



ARCHDIOCESE OF CINCINNATI

Office of the Archbishop

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January 24, 2024
Feast of St. Francis de Sales

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Today we celebrate the feast of St. Francis de Sales, principal patron of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. As a bishop and renowned confessor and spiritual guide, St. Francis de Sales led people to follow the Lord more devoutly, and his writings have inspired countless thousands over the past 400 years to walk the path of holiness. It is good for us to consider how we also can lead people to Christ in our time and place, particularly through the parishes of the archdiocese.

At this midpoint of the second year of Beacons of Light, most Families of Parishes have progressed through Phase 1, which is focused on leadership. The leadership principle states, “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.”

Beacons of Light is *a process of pastoral planning to best arrange all the resources of the archdiocese to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples in this particular time and place*. The goals and aspirations of this process have their roots in the Great Commission given by our Lord 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). Thus, the purpose of Beacons of Light is perennial, and will endure well beyond my tenure as your archbishop or the terms of our pastors, parochial vicars, deacons, lay staff, or parishioner leaders.

The decisions regarding how to best arrange resources – human, financial, physical – to pursue our God-given mission will be discerned and made locally, specific to the circumstances and opportunities within each Family of Parishes. Leadership is and will continue to be essential to this process. Over the past eighteen months, Family Leadership Teams have come together, key staff members have been designated or are being hired, and leadership training has been provided. This is only the beginning. As the leadership principle of Beacons of Light indicates, there is an ongoing need for priests, deacons, and lay leaders to grow in skill and collaboration to discern the best steps toward missionary discipleship in their respective Families.

In the recent Parish Vitality survey that many of you completed, leadership was identified among the highest needs for the future of our parishes. Please pray for all the leaders – priests, deacons, and lay leaders – in our archdiocese that they may fruitfully encourage others to radiate the love of Christ to all. I am deeply grateful for all of you who, in this way, serve the mission of the Church in and through your parish and Family of Parishes. May God bless each of you as you continue this holy work.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr
Archbishop of Cincinnati

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RADIATE CHRIST