8:00 AM

First Friday Mass 9:00 AM

Confessions Sunday 7:30-7:45 AM

Anointing of the Sick By request

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Providing emergency assistance for those in need.

Help Line: 360-458-1904

Entrance Antiphon: *I am the salvation of the people says the Lord. Should they cry to me in any distress, I will hear them and I will be their Lord for ever.*

1st Reading: Isaiah 55:6-9

Responsorial Psalm: *The Lord is near to all who call upon him.*

2nd Reading: Philippians 1:20c-24, 27a

Gospel Acclamation: *Open our hearts O Lord, to listen to the words of your Son.*

Gospel: Matthew 20: 1-16a

Communion Antiphon: *I am the Good Shepherd says the Lord; I know my sheep and mine know me.*

www.saintcolumbanyelm.org

360-458-3031

parishoffice@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Welcome to St. Columban

Weekly Calendar & Mass Intentions

All events are at St. Columban unless otherwise noted.

MONDAY September 25

Rosary Prayer Group 7:00PM Church

TUESDAY September 26 Sts. Cosman & Damian

Daily Mass 9:00AM Church

Daughters of Mary Meeting 6:00PM Parish Hall

Spanish Prayer Group 6:30PM Church

WEDNESDAY September 27 St. Vincent de Paul

Daily Mass 9:00AM Church

Bible Study 10:00AM St. Peter

THURSDAY September 28 St. Wenceslaus Sts. Lawrence Ruiz, & Comp

Daily Mass 9:00AM Church

Choir Practice 6:00PM Church

Bible Study 6:30PM Religious Ed Bldg.

FRIDAY September 29 The Archangels

Daily Mass 9:00AM Church

SATURDAY September 30 St. Jerome

Confession 3:30PM Church

Anticipatory Sunday Mass 5:00 PM Int.: Pro Populo

Knights of Columbus Oktoberfest 6:00PM Hall

SUNDAY October 1 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Confession 7:30-7:45AM St. Peter

Sunday Mass 8:00 AM Int.: Pro Populo St. Peter

Religious Ed (Grades K-5) 9:00AM-10:15AM RE Bldg

Confirmation Classes 9:00AM-15:15AM Youth Space

Sunday Mass

10:30 AM Int.: Pro Populo Church

11:45AM Listening Session 2 for Partners in the Gospel in the Large Hall.



**Join a Partners in the Gospel
Input Session**

SHARE YOUR
THOUGHTS

WE'RE
LISTENING

On the Cover: Andrey Nikolaevich Mironov *Parable about the vineyard*. 2011. Oil on canvas. (CC BY-SA 4.0) Wikimedia commons. andreimirov@yandex.ru

We proclaim the Roman Catholic faith to the communities of McKenna, Nisqually, Rainier, Roy, Tenino, and Yelm in southeast Thurston and southwest Pierce counties.

Our community has grown since its origins at the former St. Margaret Mary Church in McKenna, and our current church in Yelm is named for the Irish-born 6th century missionary to Europe St. Columbanus of Bobbio. We have also been present in Tenino since 1891 through St. Peter Mission, named for the apostle and first pope.



Happening Today

Listening session for Partners in the Gospel, after Mass in the Large Hall this Sunday and next Sunday. *More information on page 7 and at archseattle.org/partners/*

Walk for the Poor. Our parish conference of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul is hosting their annual *Walk for the Poor* following breakfast and the 10:30am Mass **today Sunday, September 24**. Children and youth participating must be supervised by parents. This is a fundraiser meant to raise awareness of the needs of the poor in our community and the help given by our conference members.

Happening this Saturday

Oktoberfest Bring the whole family on September 30 after the 5:00 pm Mass for German food and brews. There will be an auction and live music. Tickets are on sale after the Sunday Masses at St. Columban.



New Parishioners

Are you registered? Registration ensures that we know you are here, makes us aware of your needs and gifts, but

Announcements continue on page 4.

Connect with us

WEBSITE

saintcolumbanyelm.org

LIVESTREAM

youtube.com/@stcolumbanyelm

ONLINE GIVING

pushpay.com/g/saintcolumbanyelm

Parish Staff

Fr. Brian Thompson *Priest Administrator*
frthompson@saintcolumbanyelm.org x6

Jennifer Langham
PA for Admin, Liturgy, & Music
jennifer@saintcolumbanyelm.org x1

Matthew Tolar
PA for Admin, Bookkeeping & Records
matthew@saintcolumbanyelm.org x4

360-458-3031

Gabriela Makinster *habla Español*
Elementary & Adult Faith Formation,
gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org x2

Chad Lucero *Youth Ministry & Confirmation*
chad@saintcolumbanyelm.org x3

Steven Slater *St. Columban Maintenance*
steve@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Gilberto Espino *St. Peter Maintenance*

A Word from Father Thompson

On occasion, I receive questions from parishioners about why I do some of the things I do, especially at Mass. So, I thought I might explain a few practices and stylistic choices which I have not already explained in prior bulletin articles. Of course, I can't cover everything (indeed I probably won't think of everything you are curious about), but I will try to hit the most common ones based on questions I have received in the past. You may have noticed I have a strong personal interest in liturgy and sacraments, and really enjoy talking about them. Please never hesitate to ask me questions, even if the question is confusion about why I do certain things, I love giving answers and clarifying misconceptions (be warned, however, I can sometimes get quite excited and respond at length).



I know, as for most of you your primary experience with me is assisting at the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, wherein I tend to carry a certain persona that is quite unlike my actual personality were you to speak with me elsewhere (or even greet me before or after Mass). So why the, for lack of a better word, stiff persona?

The reason is to emphasize the dignity and power of the mysteries we are celebrating, that they are beyond ourselves, and—in a way—to deemphasize myself. I do not mean this in the sense of making myself unremarkable, as obviously you can't help but pay attention to the priest at Mass and I know my approach is perhaps not what you have been accustomed to with other priests you may have known. What I mean by deemphasize myself, is to deemphasize my own personality in the rituals of the Mass. The Mass is a sacrificial encounter with the Living God, not me or any priest as a person. This is why, for example, I lower my eyes when turning to address the congregation or when distributing Holy Communion: to avoid catching your eye so that you can keep your eyes on Christ (you might notice, though, that when I am speaking to God with or on behalf of the congregation, I turn my body and raise my eyes to the Cross with you; historically, virtually the whole Mass was celebrated with the priest facing the cross with the congregation—those who describe it as the priest having his back to you speak from theological and historical ignorance). Yes, this self-deemphasis is at the cost of perhaps seeming a bit stern or impersonal from a certain point of view, but that impersonality is kind of the point. Within the ritual moments of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, it should not matter whether it is me or any other priest celebrating the liturgy; I am serving a function that is larger than myself. The liturgical persona is just that: a *persona*, a mask, a part in a mystical drama, and it is quite intentional. It is the behavioral equivalent of wearing vestments.

However, I am not unaware that for those who don't understand or share my approach to our common prayer, I might indeed seem intimidating at Mass. This is the reason, and because I am in fact happy to see you all, that I make such an effort to be present before and after Mass to greet you as you come and go. That time, and perhaps in my homilies (and any asides, announcements, or commentary I might add between ritual moments), are perhaps more obviously the "real me."

In Christ,

Father Thompson



Loving God, we join with others of your people here asking you to hold in Your hands all of our homebound brothers and sisters and those who have asked for our prayers

FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND*

Jessica Nash, Mary Taylor, Vivienne Hayden, Eitan Hadayo, Stan Villadelgado, Pam Henslee, Robert Fisher, Tom & Kate Randal

FOR THE DECEASED

Teresita Aguon,
& All the souls in purgatory,
especially those who have no one to pray for them

FOR OUR EXTRAORDINARY INTENTIONS

All those in harm's way, especially those experiencing natural disasters and terrorism.

PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE POPE FOR SEPTEMBER

For people living on the margins: We pray for those persons living on the margins of society, in inhumane life conditions; may they not be overlooked by institutions and never considered of lesser importance.

PRAYER INTENTIONS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE FOR SEPTEMBER

For our local Church as we prepare to implement Partners in the Gospel, that we may listen to one another with openness and respect as we share our feedback on new parish family structures.

For the Church throughout the world, that the Holy Spirit may accompany and guide the Synod process as we seek to journey together more effectively.

The church may be open for prayer during office hours upon request

*To add a name to this list or request a Mass Intention please contact the parish office. All submissions must have permission from the named individual or an authorized family member for privacy purposes. St. Columban Prayer Chain: Confidential and private prayer chain. To join, contact the parish office.

Prayer to St. Michael the Archangel

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle. Be our defense against the wickedness and snares of the Devil. May God rebuke him, we humbly pray, and do thou, O Prince of the heavenly hosts, by the power of God, thrust into hell Satan, and all the evil spirits, who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

O glorious prince St. Michael, chief and commander of the heavenly hosts, guardian of souls, vanquisher of rebel spirits, servant in the house of the Divine King and our admirable conductor, you who shine with excellence and superhuman virtue deliver us from all evil, who turn to you with confidence and enable us by your gracious protection to serve God more and more faithfully every day.

Ministries & Events

Whether you are new to the parish or have been here for many years, we encourage you to share your time, talents and treasures in support of the mission of our parish community. Contact Jennifer Langham at the Parish Office for more information about events and to connect with a group: 360-458-3031x1 / jennifer@saintcolumbanyelm.org



Parish Ministries & Councils

Altar Society meets every Thursday after Daily Mass to clean the church.



Daughters of Mary

All women of the Parish are invited.
daughtersofmary@saintcolumbanyelm.org



Knights of Columbus

Council 17152 / Assembly 3947
kofc@saintcolumbanyelm.org



Liturgical Ministries

parishoffice@saintcolumbanyelm.org



Prayer Groups

Rosary Group Mondays 7pm, Church
Spanish Group Tuesdays 6:30pm, Church



Society of St. Vincent de Paul

svdp@saintcolumbanyelm.org

St. Peter's Circle meets at *St. Peter Mission Tenino*



St. Columban Parish Pastoral Council

Judith Cusick (Chairperson), Sheila Johnson, Jerome Didier, Joseph Judge, Dennis Stumpf

St. Peter Advisory Commission

Sherry Bachmann (Chairperson), Marilyn Ritter, Bernie Schwarz, Bob Bacon, Diane Weston
stpeteradvisory@saintcolumbanyelm.org

St. Columban Parish Finance Council

Joseph Judge (St Columban), Mari Evans (St Peter)

Continued from Page 2.

most of all it helps us to welcome you to the parish! Stop by and introduce yourselves! The Parish Office is open Monday through Thursday, 9:30am to 2:00pm or call us for an appointment on Fridays. You may also register online at saintcolumbanyelm.org/register.

Homeschool Enrichment has resumed for the school year. If you are interested in participating, please contact Fr. Thompson.

Announcement Reminders

Counters Needed Contact the parish office for more information.

Emails from the Parish. We are in the process of moving to a new Church Management software. One of the first things you may see are messages from a new email address: archseattle@ccbchurch.com. As always emails directly from our staff will always be from our domain saintcolumbanyelm.org and messages from ministries for the time being will come from mail@flocknote.com.

This process is also causing a delay with the mailing of the monthly offering envelopes, we apologize for the inconvenience.

Parish Ministries Announcements

Daughters of Mary Next Meeting is Tuesday September 26th at 6PM in the Parish Hall. Bring your favorite snack to share!

Knights of Columbus Next Assembly Meeting this Tuesday, Oct. 17, 6PM, Next Council Meeting Wednesday, Oct. 18, 5:30PM

Outside Events & Notices

Worldwide Marriage Encounter "Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last." We are called to give 100% in our marriage. Learn how to be the best spouse you can be by participating in a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Experience on: Oct 13-15, 2023 at Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center at the Palisades, Federal Way, WA, or Oct 6-8 Immaculate Heart Retreat Center, Spokane, WA or Nov 15-17 at Holy Rosary Parish, Edmonds, WA. Early registration highly recommended. Visit www.me.org or contact: Jeff and Sandy Corneil 360-930-2321

Project Rachel—Hope and Healing After Abortion English: (206) 920-6413 / Español: (206)-450-7814 projectrachel@ccsww.org If you are suffering from the experience of an abortion, you do not need to walk alone. We offer a compassionate and confidential environment for those who suffer the effects of an abortion. Find hope and healing after abortion at Rachel's Vineyard Retreat: English retreats -September 15-17, 2023, March 8-10, 2024 / Spanish retreats - October 27-29, 2023

What's the latest with the Synod? Learn more about the upcoming Synod in this question-and-answer format or go to the Archdiocese of Seattle's Synod website, archseattle.org/synod.

Financial Stewardship Report

Week of September 10th

Ordinary Income	St Columban	St Peter
Weekly Goal	\$5,800.00	\$1,000.00
Collection (Cash & Envelopes)	\$1,430.00	\$386.00
Online Giving	\$1,373.00	\$15.00
Net	(\$2,997.00)	(\$599.00)
Special Funds	\$0.00	\$0.00
St Vincent DePaul	\$145.00	\$0.00
Sacramentals (Candles, Beeswax tapers, Salt)	\$308.00	\$0.00
Flowers	\$115.00	\$51.00
Building Fund	\$107.00	\$0.00
Mass Intentions	\$0.00	\$0.00
2 nd Collection (name)	\$0.00	\$0.00

Faith Formation

Elementary Religious Education



Prayer sheets have been inserted into the folders. Count totals will begin in October. Please continue to ensure that you check your child's folder, ask questions and complete any unfinished class work with them.



FYI on October 15 there will be no Faith Formation classes.

Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA)/Adult Faith Formation

RCIA will meet this Tuesday Sept 26 from 6:30-8pm in the Religious Education building. Class will consist of discussing the Mass and the Liturgical Calendar. Begin to Develop an understanding of the Mass, know how to follow along in the Missal and know when to stand, kneel or sit.

Confirmation

Both first year and returning second year confirmation candidates meet at 9-10:15am in the new Youth Space on Sundays. Today we watched Episode 2 of The Search: To find clues as to the meaning of life, we first look at ourselves. Who am I? Is there more to me than matter? Is there more to us than meets the eye? If you're just a body, then satisfaction in life should come from tending to simple bodily needs. Fill your stomach, be comfortable. But there's more to you than that. You are material and immaterial. And that unseen part of you craves for so much more. As C. S. Lewis once said, "If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world." Catch it at <https://watch.formed.org/videos/thesearch-ep2>



Youth Ministry

For all students grades 6-12. Activities, retreats, bible Studies, and social event times vary throughout the year. Additional fees may be required for activities held outside the parish.

Upcoming events:

First weekly Youth Ministry Wednesday meeting: September 27, 6:30pm

First monthly Youth Ministry Service Saturday: September 30, 10am-3pm, at the Society of St. Vincent de Paul Wood Barn

HS Youth Convention at St. Michael, Olympia: Nov. 4

Parents of middle school and high school students! Opt-in for Youth Ministry emails at this link: saintcolumbanyelm.org/ym

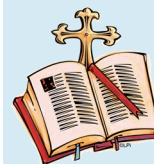


Mrs. Makinster

*Elementary & Adult
Faith Formation,
gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org
360-458-3031 x2 habla Español*

Mr. Lucero

*Youth Ministry & Confirmation
chad@saintcolumbanyelm.org
360-458-3031 x2 x3*



Reflect and Respond to the Sunday Readings

First Reading: *Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.* (Sir 28:2)

Sirach teaches that the Lord desires us to be forgiving and merciful to each other. In doing so, the Lord will show us mercy and forgiveness in return. To whom could you show mercy and forgiveness this week?

Second Reading: *None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.* (Rom 14:7-8)

Paul instructed the Romans that Jesus was the Lord of all — both the living and the dead. How should this reality impact our daily living?

Gospel: *"Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times." (Mt 18:21-22)*

Jesus tells the parable of the unforgiving servant to teach the disciples the importance of compassion and forgiveness, especially toward those who sin against you. How do you deal with friends or co-workers who have wronged you?

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD. Reflections ©LPI



JOIN US FOR...

REVIVAL

AVIVAMIENTO SỰ HỒI SINH 리바이벌

Saturday, November 4
10am – 8pm
St. Michael Church, Olympia

CATHOLIC YOUTH CONVENTION 2023

Saints of the Week

Ora pro nobis!

Pray for us!

STS. COSMAS AND DAMIAN
September 26

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
September 27



St. Vincent de Paul is much more than a patron saint of thrift shops! Young Vincent became a priest hoping to advance and rise above his modest upbringing. His early ambition amounted to little when he

was assigned to a poor rural parish. Here he experienced a new joy in his vocation. Hearing the profound deathbed confession of a dying servant, Vincent became more convinced of the special attention that must be given to the poor. In 1625, Vincent founded the Congregation of the Mission for the purpose of caring for the poor. Originally priests only, the mission expanded to include groups of laity who provided for spiritual and material needs of the poor in each parish. Nearly 400 hundred years later, his legacy lives on!

**ST. LAWRENCE
RUIZ &
COMPANIONS,
MARTYRS**
September 28



**STS. MICHAEL, GABRIEL, AND
RAPHAEL, ARCHANGELS**

September 29

**ST. JEROME, PRIEST AND DOCTOR
OF THE CHURCH**

September 30

This week on FORMED

Our parish pays for a subscription to FORMED.org, a streaming service from the Augustine Institute and Ignatius press. Go to formed.org/signup and enter our parish name to redeem your FREE membership. Once logged-in, access these suggestions at watch.formed.org/this-week-on-formed

Who Are the Angels?

Dr. Ben Akers sits down with Dr. Mark Miravalle, Saint John Paul II Chair of Mariology at Franciscan University of Steubenville, to discuss the angels. What is an angel? What are the choirs of angels? How do we engage with our guardian angels?

St. Jerome | Catholic Saints

An early Church Father from the 4th century, St. Jerome translated the Bible into Latin with the desire to make Scripture more accessible. St. Jerome is the patron of biblical scholars, translators, and archivists and famously said, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ."

Who Are the Archangels?

Dr. Ben Akers and Dr. Elizabeth Klein discuss archangels and what role they have in our lives.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church

THE ANGELS

The existence of angels - a truth of faith

328 The existence of the spiritual, non-corporeal beings that Sacred Scripture usually calls "angels" is a truth of faith. The witness of Scripture is as clear as the unanimity of Tradition.

Who are they?

329 St. Augustine says: "'Angel' is the name of their office, not of their nature. If you seek the name of their nature, it is 'spirit'; if you seek the name of their office, it is 'angel': from what they are, 'spirit', from what they do, 'angel.'" With their whole beings the angels are servants and messengers of God. Because they "always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" they are the "mighty ones who do his word, hearkening to the voice of his word".

330 As purely spiritual creatures angels have intelligence and will: they are personal and immortal creatures, surpassing in perfection all visible creatures, as the splendor of their glory bears witness.

Christ "with all his angels"

331 Christ is the center of the angelic world. They are his angels: "When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him. . ." They belong to him because they were created through and for him: "for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities - all things were created through him and for him." They belong to him still more because he has made them messengers of his saving plan: "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to serve, for the sake of those who are to obtain salvation?"



332 Angels have been present since creation and throughout the history of salvation, announcing this salvation from afar or near and serving the accomplishment of the divine plan: they closed the earthly paradise; protected Lot; saved Hagar and her child; stayed Abraham's hand; communicated the law by their ministry; led the People of God; announced births and callings; and assisted the prophets, just to cite a few examples. Finally, the angel Gabriel announced the birth of the Precursor and that of Jesus himself.

25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME





PARTNERS
IN THE GOSPEL

UPDATE

An update for parishes and parishioners on Partners in the Gospel

This summer was busy as the consultation process progressed across the Archdiocese of Seattle.

After priests provided their input, the Oversight Committee and Presbyteral Council made adjustments to the Parish Family configurations, and a new draft was created. This draft has been going through consultation with:

- Deacons
- Principals
- Archdiocesan staff
- Parish and school staffs

Now it's time to hear from YOU

On Sept. 23, 2023, the three-week public input phase begins. Each parish will host its own parishioner listening and input sessions to collect feedback and insights about the proposed parish families. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend one of these parish sessions. The public input phase ends on Oct. 14, 2023.

How to prepare

We can prepare by first praying and asking the Holy Spirit for guidance. For these input sessions, we will use synodal listening, which means the effort is grounded in prayer with a sincere desire to listen to the Holy Spirit.



Rosa Luna from St. Pius X in Mountlake Terrace shares her perspective about Partners in the Gospel.

Scan QR code to watch



"Partners in the Gospel is our response to the realities we face. It is a significant process of restructuring to maximize our existing pastoral leadership and provide a sustainable structure for the future."

Archbishop Etienne

Partners in the Gospel Pastoral Letter

Sign up to read the online
Partners in the Gospel UPDATE
newsletter at
archseattle.org/partners

Questions of the Week - Reflect and Respond to the Sunday Readings:

For September 24, 2023
Twenty-fifth Sunday
in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Is 55:6-9

*For my thoughts are not your
thoughts, nor are your ways my
ways, says the LORD. (Is 55:8)*

- Isaiah urged his fellow Israelites who were in exile to seek the Lord who is near, merciful, and forgiving. When have you sought the Lord's presence in dark periods of your life?

Second Reading: Phil 1:20c-24, 27a

*Christ will be magnified in my body,
whether by life or by death. For to
me life is Christ, and death is
gain. (Phil 1:20-21)*

- Paul writes the letter to the Philippians from prison, facing a spiritual dilemma of feeling "caught between" life and death. Have you ever helped someone going through a spiritual problem?

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16a

*"What if I wish to give this last one
the same as you?"*

*Or am I not free to do as I wish with
my own money?*

*Are you envious because I am
generous?" (Mt 20:14-15)*

- The parable of the workers in the vineyard speaks to God's generosity. In what ways do you think God has been generous to you and your family?

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass
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Q&A (updated July 2023)
provided by the Archdiocese of Seattle

Q: What is Partners in the Gospel?

A: Partners in Gospel is a strategic pastoral planning effort taking place across the Archdiocese of Seattle to re-invigorate and renew our local Catholic Church.

Q: Why the focus on strategic pastoral planning?

A: The mission of the Catholic Church – which is to encounter Jesus, accompany others and live the joy of the Gospel – is at the heart of strategic pastoral planning. To achieve our mission, we must re-invigorate our parish communities, which includes adapting to the needs of the faithful and to our current reality. As part of strategic pastoral planning, we continually examine our resources and how we can best use them to support vibrant, sustainable, mission-focused parish communities across the entire Archdiocese of Seattle.

Q: Why now?

A: Today we face many realities that are impacting parish life and making it difficult to fully live out our mission. We face an urgent — yet exciting — opportunity to transform parish life. Over the past few decades our local Catholic Church has experienced a decrease of engaged parishioners, fewer priests, dwindling finances, deteriorating campus conditions and more. Here are just a few statistics:

- Today the archdiocese has 80 diocesan pastors for 174 locations; by 2036, we estimate we will only have 66 diocesan pastors, an 18% decrease. (We also have fewer seminarians and fewer lay ministry leaders.)
- While the overall population the Archdiocese of Seattle is growing, registered households are declining, along with Mass attendance, baptisms, first communions, marriages in the Church and parish giving:
 - o From 2010 to 2019, Mass attendance declined 11%.
 - o Between 2010 and 2019, baptisms declined 32% and weddings declined nearly 19%.
- Currently, 67% of parishes operate with a financial deficit (excluding extraordinary income, which is income from sources such as leasing properties and endowments).

Q: What will be the outcome with Partners in the Gospel?

A: There is no predetermined outcome for this strategic pastoral planning effort. Together we will pray to the Holy Spirit to guide our efforts so that we can support our mission to encounter Jesus, accompany others and live the joy of the Gospel.

What we do know is that Partners in the Gospel will bring most parishes together into a new family structure with two or more other parishes. This parish family will be under the leadership of one pastor and have

about three years to join together to become one canonical parish. The pastor, parish leaders and parishioners will determine how this new family will best join together to carry out the mission of the Church as one parish.

Q: Can you define what you mean by “parish” and “parish family”?

A: A parish is defined as a certain community of the faithful stably constituted within the archdiocese, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a priest as its proper pastor under the authority of the Archbishop of Seattle. (c. 515§1)

Note that the term parish refers to the community of people and not the sacred building designated for divine worship — the church (with a lowercase “c”).

A parish family is a group of two or more neighboring parishes under the leadership of one pastor and one or more parochial vicars. Over time, the parish family will determine its own consultative leadership team(s) and how they may share resources such as staff, ministries and outreach.

Q: Will all parishes be in families?

A: The majority of parishes will be placed in a family. However, there will be some parishes, due to size, geographic location, unique cultural communities or other factors, that will not join a family. These parishes will still be part of the Partners of the Gospel renewal effort to plan for how to best carry out the mission of the Church.

Q: What are the benefits of this approach?

A: This highly consultative approach gives parishioners the ability to provide input and take an active role in building and renewing their local Church. The process allows communities time to truly journey together and accompany one another in a synodal manner, while forming one new vibrant parish community. It is intended to give priests more time for pastoral care — while also ensuring no parish community is left out. The new parish family will benefit from the shared gifts, talents, finances, resources and more from each of the joining parishes. This consolidation means that the new parish family may have more resources to carry out the mission, which could include benefits like a larger active youth group and fuller Masses in one location — and a larger outreach ministry at another location. It really comes down to the creativity and engagement of the parishioners and parish leaders to determine how the family will

collaborate to carry out the mission. Please know that the Archdiocese is committing significant resources to support parishes throughout this journey.

Q: Does this mean churches/parishes are closing?

A: Yes and no. First, it is important to note the parish is not the church building. The parish is the community of the faithful and all that comes with it.

- The parish — community of faithful — will not be closing, but instead will join together to form one new community of faith.
- It is likely that some Church buildings will close or be repurposed as part of this process.

Further explanation:

A parish family is comprised of different parish communities that will eventually become one canonical parish. Decisions will be made at the local level to reflect the needs of each parish community. The parish leadership, with input from parishioners and guidance from the Holy Spirit through a synodal process, will make decisions about how to best carry out the mission locally. This means that the new parish will determine many things, such as what ministries to provide, what outreach to the community is possible, what Mass times to offer and what and how properties and buildings will be used.

Q: Is this simply expanded clustering?

A: No. This is not expanded clustering.

Further explanation:

To enable and support parishes in this renewal effort, Partners in the Gospel uses a fundamentally different approach to the historical clustering model.

The parish family is a temporary step on the way to becoming one parish. A comprehensive parish support plan is in development as part of this process. This support plan will include a newly formed group of liaison staff, employed and funded by the Chancery, who will accompany the pastor in guiding the parish family through the process of becoming one parish. In addition, many tools and resources are in development that will help support parishes every step of the way, including detailed handbooks for navigating prayer and worship, community, discipleship, mission and evangelization, governance and leadership, and administration, infrastructure and finance.

Learn more at archseattle.org/partners/

PARISH STEWARDSHIP OF TALENT.



“Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

Matthew 5:16

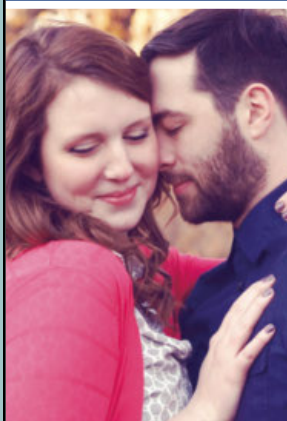
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TO YOU. HOW
WILL YOU USE
IT FOR HIM?

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