



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Office of the Archbishop

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*Feast of St. Francis de Sales,
patron of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The implementation of Beacons of Light marks a new chapter in the life of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. It is now just over six months since our 208 parishes were organized into 57 Families of Parishes, in several instances under new pastoral leadership. These changes, while necessary and infused with great hope, understandably have been a source of concern and anxiety for many of you, as well as for your priests. Please accept my heartfelt gratitude for your patience and fortitude during this time of transition. Your steadfast commitment to the work of the Church and your parish community is a great testament to the depth of your Catholic faith.

In any undertaking as complex as Beacons of Light, it can be easy to “lose the forest for the trees.” For that reason, it is important to pause from time to time and remind ourselves why we are doing this and what we hope to accomplish.

It all begins with the Great Commission given by Jesus to the apostles: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Mt. 28:19-20). The Catholic Church is Christ’s sacramental presence on earth, imbued with the Holy Spirit, given to us as a means for our salvation. All the resources of the Church – human, physical, financial – must be structured, as appropriate for the particular time and place, to proclaiming the Good News of salvation and making disciples.

This is the purpose of Beacons of Light, to enable the vital proclamation of the Gospel for the third century of our own archdiocese. The infrastructure and schedules that were essential to the work of the local Church in decades past may no longer best serve the mission today. Therefore, under the leadership of the pastor, each Family of Parishes will engage in intentional pastoral planning, rooted in sincere prayer and open collaboration, to discern the best configuration of its collective resources to pursue the evangelizing mission of the Church. This is not a project for the priest and parish leaders only, but for the entire parish community, and it will not come to fruition overnight. Patience and fortitude will be essential.

Our hope for this transformative undertaking is that our parishes truly become “beacons of light” – strong, joyful communities of evangelization and service centered on the Eucharist, together growing in faith and radiating the love of Christ to the world. We need to keep this vision in mind to avoid simply getting mired in the details. Every decision within a Family of Parishes should be made with the intent of moving the parish community closer to our desired outcome.

St. Francis de Sales, patron of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, once wrote, “Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset.” As we move forward, let us keep these comforting words top-of-mind, praying for, and confident of, the continued blessings of our loving God who has promised to never leave us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr
Archbishop of Cincinnati

RADIATE CHRIST