



FAMILIES OF PARISHES

Corpus Christi Families of Parishes Q & A

Hello everyone, I pray you are well! Sorry for the delay, here are the responses to the questions that were given on the weekend I gave a presentation on Families of Parishes. Some of the answers below have AOD/FOP after them, indicating the text (the answer) comes from the Families of Parishes website. The other answers have FP after them indicating they are my answer, which is drawn either from previous Families of Parishes readings/meetings or essentially, just giving the best answer I can at this point. I'm glad to continue the FOP conversation with anyone who would like and I'll keep doing what I can to share FOP information with you in the bulletin. Thank you and God bless you!

— Fr. Patrick

1. Will the Families of Parishes share financial resources?

Families of Parishes will have significant common ministries and outreach that will necessitate the sharing of resources. The Pastors and Moderators have the responsibility to ensure that all parishes in each Family share in these resources and costs on an equitable basis. This will require structures enabling transparency of finances and good communication about administrative matters among the parishes in each Family.

Each parish within a Family will remain solely responsible for its own financial viability. This includes establishing appropriate parish budgets, coordinating parish fundraising, and controlling parish costs. Accordingly, each parish will be required to have its own Parish Financial Council comprised of parishioners, as is true today.

New to the Family of Parishes structure is the need for a Family Finance Team to help the One Pastor or Moderator in matters which span the Families. A Family's Finance Team is chaired by the One Pastor or Moderator and is comprised of the Family Mission Support Director and two representatives from each parish in the Family. It is recommended that the representatives from each parish also be members of their respective Parish Finance Councils.

AOD

As shared costs arise it will be the work of the Mission Support Director in conjunction with the Moderator to ensure equitable cost sharing occurs. The Parish Finance Council will be consulted as well regarding any cost sharing.

FP

2. Who decides the mass schedules?

The mass schedule will be decided by the team of priests, which is led by the moderator. Initially, every parish maintains their regular mass schedule. Should changes come about to the mass schedule in the family, these changes would chiefly be driven by the need for clergy to be able to better balance mass coverage in the family. For example, if in three years, a Family of Parishes has two less priests than it currently has, the mass schedule would need to change. Or, another example, the clergy decide they need to stagger their various mass times on Sunday so that there are priests in the family who can cover for other priests in the family if need be. FP

3. If each parish will maintain its own finances, at least initially, will they also be able to carry out budgeting to support parish specific staff who may be looped into the reporting structure outlined in the Family of Parishes model?

Yes, parishes will still maintain their own finance councils and create their own parish budget as well, which would include parish specific staff, who may also be looped into the reporting structure for FOP. Additionally, per AOD guidelines, the Family will create a budget as well that anticipates any shared family costs. FP

4. Wondering what this means practically for Corpus Christi staff today – are all needing to reapply for a limited number positions to support the family?

As parishes come together to form Families of Parishes, they will begin to discuss the practical ways in which the clergy and staff will interact within the Family, as well as finalize the new leadership structure, including items such as leadership teams, key staff mission, and operations staff positions. During this process, some parishes may lose some staff members (e.g., if a Family of Parishes opts to share one bookkeeper instead of having each parish maintain its own). At the same time, some Families will be able to add positions that better serve the mission going forward. In addition, we expect that natural attrition (e.g. through retirements and normal staff turnover) over the next few years may assist the parishes' efforts to further consolidate their staffs.

These and other staffing decisions will be left to the discernment of each Family of Parishes, led by parish leadership and with assistance, as needed, from the Archdiocese of Detroit Curia. All decisions will be guided by a complete focus on mission and the best interest of the entire Family of Parishes. This process will be rooted in prayer, will be respectful of building and maintaining relationships, and will be marked by quick and honest responses to questions and concerns that are raised. AOD/FOP

The development of our family structure is going to take time and the process will be driven by the Moderator in conjunction with the labors of the Mission Support Director. Corpus Christi Staff at this time (July) don't need to reapply for a position. We do not, in the family structure, have a set number of limited positions for the whole family. There is a set number of director positions (6) which we hope to fill from staff members already working in the family. So there may be some shifting around but at this time, I don't anticipate a set total number of positions for the family that would cause a great reduction in staff across the family. FP

5. Will there be room for internal pastoral council like leadership meetings, perhaps with new names?

I think this depends on the Family, the priests assigned to the family, and the various delegations given to the priests by the moderator and the various leadership tendencies of a priest. For example, a priest given primary care of a particular parish (via the moderator) who has been used to working with a leadership team may find a similar entity helpful. Yet it is also clear that in the new FOP structure the Family Pastoral Council, Family Finance Team and Family Leadership Team are the primary consultative bodies for the moderator and that these need to be healthy and strong with a real commitment from each parish to be a part of them so good family leadership is established. FP

6. Why is the priest in charge of every church in the family? Why are they not only in charge of their own church?

A number of priests will share the work of caring for each Family of Parishes. These priests will be able to leverage their charisms and strengths in the work that they do and will find themselves supported by a talented and trained lay staff and, in many cases, one or more deacons. Those priests serving as pastors of Families of Parishes will be responsible for administration. All priests, regardless of their role within the Family of Parishes, will have more time to engage in the work of ministering to the people of God. AOD/FOP

It may be the case that a family doesn't have a priest for each parish, also, there may be a priest who is great at being a pastor and can happily serve as pastor for 4 parishes, while the family pastor on his team may serve better in a support role than pastor role. FP

7. Do the other parishes have Deacons and will they help out parishes, as needed?

In our family, we have three Deacons: Paul Mueller, Aaron Poyer, and Hubert Sanders. Dcn Paul is retired and is free to choose what level of activity to pursue and where. At this time, he has chosen to remain on staff at Corpus Christi and lend his preaching gifts to Corpus Christi as well. He is free to accept ministry invitations to other parishes

in the family but is not assigned to such as he is retired. Dcn Aaron has officially been assigned by the Archbishop to the entire family and will work out an agreement with the moderator as to how he will serve in the family. Dcn Hubert has been the administrator at Our Lady Presentation of Victory and will continue to be a leader in that parish, but he is open to helping in the family as well. FP

8. Is the motivation financial?

9. Is the motivation lack of priests?

An Answer from the AOD regarding both of the above questions:

Families of Parishes are groups of parishes, generally three to six, sharing resources to advance the mission, including having multiple priests and deacons serving the Family of Parishes. This new model will allow the priests, deacons, religious and lay staff associated with each parish to better share their gifts and talents with the whole Family of Parishes.

Our shift to Families of Parishes is a response to Synod 16, which called for a complete renewal of structures of our parishes to make them radically mission-oriented. Our goal is to make our parishes places where individuals and families can encounter Jesus anew, grow as disciples, and be equipped to be witnesses the Risen Christ. The current health and economic crises have accelerated the process of renewing the way our parishes are organized and structured. In addition to the already problematic priest shortage, we now have fewer material resources to keep our mission active. Archbishop Vigneron, in consultation with clergy and lay advisors, has determined that now is the time to act.

Our mission hasn't changed, but how we approach that mission must shift in response to our circumstances. We must move forward with greater collaboration and better stewardship of our resources. AOD/FOP

10. Are some people going to lose their jobs with the new Director roles?

Hopefully not, our family (under the leadership of our moderator) will be looking internally to fill the new Director roles. FP

11. Can the parish priest (all) include the people in the city and other states that were killed in the mass shooting pray for them?

Yes, and additionally, "for an end to gun violence" is quite frequently a petition made during the intercessions at the daily masses at Corpus Christi. FP

12. Will lay people serve as Vatican II dictated, or will we be silenced, etc., for trying in a leadership role?

The FOP structure values lay leadership and counts on it when it comes to the Family Pastoral Council, Family Finance Team, Family Leadership Team and Family Intercessory Prayer Team. Consultative leadership bodies are part of the structure, as are six Director positions that will most likely be filled by lay leaders. The FOP structure envisions strong lay leadership working with the team of priests. FP

13. What does the #1 mean in our Family name, "Trinity..." etc?

Our official Family name is *Central Region Trinity Vicariate Family 1*. There are two families in the Trinity Vicariate and we happen to be in family #1. FP

14. Will each priest represent each parish and be required to go to 5 or 6 different meetings every month?

The FOP consultative bodies structure (Family Pastoral Council, Family Leadership Team and Family Finance Team) is designed such that not all the priests will be at all the meetings. The Moderator will, as he is the lead administrator. When it comes to the Family Pastoral Council, all the priests will be at that meeting. Regarding which priest represents which parish, all priests are assigned to all parishes in the family, however --- the Moderator may (and in our family will) delegate primary care of a parish to the priest already at that parish. FP

15. May I have time to digest these major changes? I'm in the process of changing parishes. It's confusing.

Absolutely! We're glad you're here, thank you for joining us, you'll love Corpus Christi we pray! FP

16. What does this mean for new members?

Well, it means that the parish that you have joined is now part of a family with other parishes. Corpus Christi is still its own parish, yet we are in a closer bond/network with other parishes now. Realistically, coming to mass, worshipping God, serving the Lord, finding a ministry you'd like to get active in, these core aspects of being a parish member are pretty much the same. We're glad you're here, thanks for joining! FP

17. When we come to church/mass every Sunday, we know what to expect. What will change? Mass times? Sharing with other parishes? Will the priests change? Happy that we will remain the same.

The team of priests has much to discuss still. We might see mass times change (as was addressed in question 2), there may be an implementation of having the occasional pulpit switch, and some cost-sharing between parishes is envisioned by the new structure (at least at some point). Each parish will continue to maintain its identity and, in that regard, the blessing that Corpus Christi is will indeed remain the same. FP

18. Will programs like GOF continue within our parish?

Insofar as a parish program is fruitful to the life of the parish, it would be good for that program to continue. In the new FOP structure, as space and resources allow, it would be good to invite other family members to experience these treasures as well. FP

19. Will Catechesis of the Good Shepherd be continuing even if other FOP members don't use it?

If a particular faith formation program is bearing fruit (as CGS is!) the Director of Discipleship Formation (when in place) would ideally communicate in conjunction with the priest at the parish, to the Moderator the efficacy of the program and it would continue as such. CGS is a treasure at Corpus Christi and I'm confident it'll continue to be for a long time to come. FP

20. Will our special dinners celebrating Christmas, Holy Thursday, volunteer thank-you, continue as in the past?

Oh yes, each parish still maintains its identity and that means Corpus Christi will still celebrate these joyful occasions as we have, it's a wonderful aspect of this community. FP

21. Will our parish lose it's ecumenical, socially aware and progressive spirit to a more conservative wave?

Catholicism embraces ecumenism and social justice, along with devotion to continued growth in the Holy Spirit. Corpus Christi will remain a Catholic Church. FP

22. We use the Apostle's Creed. Many priests do not. Will that have to change?

At the profession of faith, the priest may select either the Apostle's Creed or the Nicene Creed, the choice of which creed to use is up to the priest celebrating the mass. FP

23. What is meant by sharing of resources? Which resources will be shared?

The FOP structure envisions parishes working together to help each other and staff positions (the six directors) who serve all the parishes in their area of expertise. As shared staff develops equitable cost sharing will be implemented as well. We know that at some point, staff will be some of the resources that is shared. FP

24. Are parishioners members of a particular parish or are they now member of the parish family?

Parishioners remain members of the parish they choose to register at. FP

25. Great presentation Father! Thanks for the concrete info. What do you anticipate for staff that are not selected for future positions, e.g., termination, pay until they find a new job, etc.?

Thanks for the encouragement, may God outdo you in kindness!! I am anticipating that the team of priests will work together to help identify internal candidates to fill the new director positions. Along with this, I hope we are able to maintain our current staffs as they are, but with some realigning with the new structure. I'd like to see all the staff at Corpus Christi continue joyfully forward, being flexible with the new structure. Lastly, I'd love to see our collections rise so our operating budget (which staff is paid out of) can rise as well. FP

26. What is the length of time for the director team (if any)?

In terms of trying to get Directors in place for the family, the Archdiocese has prescribed Sept 1st as a date to try to have the Mission Support Director in place and October 1st as the date to have the Mission Direct Directors in place. These are prescribed dates and the team of priests, led by the Moderator, will be mindful of these dates and also responsible to do what is best...and if that takes longer than the prescribed date, we're ok with that. Once hired, there is no length of time that is part of the hiring. These are not time bound positions in terms of they will end at X date or whatnot. FP

27. How will all these programs be financed or are they volunteers?

The FOP structure envisions full-time staff, part-time and volunteers. Looking internally to fill the Director positions enables us to try to utilize the resources we are already blessed with and that are already financed to be able to move to this new alignment in a cost effective way. FP

28. Will we have a Q&A session at Corpus Christi to understand better what we must do differently as well as the same?

The staff has discussed this idea and we may do something along these lines, but first wanted to give the process a few months and see how it is going and also give people time to digest the information we're seeking to share. Quick reminder, check out the Families of Parishes Tab on the Corpus Christi Website and visit familiesofparishes.org FP

29. I know we keep our primary priest but are they going to start rotating them around for Sunday (and Saturday) masses?

This is still to be determined. I do think priests rotating to different parishes will most likely happen...but what the frequency of that rotation is we don't know yet. FP

30. Are we creating more bureaucracy with all these levels?

Hopefully the FOP structure will be conducive to having a great team that communicates well and thereby helps serve parishes efficiently. FP

31. Do we direct our own religious formation? Or does that come from a Director of [Family of the] Parish?

While the Director oversees their area of expertise over the family, at the parish level there are coordinators who can direct religious formation at the parish. So yes, it is possible for a parish to have a coordinator who directs religious formation. That coordinator might also be the Director for the whole family in some cases. Directors will work with each parish though and their staff in that area to determine what's best for that parish, also being mindful for the family. FP

32. Who hires/fires parish staff members? What's the process?

The Moderator and the Mission Support Director will be the two leads regarding HR items for the family. The Moderator will also work with the team of priests to help identify internal candidates for the Director positions. Once the Mission Support Director is in place, they will work with the Archdiocese in securing any HR assistance that is needed should the Moderator and Mission Support Director need help. Regarding hiring process, in addition to identifying internal candidates for the Director positions, staff are free to make known their interest in a Director position. Once candidates are identified and resumes received, interviews are conducted. FP

33. What's the process for determining parish budgets?

Each spring, the budget from the prior year is taken into consideration. If we came up in the red, we have got to trim, if we're in the black, we can budget in a similar way. Staff members are contacted to talk about their own particular budget in their various areas. Numbers are secured, added up. Finance Council reviews it, makes sure we have a good balanced budget that makes sense. Budget is submitted to Archdiocese. FP

34. How can we apply for positions? I mean those interested in working as coordinators for our family parishes. I am interested in working for the diocese in this awesome project.

Initially we are recruiting internally for these various positions, respecting that we already have great staff in place across the parishes who we think very well may be able to fill these positions. Yet, anyone interested is free to let me know. You can also keep your eye on the jobs page for the Archdiocese of Detroit to check out postings as they come up: <https://www.aod.org/careers> FP

35. How can we be of assistance to our parish priest?

Oh, bless your heart, thank you! Just your prayers...prayers that we (all the priests) will be faithful to Jesus whom we have given our lives to. Sincerely, thank you! FP

36. How can our family move forward in coordination with the diocese when it sounds like some of our family pastors want to drag their feet?

The priests in our family are committed to working together and doing the best we can in our particular situation. It seems quite providential that someone asked in the question just prior to this one how to help the priests. We do need prayer. This is not easy, and for some priests it is harder than for others. Your prayer will help the priests, which in turn will help the family move forward. FP

37. What will be my part in Family of Parishes as a parishioner?

Parishioners will become part of a larger faith family, working together and leveraging resources in pursuit of our mission to unleash the Gospel. They will still be part of their own parish communities unless their own discernment suggests otherwise. They will worship alongside and work with other members of their new Family. They will be ministered to by multiple priests from all parishes in the Family and in many cases access to the Sacraments will be increased. They will share best practices and benefit from competent and improved lay leadership of the various ministries managed through the Family structure. AOD/FOP

38. Will we still be in control of our activities, such as Generations of Faith?

In the FOP structure, the Director of Discipleship Formation will work with the various staff and volunteers at the parish level to assess what is best for the parish, mindful of the family too. Corpus Christi has wonderful faith formation and that makes the job of the Director of Discipleship Formation easier in my opinion. FP

39. Need fuller explanation of how this works.

Completely understandable. Spending a few hours at the original Families of Parishes website, which has a lot of information, and also reading the Families of Parishes playbook would be helpful. I'm also glad to talk in person if you would like. Here's the links for good information:

<https://www.familiesofparishes.org/> and <https://www.familiesofparishes.org/playbook/>

FP

40. Are CSA obligations still assessed according to the parish or to the parish family?

With each parish still retaining its own identity and finances (though there will be cost sharing in the future), CSA will still be done on a parish basis and not family basis. FP

41. If a parish doesn't have a priest do the family priests take turns filling in or do the deacons alternate to fill the deficiency?

The FOP structure foresees the days when the clergy shortage (which will be felt much more significantly in about 10 years) when a Family of Parishes very well may have two priests for five or six parishes. It will be up to the team of priests to make sure they mass schedule is doable for two priests in that situation. In a family with six parishes and five priests, rotating to cover the mass at the parish without a priest in residence is more doable at this point. FP

42. I am confused but will pray for understanding.

Thank you for your beautiful example of living out Proverbs 3:5 "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding." FP

43. Will there be builds of new homes on vacant lots like before? Help keep neighborhood clean. Offer childcare.

As part of the FOP initiative, at some point, the Family is to draw of a missionary strategic plan. Included in the Unleash the Gospel document that continues to be a charter for the New Evangelization initiative in the Archdiocese of Detroit is a beautiful section on *Evangelical Charity*. The items noted in the question above may very well make their way into a missionary strategic plan for the Family. FP

44. How will my donations to Corpus Christi be distributed? Will contributions be divided among the parish families?

Your donations to Corpus Christi continue to support the operating budget of Corpus Christi. Collections go directly into the operating budget, the cost to run the parish. At some point, when there begins to be cost sharing in the family, we'll be sure that it is very transparent. Additionally, as the FOP structure develops, a family budget is envisioned that indicates what portion of funds from each parish go into any shared family costs. FP

45. Will there be any changes or updates to our Community Outreach?

Coming into a Family of Parishes provides us with the opportunity to collaborate with other parishes in the family in Evangelical Charity efforts. There are no changes or updates to report at the moment. FP

46. Will the mass times at Corpus Christi change?

Please see question #2

47. Where is Catholic school education in the Family Parish plan? Catholic schools are critical in urban evangelization.

Synod 16 was very clear that Catholic education is the responsibility of the entire Archdiocese. While the details of how Families of Parishes will support this directive have yet to be determined, it is probable that, should one member of a Family of Parishes sponsor a school, the other members should be supportive of that apostolate. Specific details about how this will work are under consideration by those leading our transition to Families of Parishes and the Department of Catholic Schools, in consultation with the Department of Finance, Catholic Schools Council, and a cross-section of pastors. Our intent is to have these options reviewed by archdiocesan consultative bodies and other stakeholders, so that they may be fully vetted and shared with the larger presbyterate in early 2021. AOD/FOP
Once the Family is in a position to put together a family missionary strategic plan, how the family will support Catholic schools is to be part of that plan. FP

48. What group does this church fall under?

Corpus Christi is in Central Region Trinity Vicariate Family #1. Our family includes St. Scholastica, Presentation/Our Lady Victory, St. Juan Diego, St. Mary Redford, Sts. Peter and Paul, and Corpus Christi.

49. Will there be a Parish Council?

As of January 1, 2022 parishes will no longer have a parish council; rather, a Family Pastoral Council will become the main consultative body for the Moderator. The Family Pastoral Council will be composed of parishioners from each parish and the priests as well.

50. Will we set our own budget or will the Moderator?

Each parish maintains its own finances and Finance Council. With that being said, the Moderator is technically the head of the Finance Council (akin to a Pastor) and will give final approval to the budget.

51. Sounds too good to be true. How do you plan on people volunteering for all these jobs? We already have a big problem with volunteers!!

I have heard variations of those six words (sounds too good to be true) many times regarding the FOP initiative, yet with God all things are possible. The plan the team of priests has (following AOD instruction) at this point is to internally identify candidates for the Director positions. It follows that after that as Directors start to get moving in their areas of expertise that they work with parish level staff to see how things look at the parish level. Ideally, staff we already have and volunteers, too, can fill much of what we are looking for. If not, if it is a staff need, we will look outside of the family. Ideally, we will keep coming up with the volunteers needed as well.

52. So, will you coordinate different events together, all 6 parishes together?

While parishes will still have their own identity and own life as a parish doing their particular events and whatnot, I imagine that there will be various gatherings that we have as a family.

53. Will mass times change at different parishes?

See question 2 please.

54. Are there new windows and Stations of the Cross on the wall? Since I have not attended church for a year, the windows look nice.

Welcome back! They're the same windows and stations but it's awesome you're seeing them in a new way 😊.

Central Trinity Vicariate 1 (CTV1)

Corpus Christi Parish

<http://www.corpuschristi-detroit.org>

Presentation/Our Lady of Victory Parish

<http://presentationourladyofvictory.org/>

SS. Peter and Paul Parish (Westside)

<http://www.ssppdetroit.net>

St. Juan Diego Parish

<http://www.familiamdei.com>

St. Mary of Redford Parish

<https://saintmaryofredford.church>

St. Scholastica Parish

<https://scholastica.church/>

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