



# SAINT BRENDAN SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA PARISH FAMILY

**PARTNERS  
IN THE GOSPEL**

**WINTER 2025 NEWSLETTER**



**SAINT BRENDAN**  
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**SAINT TERESA OF CALCUTTA**  
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## FROM OUR PASTOR

Hello St. Brendan and St. Teresa Parish!

May the Lord's blessings and peace be with each of you in the Jubilee Year of Hope. I am so grateful we have the greatest gift of all in the Holy Eucharist, Jesus' very Body and Blood, to give us the strength we need in the journey toward becoming "One Canonical Parish." This endeavor, set for every Parish Family within the Archdiocese, began on July 1st, 2024 and will span three years.

As we embarked on this journey together as a Parish Family, it has been so great seeing parishioners take advantage of the numerous opportunities we have had to get to know one another. This first year is primarily focused on fostering these connections. We have enjoyed various events such as Parish Picnics, the Trent Horn talk that packed St. Teresa, and the 'Parents Great Escape.' Parishioners have been attending Daily Mass at each Parish church, and we have hosted events like the altar server bootcamp, the Jesus Thirsts movie night, as well as a few adult education classes during Advent with more planned during Lent. The youth group at St. Teresa has welcomed the youth from St. Brendan, and we've seen many parishioners attending weekend Masses at each Parish church. Additionally, we have had several joint staff meetings, a working retreat day for both staffs, staff lunches, and two joint Christmas parties including one with the school faculty and staff. Our men's group had a fantastic Louisiana-style boil and bonfire with a great turn-out of about 70 guys, and the joint women's group held a well-attended cookie-exchange in December.

**WINTER 2025**

## LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR CONTINUED

Daily interactions at the school also foster connections among families from both parishes. That is a lot! And that's just off the top of my head!

We have already put together a joint Parish Family Advisory Council (I call it the PAC-9 since we are Parish Family 9). They are pictured later in this Newsletter, and we have been meeting monthly since September. Karah Burgess, along with our dedicated staff from both parishes and many volunteers, have been instrumental in supporting these efforts.

Starting in May, we will be holding Listening Sessions open to everyone from both Parishes. These initial sessions will focus on our current identity, our strengths and our opportunities for growth as well as some statistical information around the vitality of our Parish Family. We will then explore who we want to become, how do we get there followed by what should we be called. These steps will help us to finalize what the Archdiocese calls our 'One Parish Plan.' This process, over the next 2.5 years, is designed to be an intentional journey to discover who we are going to be as one Parish. Everyone will have an opportunity to have their voice heard, but that part depends on your level of engagement.

It is important to remember why this initiative is taking place across the Archdiocese. There isn't just one reason, there are many. We have a lack of sufficient priests to care for all the souls of the Archdiocese. We also have parishes who, on average, have Masses that are at just 33% capacity. We have a lack of being able to find sufficient and qualified staffs to help us run the Parishes. And many priests have buildings with deferred maintenance for which they can't afford to pay.

I know this isn't easy, believe me, I have tried to lift the load (with God's grace and a torn Achilles, Fr. Peter, and an incredible self-sacrificing staff) for the last 8 months. But we need your help. With guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will navigate this process at St. Teresa and St. Brendan, growing stronger together in faith, love and hope. This will require the collective effort of our entire Parish Family, working to build up the body of Christ and support one another.

In the peace of Christ,  
Fr. Wichert

### Prayer for Partners in the Gospel

Gracious God, we praise and thank you for the Catholic Church in Western Washington. We praise and thank you for the women and men who have shared the joy of the Gospel here for more than 170 years. Send your Holy Spirit upon us that we might encounter your Son anew and become more effective partners in sharing the Good News of his saving love. May our partnership in the Gospel empower us to be your missionary disciples, bringing the Good News to all, especially to those who are marginalized or hurting in any way. Give us the courage, the flexibility and the vision to renew parish life, so that the good work, begun long ago, may continue among us, and one day, be brought to completion in your Kingdom, where you live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## OUR PARISH FAMILY IN COMMUNITY

Our Parish Family has had some great opportunities to gather in community, here are some highlights:



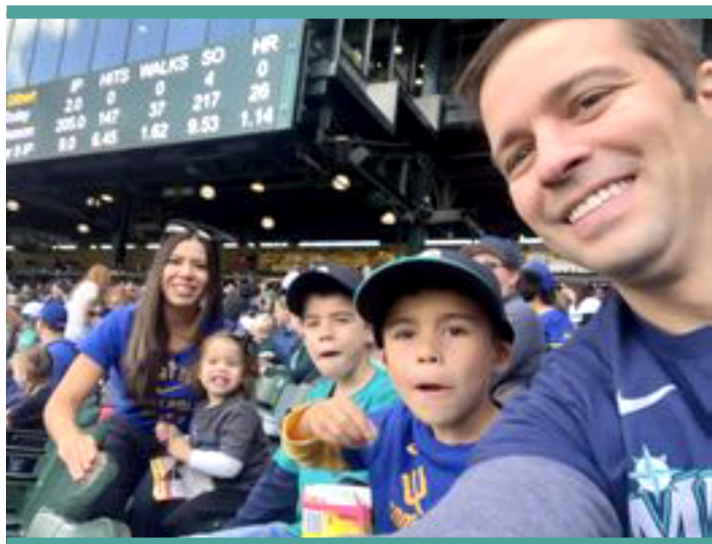
St. Brendan Parish & School Picnic - August 25th



Saint Teresa Parish Picnic - September 8th



Our parish family hosted Trent Horn at Saint Teresa – September 12th



Our community took to T Mobile Park for the Seattle Mariners Family Day – September 29th.



Men's Group Seafood Boil Saint Teresa – Oct. 17th  
WINTER 2025



Women's Group Cookie Exchange – Dec. 16th

## THE "WHY" BEHIND PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

A special message from Father Gary Lazzeroni, Vicar General

*"We are carrying this burden of change because we want to be better at forming missionary disciples. We want to offer beautiful and prayerful liturgy experiences to help people deepen and nourish their encounter with Christ. We want to inspire our people to be formed and shaped as the living Body of Christ, bringing the love of Jesus to the world, especially to those on the margins. This is why we are doing this. We are restructuring now so we can spark and fuel people's faith so that they can go out and share the light of Christ.*

*During all the logistical and administrative work of restructuring, let's not lose sight of that. Thank you for your partnership to re-envision the Catholic Church in Western Washington!"*

## WHAT DOES PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL MEAN FOR PARISHIONERS?

**Answer:** Overall, parishioners should experience a more vibrant and engaged Catholic community. They will have more opportunities for personal faith growth and the opportunity for a closer relationship with their parish leaders. Practically, it also means that parishioners will experience administrative changes. This will differ by parish family, but some changes included a new pastor and parochial vicar, changes to Mass times and locations, changes to parish leadership teams and new outreach ministry opportunities. **Read all Q&As [here](#).**

## STAGES OF ONE PARISH PLANNING

### Five Stages of One Parish Planning



**Listening Session: May 1, 2025 6:30PM at St. Teresa**

## CURRENT STAGE: WHO ARE WE? PROPOSED START DATE FOR THIS STAGE IS APR-JUN 2025, WITH AN ANTICIPATED DURATION OF 3-6 MONTHS.

A critical component of this process is prayerful consideration of these four questions and a commitment to listen well to each other, and together, to what the Holy Spirit is calling the parish family to embrace in the future. This process is rooted in discernment, which is always the work of the Holy Spirit and not the advancing of a particular agenda.

Central to the work of coming together as one parish is embracing the co-responsibility everyone shares for the life of the Church - a responsibility rooted our common baptism. Co-responsibility in parish life means embracing the responsibility everyone shares – clergy, volunteers, lay leaders and ministers in the mission of the Church.

*“...we think about all that the Lord gives us in baptism and the dignity of what is rooted in baptism. It is that baptismal life that makes us sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters of Christ and therefore brothers and sisters with one another. It makes us the family of God. The more we can prayerfully enter into these theologically grounded identities of who we are, the better capable we’re going to be of embracing and shouldering this co-responsibility that all of the baptized have for the mission of the Church.”*

— Archbishop Etienne

## PARISH FAMILY UPDATE

### What progress have we made so far?

- Ermina Swager is publishing bulletins for both St. Brendan and Saint Teresa, and we have started distributing both bulletins at each parish.
- Mark Sizemore has been hired as the lead for Child & Family Ministry for both St. Brendan and Saint Teresa. He has been spending time in the 2nd grade classroom at St. Brendan Catholic School.
- Parish staff from both St. Brendan and Saint Teresa have come together every month since June to pray together and talk through any upcoming events, relay any questions coming from our parish communities and discuss ways to improve or streamline our work.

## IMPORTANT DATES TO NOTE

- ◇ Adult Education Series: 6:00PM, March 12th, 19th, 26th, April 2nd at St. Brendan
- ◇ Annual Potato Bake: 5:00PM, March 17th at St. Brendan School Gym
- ◇ Soup Suppers & Stations of the Cross:
  - ◇ St. Brendan: Soup Supper starting at 6:00PM followed by Stations of the Cross at 7:00PM March 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th and April 4th
  - ◇ St. Teresa: Stations of the Cross at 6:30PM followed by Soup Supper March 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th and April 4th
- ◇ Chrism Mass: 7:00PM, April 10th St. James Cathedral, Seattle
- ◇ Soup Supper 6:30PM and Living Stations of the Cross 8:00PM, April 11th at St. Brendan
- ◇ Tenebrae: 8:30PM, April 16th at St. Brendan

## MEET YOUR FAMILY PARISH ADVISORY COUNCIL

Father Wichert has created a Parish Family Advisory Council to serve as the primary consultative body for the strategic pastoral plan and the formation of the new canonical parish.



Rev. Nicholas Wichert  
Pastor



Rev. Peter Adoko-Enchill  
Parochial Vicar



Dominic Anderson



Sandra Barnett



Karah Burgess



Innocent Deepa



Carol Fabrizio



Saul Manzano



Mike Rice



Cindy Sarinyamas



Greg Van Hollebeke

### The role of the Parish Family Advisory Council:

- This group will be the pastor's go-to group to consult about all Partners in the Gospel questions, including changes that impact the parish family, shared events, collaboration across parishes, etc.
- Primary focus on the health of the entire parish family, looking beyond the needs of each individual community.
- Leading our Parish community through the Listening Sessions
- Responsible for the creation of the strategic pastoral plan called One Parish Plan that will be submitted to the Archbishop prior to becoming on canonical parish.
- Ensure that the necessary discernment processes are in place for the completion of the strategic pastoral plan. The group should represent the ethnic, cultural, and economic makeup for the new parish family.
- Schools and their ministries should also be considered as part of the Parish Family Advisory Council.

In July 2024, Archbishop Paul D. Etienne released a letter to the People of God to commemorate this important and historic next chapter in the Archdiocese of Seattle. Use the links to the right to view the letter.

[English](#)

[Spanish](#)

For more information about Partners in the Gospel, please visit: <https://archseattle.org/partners/>

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