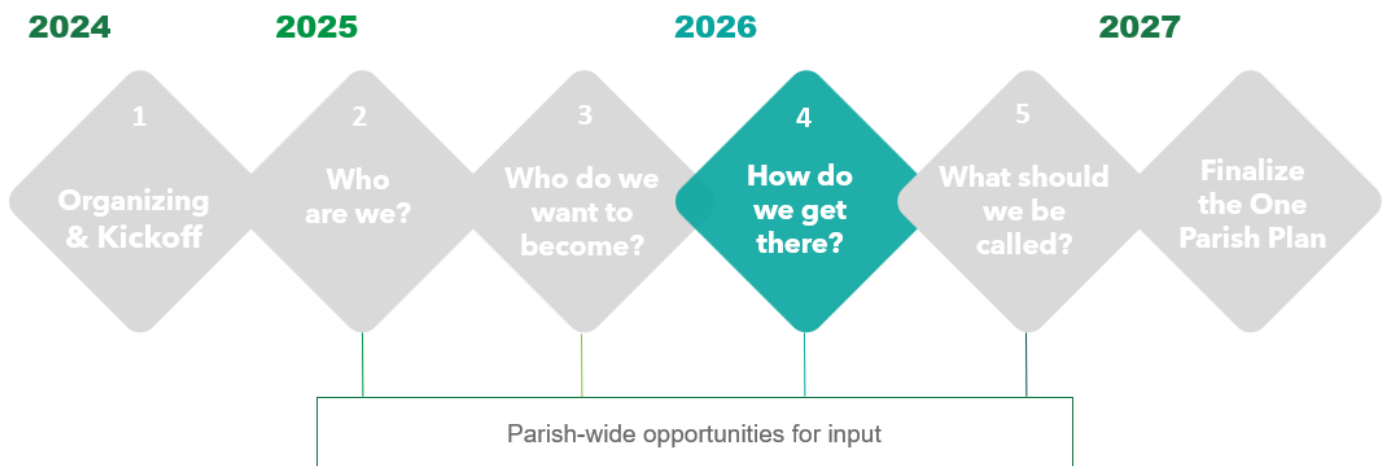




One Parish Plan: How do we get there?

Possible start: Jul-Sep 2026 | Anticipated duration: 6-9 months



Document D1: Overview

After discerning “Who are we?” and “Who do we want to become?” the next step is to ask: *How do we get there?* In this stage the parish family will determine the resources and initiatives needed to fulfill the community’s vision. This renewed commitment to grow closer to God and make missionary disciples will bring forth fruit for the Kingdom of God.

Specifically, the process in this phase requires parish families to:

1. **Hold one or more PFAC sessions** to complete the “Prioritizing our Initiatives” and “Impact/Effort Analysis” activities.
2. **Complete** the “Defining our initiatives” activity (including the creation of a 5-year workplan and impact projection report by the PFLT/staff.)
3. **Provide a report back to the community** on the Partners in the Gospel process in your parish family and the proposed prioritized and scoped initiatives.
4. Allow an opportunity for **community consultation**, informing parishioners on the contents of the final report and gathering input. Use this feedback to make any needed adjustments.

Due to each parish family’s unique circumstances, some may have already begun initiatives discerned during this process. The focus for this phase is to assess those issues that require more time to complete (e.g., 5 years or more).

Timing of Initiatives and One Canonical Parish

Strategic pastoral plans – like the One Parish Plan – are composed of initiatives implemented over time, including the associated costs, effort, and fruits. The One Parish Planning process is a 5-year plan, which allows enough time for major initiatives to take root, but is short enough for the fruits of its initiatives to be seen. (A twenty-year plan may be too long and a plan with impacts in just one or two years may be too shortsighted.)

Submission of the One Parish Plan itself is not the point at which the one canonical parish is formed. After reviewing the plan, Archbishop will promulgate a decree formally establishing the new canonical parish. This will come *after* your plan has been submitted and approved.

For those major initiatives included in the One Parish Plan, work may begin once the One Parish Plan is approved (but before the official formation of new canonical parishes) so long as the initiative does not require combined finances to begin.

Initiatives: The Who, When, How, and Why

Consultation with various stakeholders including the people of God provides insights that help inform this planning work. The need for engagement and transparency in the process and outcomes are as important as ever. As stated in the Final Document of the Synod on Synodality:

In prayer and dialogue, we have recognized that ecclesial discernment, the care for decision-making processes, the commitment to accountability and the evaluation of our decisions are practices through which we respond to the Word that shows us the paths of mission. These three practices are closely intertwined. Decision-making processes need ecclesial discernment, which requires listening in a climate of trust that is supported by transparency and accountability. Trust must be mutual: decision-makers need to be able to trust and listen to the People of God. The latter, in turn, needs to be able to trust those in authority. This integral vision highlights that each of these practices depends on and supports the others, thus serving the Church's ability to fulfil its mission.

- For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission, ch. 79-80

The work described in the following pages is similar to the strategic planning parishes and schools may have experienced in the past. Ecclesial discernment by the community and leadership are central to the work - alongside accountability and transparency. It is important that the community is aware of what is happening and recognizes when the work should be done by a smaller group and then brought to the entire community.

Using initiatives from "Who Do We Want to Become?" the parish family will discern *who* will be involved in each piece of work (either leading or supporting it), *when* work will be done, *how* it will be completed, and *why* these initiatives will be the focus moving forward.

Initiatives: Prioritizing and Defining

As part of “Who do we want to become?”, the parish family community surfaced ideas, hopes, and concerns that led to the creation of a vision statement and a handful of high-level initiatives. Now the parish family must prioritize and define those initiatives so that they can be evaluated in service to the vision. It is possible that competing priorities will make it so that not all initiatives can be pursued. Focus should be on those which *most* align with the parish vision and best utilize parish family resources.

When **prioritizing** initiatives, the purpose is not to complete quantitative analysis of each initiative, nor begin to determine all resource needs or research long-term impacts of the proposal. Rather, the purpose of this work is to determine which initiatives should take precedence. This is accomplished by considering the potential high-level *impact* of the initiative, as well as the projected *effort* required by staff, clergy, consultative leaders, and volunteers to make it happen.

When **defining** initiatives, take the prioritized initiative and begin thinking objectively about how to make that initiative happen – and what the real-world impacts of the initiative could be. The goal is not to evaluate all initiatives at once, nor to try and estimate the spiritual or ministerial outcomes from new work, but to consider individual initiatives and think through practical benefits, costs, and resource impacts of each. It will be important to note which impacts are expected but not measurable (e.g. impact of a faith formation program on sacramental participation) as well as those which are (e.g. impact of a new staff structure on annual expenses).

Prioritizing and defining should happen in the context of the call to both **re-envision** parish life (better foster encounter, accompaniment, and living the joy of the Gospel) and to **restructure** it (addressing the physical, financial, and personnel resources of the family). Make sure to give equal consideration to both types. It may be harder to estimate the impacts of an expanded Marriage and Family Life ministry or new Vocations Team than it is for a construction project, but that does not mean it is less worthy of consideration. All initiatives should be assessed for their impact on the Parish Family Viability Metrics, focusing on initiatives that meet areas of need but are also realistically achievable. These Viability Metrics will also be used when projecting an initiative’s impact over time. As a reminder, the metrics with specific targets are:

- Total church capacity utilization (between 50% and 80%)
- Number of weekend Masses per priest (4 or fewer including Saturday vigils)
- Number of Black status buildings (reducing overtime)
- Number of Red status buildings (reducing overtime)
- Ratio of maintenance spending to total building insured value (over 0.635%)
- Ratio of PRF savings to total building insured value (over 6%)
- Total PRF debt (reducing overtime)
- Total combined Ordinary Income (over \$1,000,000)
- Total combined income (over \$1,200,000)
- Total combined expenses (less than Ordinary Income)
- Total parish margin (positive)
- Per-school enrollment (>200 per school)
- Total school margin (positive)

Who is involved?

The primary groups responsible for prioritizing and defining initiatives are the PFAC and PFLT, with input from the community. However, this process will look different based on their role:

- The **PFAC** is primarily responsible for the prioritization and impact/effort estimation work. Parish staff/PFLT members may support this work, but this direction setting is primarily the responsibility of the PFAC in support of the pastor.
- The **PFLT** is primarily responsible for defining initiatives, using their experience and knowledge of parish operations to make concrete workplans, including staff requirements, and impact projections as prioritized by the PFAC.
- The **parishioners across the parish family** will be asked to sincerely engage with the final plan, ask questions, and provide input, but they are *not* the ones actually prioritizing or defining initiatives. The PFAC and PFLT, as the pastor's primary consultative and work bodies for Partners in the Gospel, own those responsibilities. However, it may make sense to tap the expertise of some parishioners in the prioritizing and defining stages if additional skills or support are needed.

When developing initiatives, there may be the need for guidance or support from Archdiocesan teams such as liturgy, faith formation or outreach. Parish staff should work with their parish family liaisons who can help connect them with the appropriate departments for input on specific initiative proposals.

For those initiatives with property, personnel, or PRF impacts in particular, you will need to make sure your proposals are developed in connection with the following groups:

- For **real estate** or **property-related** initiatives (including buying, selling, rezoning, or building), you will work with [Property & Construction](#).
- For initiatives related to **major staffing changes**, you will work with [Human Resources](#).
- For initiatives that include **Parish Revolving Fund loan proposals**, you will work with [Parish Financial Services](#).

Reporting and revising

After prioritizing and defining the final initiatives, share them with the entire parish family, along with a general report on the Partners in the Gospel process. In addition to announcements at Mass and sharing the report digitally and/or in print, parish families may choose to host an in-person session to walk parishioners through the process and results or create a video or webpage to show the process. This should be a major communication push, ideally using multiple channels to highlight the report. Reports should include a history of the One Parish Plan's creation (including information about how and when consultation happened), key learnings, and an outline of the initiatives and their rationale.

In addition to providing the report to the community, it is important to allow space for feedback. That said, make sure to clarify the intent of this input gathering. Parishioner input has already informed the parish's gifts, opportunities, and challenges; guided the vision creation; and shaped high-level initiatives. With this guidance, the PFAC and PFLT – as the consultative bodies for the pastor – are now prioritizing and estimating impacts. The purpose of this round of input is not for

rewriting initiatives, proposing new ones, or revising workplans. It is to ensure everyone sees the report, understands the plan, and can ask questions/offers comments.

Because of the unique purpose of this round of input, it is *not* recommended to hold a Conversation in the Spirit-style listening session. Instead, provide ways for questions to be clearly asked and answered and for comments to be received. To assist with this, we've created a ParishStaq form template for easy input collection, which can be deployed in each parish family. Paper surveys or a town hall-style Q&A session to receive input would also work. Whatever method you choose, review input prayerfully and create a general synthesis of what was received. If any adjustments are made to the plan as a result of this input, this also should be shared.

Special Note: School initiatives

In those parishes with schools, the school is often the largest ministry in the parish. The school and the wider parish are linked in innumerable ways, and it is critical to consider this when finalizing initiatives. For instance, if an initiative proposes to move all Masses to one campus while the school remains on another, how will this impact students? Additionally, how will *school-specific initiatives* impact the wider parish? For instance, how would merging schools impact parishioners?

For *school-specific* initiatives, engage the [Office of Catholic Schools](#) as early as possible. There are school-specific requirements and processes related to things like curriculum changes, class size adjustment, or general directional adjustments for schools that should be considered. Please contact the [Office of Catholic Schools](#) Assistant Superintendent of Financial Services for initial conversations around these initiatives.

Completion of the identified forms is a required part of the One Parish Planning Process.

Timing, steps, and tools

Possible start: Jul-Sep 2026 | Anticipated duration: 6-9 months

1. Refamiliarize the PFAC with the outcomes of the "Who are we?" and "Who do we want to become?" work
2. Complete the "Impact/Effort Analysis" and "Prioritizing our initiatives" PFAC exercises (Hosts: PFAC/PFLT members | Audience: PFAC members | See Doc. D2A-D2C)
3. Complete the "Defining our initiatives" PFAC exercise (and related impact projection) (Hosts: PFAC/PFLT members | Audience: PFAC members | See Doc. D3A-D3B)
4. Assemble the PFAC vision and initiatives report (Hosts: PFAC/PFLT members | Audience: PFAC members | See Doc. D4A & Appendix)
5. Complete "Reviewing our vision and initiatives report" community consultation (Hosts: PFAC and pastor | Audience: Parishioners | See Docs. D4B)