

For the last few months, we have been conducting planning and preparing for the formation of the pastorate of St Joan of Arc and St Patrick's. Below are some frequently asked questions and answers to them.

What is a Pariate?

Beginning in July 2015, Archbishop Lori outlined the pastorate formation model in his strategic planning document entitled, *A Light Shining Visible, Guiding the Path to Missionary Discipleship*. He identified the need for the formation of parishes which is “one or more parishes with a single pastor and leadership team.” At the core of the formation of a pastorate is the goal of evangelization to help energize faith communities to proclaim the gospel with joy, no longer in isolation, but working together in solidarity as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Why did the Archdiocese of Baltimore adopt a pastorate model for parishes?

The archbishop directed this approach, and we are implementing this pastorate model to enhance the evangelization mission of the church and to foster a sense of community among our parishes.

The pastorate model focuses on the mission of the church to help Catholics become **missionary disciples**, who are then empowered to evangelize others. By forming parishes we encourage collaboration, share resources, and seek to build community.

As parishes form into “parishes” – one or more parishes under the leadership of a single pastor and leadership team – they focus on the six mission priorities the archbishop laid out in his pastoral letter: *liturgy, welcome, encounter, accompaniment, sending and mission support*.

Isn't forming parishes just about addressing the shortage of Priests?

While we have experienced Priest shortages compared to historical numbers, within the Archdiocese of Baltimore, we're beginning to see the effects of prayer resulting in an increase of vocations with men in Priestly formation and newly ordained. Just as important, the formation of parishes helps us bundle our resources, build teamwork, synergy, and vibrancy to accomplish our mission to proclaim the Gospel within our communities, and position ourselves to serving the Church and the people of God in the future.

Will the pastorate merge St Joan of Arc and St Patrick's into one entity?

Rather than thinking in terms of a merger or consolidation, the pastorate is best thought of as the formation of an overarching organization that incorporates both parishes. Our two parishes will maintain their parish canonical responsibilities and identity. Collaborative and focused pastorate planning, sharing of resources, and integrating parish activities and ministry efforts will help us to enhance our parish core missions of *liturgy, welcome, encounter, accompaniment, sending and mission support*.

How does this pastorate formation effect St Joan of Arc School?

It doesn't. The school will be under the oversight of the Pastor of the Pastorate. The school's relationship with the Archdiocese of Baltimore and accreditation will remain the same. The school staff will continue to work closely with the Pastor and staff for support.

Who is going to be the Pastor of the Pastorate?

This is at the discretion of the archbishop and has not been formally announced. The Pastor will be supported by our Deacons and parish staffs in his efforts. We hope that an associate pastor will be assigned at a future date.

Who is helping Fr. Francis and Fr. Willie plan for the pastorate?

We have formed a Pastorate Formation Team that is comprised of clergy, staff, and parishioners. Additionally, both of our parish staff, school staff, and pastoral councils are engaged in this process. Our planning team is developing a pastorate prayer, vision statement and developing our communications plan. As mentioned, we are supported by the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Department of Evangelization in this effort.

When will the Pastorate be formed?

The pastorate will be activated on July 1st, 2024. This is also the date that Fr. Willie Franken will retire after a long and faithful service! Fr. Willie's retirement ceremony and celebration are scheduled for June 30th, 2024.

Will the Mass schedule change?

At this point of planning, our intent is to maintain the current Mass schedule. Over time there may be some adjustments as needed to enhance supporting the liturgical calendar and provide adequate Priest presence across the pastorate. The Pastor will do an assessment once we form the pastorate.

Will finances be merged between the two parishes?

No. Both parish finances and contributions will remain separate because they are canonically (Church law) independent. So, if you put your St Joan of Arc contribution envelope in the St Patrick's offertory during Sunday Mass, it will be forwarded to St Joan of Arc for processing and vice versa.

What can I do to help the formation of our pastorate?

A very important thing we can all do is pray for our successful formation! You will notice that at Sunday Masses, both parishes have inserted an intercession for our pastorate. In a few weeks, we will provide a "pastorate prayer" for our communities to pray at Mass.

Also, we invite everyone to visit our "sister parish" for daily or Sunday Mass. Go to Mass and plan on meeting some new Catholic friends! Also, consider getting a few friends together and joining respective parish social or community events.

Where do I submit additional questions about the pastorate?

If you have additional questions or concerns, you can always speak to one of our Pastors, parish staff, pastoral council members or send/call us an email through our parish website.