



LISTENING SESSIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS ALL THINGS NEW?

We all know that the Church of today is not the same that it was 50, 100 or 150+ years ago, and yet we are still functioning in many ways out of the same mode of evangelization. We have inherited a great treasure of Catholic institutions from previous generations, but as the Catholic population and society have shifted over the past several decades, they are no longer as effective or sustainable as they once were.

We need to ask ourselves what our parishes, ministries and institutions need to look like in order to effectively share the faith in a way that is suitable and sustainable for our children and generations to come.

All Things New will evaluate the effectiveness of the Church in St. Louis in proclaiming the Gospel and will identify opportunities for improvement and renewal within all parishes, schools and curia offices and agencies.

I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there shall be no more death or mourning, wailing or pain, the old order has passed away." The one who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Then he said, "Write these words down, for they are trustworthy and true."

Revelation 21:3-5

WHAT ARE THE LISTENING SESSIONS AND HOW DO I ATTEND ONE AT MY PARISH?

The Archdiocese of St. Louis will host over 350 listening sessions throughout our 178 parishes between October 8 and November 19, 2022. Parishioners are invited to register for their parish's listening session beginning mid-September <https://allthingsnew.archstl.org/>.

Parishioners must register in order to attend a Listening Session. Registration will close once the designated room's seating capacity is reached. There will not be additional opportunities for Listening Sessions other than the ones scheduled for each parish.

Each listening session will be facilitated by volunteer parishioners from a different parish. These trained facilitators will share pre-recorded messages from Archbishop Rozanski and Fr. Chris Martin, Vicar for Strategic Planning, with an overview of All Things New, a planning area overview and multiple DRAFT model options to consider for the respective planning area. A brief time will be allowed for small group discussion and facilitated large group feedback.

HOW CAN I PREPARE FOR A LISTENING SESSION?

The Archdiocese of St. Louis has created Parish Workbooks as a supplementary resource to help parishioners prepare for the listening sessions. The workbooks are meant to equip pastors and parishioners with data about the Archdiocese of St. Louis, their local planning area, and their specific parish. The data contained in the Parish Workbook was created by the Pastoral Planning Committee and validated by pastors and Key Parish Leaders over the past several months. The workbooks incorporate data gathered over the past twenty years from parishes across the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

The Archdiocese of St. Louis is releasing the Parish Workbooks for each of our 178 parishes several weeks in advance of the listening sessions so parishioners have adequate time to review the information and fully inform themselves in preparation for their parish's scheduled listening sessions. Each Parish Workbook is posted on allthingsnew.archstl.org for anyone to view.

WHAT IF I CANNOT ATTEND A LISTENING SESSION?

After the final listening session in each planning area, the Archdiocese of St. Louis will make public the content presented at all the parish's Listening Sessions in that planning area and will offer an additional opportunity for parishioners to provide open-ended feedback through an online survey. The survey will remain open until December 31, 2022. Parishioner feedback to the models is critical, as it will be used to help shape the future of the Archdiocese of St. Louis.

WHAT IS A PLANNING AREA?

A Planning Area is a number of parishes and schools in a geographic region which will be considered together to develop proposed structural options for the future. There are 15 planning areas in the Archdiocese.

WHAT IS A MODEL?

A model is an option as to how parishes in your Planning Area could be structured. The models are “unfinished” because they need parishioner and community insight and feedback. The purpose of the Listening Sessions is to gather input on these proposed options so that a recommendation can be presented to Archbishop Rozanski for his discernment.

WILL I FIND OUT IF MY PARISH IS GOING TO CLOSE AT THE LISTENING SESSIONS?

No. You will be presented with different DRAFT models for your planning area which may show merger options. No decisions will be made about specific closures or mergers until after all the Listening Sessions and additional feedback opportunities.

WILL I FIND OUT IF MY PARISH SCHOOL IS CLOSING?

No. As we look to ensure a more sustainable future, it is our priority to provide an educational model that is accessible, affordable, strong in Catholic identity and more equitable towards our teachers. We are actively working to identify a solution that satisfies these criteria. While we do not have an exact date for when this information will be available, our goal is to make an announcement in advance of re-enrollment time for the 2023-24 academic year.

IF I CANNOT MAKE A LISTENING SESSION AT MY OWN PARISH, CAN I GO TO ANOTHER PARISH'S LISTENING SESSION?

Each Listening Session will have information unique to the parish hosting it and the planning area in which it is located, so it is best to go to your parish's Listening Session.

DO I HAVE TO GO TO BOTH LISTENING SESSIONS IF MY PARISH HAS TWO LISTENING SESSIONS?

The same information is presented at both Listening Sessions at the same parish, so you are invited to attend one of them.