



ARCHBISHOP OF DETROIT

November 15, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Since arriving in Detroit this past March, I have had the great joy of meeting many of you at parish celebrations, diocesan gatherings, Mass, and other liturgies. In every encounter, I have seen something truly beautiful. I have witnessed your deep love for Christ, your local parish, and our Archdiocese. I also have witnessed your intense desire to see the Church of Detroit flourish for generations to come.

Along with our many blessings, I have also heard the candid expression of your concerns and your understanding of the challenges we face now and into the future. Please know that I hear you and that I see these challenges, too. Many of our churches were built during a time of tremendous growth, when more than 1.5 million Catholics called this Archdiocese home. Today, our Catholic census is closer to 900,000, with a smaller number regularly attending Mass. We have been struggling to maintain buildings, ministries, and structures that were designed for a much larger Church. The situation that unfolded in the last 50 years has left us stretched—sometimes stretched too thinly to serve as well as we want. Moreover, as we struggle to care for buildings and parish structures where there are very few people, we are also seeking to ensure the presence of the Church as we follow the Catholic population in those areas where the Church is growing.

While I believe that our commitment to Christ and his Church means that we must face these challenges, I do not believe that this moment in time need be marked primarily by anxiety or despair. Rather, I believe the situation we are facing is one that holds real and blessed opportunities. I believe with all my heart that God is inviting us to reimagine parish life, priestly ministry, and our mission. I believe God is asking us to face our future with creativity and deeper faith and trust that if we ask Him, then He will show us the way toward building something vibrant, sustainable, and enduring into the future.

This is why I am inviting every Catholic in our Archdiocese to join me in a serious two-year process of Archdiocesan restructuring. It will be a journey of discernment that I believe we can accomplish only together—a time for us to chart the best path forward for each of our parish communities and regions. In such an endeavor, every voice matters, just as every prayer matters. The end result will affect each parish and community of our Archdiocese, so each of you has a part to play in shaping the future of our Church.

It is important to be honest about what this restructuring may bring. We know that we cannot maintain the same number of parish buildings that we have today. Some parish communities may see changes in how or where they gather, while others may be called to see church buildings closed—structures that have been dear to their hearts for generations. But just as there will be mourning over losses or changes in parish life, there likewise will be new blessings with enhanced locations, renewed communities, and the ability to redirect our efforts toward sharing the Gospel and making disciples. I believe that as we work to *right-size* the Archdiocese and reallocate our personnel and financial resources, the footprint of the Church's presence—her mission, her faith, and her people—will remain.

Our work will be guided primarily by three key pillars:

- **Vibrant parishes:** We want every parish to be a living heartbeat of faith, where people encounter Christ, grow in discipleship, and build real community.
- **Flourishing priests:** Our priests are at the heart of parish life. They must be supported and free to focus on what they do best: preaching the Gospel, celebrating the Sacraments, and caring for the faithful.
- **Mission ready:** By realigning our clergy and financial resources wisely, we will bring the joy of Christ to the next generation with energy and purpose. We will hand the next generation a Church that is vibrant, thriving, and alive in every way.

Next spring, each parish will host two listening sessions where you will have a chance to share your insights, hopes, and dreams for the future of your local parish and the Archdiocese. In the meantime, I ask for your prayers. Special prayer cards will be made available for this purpose at each parish. You can also access the prayer at restructuring.aod.org, along with other resources related to this effort.

Additionally, every step of the restructuring will be covered in *Detroit Catholic*, the Archdiocese's free online news source. The best way to be kept up to date with how our restructuring unfolds is to sign up to get *Detroit Catholic* delivered to your email inbox either daily or weekly at detroitcatholic.com/subscribe.

Brothers and sisters, thank you for your generosity of time, prayer, talent, and faith. Together, and with God's grace, we will fashion a Church in this Archdiocese that is vibrant, flourishing, and fully alive in the mission of the Gospel.

May God bless you abundantly.



Most Reverend Edward J. Weisenburger
Archbishop of Detroit