



Equip the Saints Our Pastoral Plan – One Year Later

In April 2017, Archbishop Anthony Mancini presented a three-year pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth. The plan is called *Equip the Saints* and its aim is to help accomplish the transformation and revitalization of our local Church.

How are we doing in putting this plan into action?

A full progress report is available at www.halifaxyarmouth.ca/plan, but here are some highlights, according to each of the four objectives of the plan:

- 1) Foster parish communities to form missionary disciples
 - 43/65 parishes, with more than 6,000 Catholics, participated in a survey on parish life and attitudes in the pews
 - 33/65 parishes have completed or are in the process of completing their own pastoral plans; and
 - 17% increase in attendance to the Assembly of the People of God
- 2) Provide resources to carry out our mission to the world
 - Hired a faith formation coordinator
- 3) Equip people for our mission by providing diocesan leadership formation opportunities
 - Supported 10 parishes to send their pastors and leadership teams to the 2018 Divine Renovation conference
- 4) Increase our mission capacity and efficiency by restructuring our parishes and our diocesan human and financial resources
 - *New Parishes: Stronger Together* consultation process underway

Again, these are just some of the highlights. A full progress report is available at www.halifaxyarmouth.ca/plan.

Equip
the Saints

New Parishes: Stronger Together
An Update from the Archbishop
June 2018

Over the last couple of months, there has been a lot of discussion around the future of our parishes, missions and churches within the Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth, as part of the 2017-2020 pastoral plan called Equip the Saints.

I have appreciated the time people have spent responding to my Lenten Series of videos or my letter to the faithful about New Parishes: Stronger Together in April. For those who have contacted me directly, I hope that you have received a direct response from me, but if not, please let me know.

While each parish, church and mission is different, reflecting our diverse urban, suburban and rural communities, a number of common questions have come up that I thought I would try to address by way of this update.

Why won't you tell us what your plan truly is?

My office has been working with clergy and Catholics in each region of the Archdiocese to consider what change could look like. At this point, no decisions have been made and we are continuing to accept proposals until the end of June 2018. Once I have had the chance to consider all the different options coming forward from regions and communities, I will be sharing more information later this year for further discussion.

Will I lose my parish or will my church be closing?

I have said publicly that I did not become Archbishop to close churches. That position remains the same.

With 65 parishes and 25 missions serving approximately 17,000 Catholics on a weekly basis, we do have a responsibility to consider whether this is the right number of parishes and missions

for the next 20-30 years to achieve our mission. It's important to remember, however, that changing the number of parishes and missions does not necessarily change the number of church buildings. A number of options are being prepared from regions throughout the diocese, but I have not approved any of these proposals. I am committed to taking the time to listen to and consult with Catholics across the Archdiocese.

What will happen to our parishes financial assets and liabilities?

It's too soon to say until we have had a chance to review all the proposals submitted from across the Archdiocese.

What's next?

Over the summer, I will be reviewing the proposals that have come forward about New Parishes: Stronger Together from the different regions from the Archdiocese. I will also be considering additional ways to engage with Catholics through this deliberative and prayerful process. A draft plan will then be shared for additional feedback on October 26-27 at the Assembly of the People of God.

I recognize this process is causing concern and questions among many faithful Catholics. I share many of these concerns. Rest assured that I am open to finding the best possible way to work openly and co-operatively to achieve New Parishes: Stronger Together.



Anthony Mancini
Archbishop of Halifax-Yarmouth