



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Archbishop Etienne Launches Pastoral Planning

Invitation to all Catholics to grow closer to Jesus Christ and embrace his mission

Seattle, WA, May 23, 2021 – Today, Pentecost Sunday, the Archdiocese of Seattle entered the next phase of pastoral planning by inviting all Catholics and Catholic ministries to participate. This phase of pastoral planning draws attention to Christ and the central mission of the Church, and introduces a set of focus areas and values for people to prayerfully reflect upon so as to discern how we can apply them to our lives and joyfully share Christ with the world today.

“My invitation to all Catholics, parishes, schools and Catholic ministries is to begin prayerfully considering the ways we carry out the basic mission of the Church. Specifically, how do we bring Christ to others, and lead others to Christ?” said Archbishop Paul D. Etienne, who titled the pastoral planning effort, “Knowing Jesus Christ, Embracing His Mission.”

The pastoral planning effort began in 2019 with the creation of the office for Planning and Mission Effectiveness, led by Executive Director Tim Hunt. In 2020, Archbishop Etienne appointed a new Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, which began listening efforts to gather insights from the faithful and help shape the pastoral planning effort. To date, nearly 10,000 Catholics have participated in more than 90 listening sessions and an online survey.

“Because the Church is not a building or the hierarchy, but the people of God, the council dove right into listening to the people who, in very candid and often moving ways, shared the contents of their hearts and minds,” said Hunt. “Participants did not mince words, nor did the council shy away from difficult conversations. The council witnessed deep faith rooted in close relationship with God, which our Church wants to renew here and now.”

An Invitation to Catholics

This phase lays out the vision and values for the ongoing pastoral planning process, which will now begin to take shape at the local parish, ministry and personal levels.

“How the plan is enacted with each person, parish or ministry will be different, which is good,” said Archbishop Etienne. “We want people to make these focus areas relevant for their communities and the needs of their people.”

Everyone is invited to reflect on the plan, which will guide efforts across the Archdiocese of Seattle for several years. To review the plan, please visit archseattle.org/pastoralplan or see below:

MISSION

Jesus said to his disciples, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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 obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” – Matthew 28:18–20

FOCUS

- Encounter Jesus Christ and one another.
- Accompany each other, as one human family, on the journey of discipleship.
- Live the unconditional love and joy of the Gospel.

VALUES

- Faith in Action — *Jesus calls us to follow him and surrender completely to the will of the Father in every part of our life. We believe every moment is an opportunity to give glory to God.*
- Hope in Resurrection — *Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. Our hope in the future guides how we live our lives today.*
- Truth in Love — *God created every human heart for true love. We find the fullness of truth in love by loving God with all our being and loving our neighbor as ourselves.*
- Unity in Diversity — *Unity is not a human invention; it is a gift from God. We are the Body of Christ, with our diverse gifts united by the Holy Spirit. We fully participate in this unity when we give reverence to all of God’s creation and surrender to God’s will.*

“There are a number of signs that the providence of God is at work in the timing of this pastoral planning effort,” said Archbishop Etienne. “We’re living in a time with a lot of social unrest and coming out of a global pandemic, so it’s the perfect opportunity for us to re-envision how we live our faith more concretely in our parishes, schools, Catholic Community Services, Catholic Housing Services, in our homes and families.”

Listening efforts by the pastoral council will begin again in the fall and will continue throughout the multi-year pastoral planning effort.

“I want to invite everyone to join us in praying that we can be the people of God, the Body of Christ, the Church in Western Washington that God is calling us to be,” said Archbishop Etienne. “Let’s ask the Holy Spirit to inspire us, to lead us, to guide us that we can live the faith, live in Christ, and bring Christ to the world.”

About the Archdiocese of Seattle

The Archdiocese of Seattle encompasses all of Western Washington, stretching from Canada to Oregon and from the Cascade Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. There are 72 Catholic schools, 168 parishes, missions and pastoral centers in the archdiocese, with more than 500 weekly Masses celebrated in eight languages.

Archbishop Paul D. Etienne leads the archdiocese with his two auxiliary bishops, Bishop Eusebio Elizondo and Bishop Daniel Mueggenborg. For more information about the Archdiocese of Seattle, visit archseattle.org.

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Media Contact: Helen McClenahan

Helen.Mcclenahan@seattlearch.org | Media line: 206-402-9373