

why **change?**

on**mission**churchalive.org

Change occurs for one of three reasons. All three are present in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, but one is the most powerful.

3 CHALLENGE

As the Catholic Church in southwestern PA, we face daunting and immediate challenges which require a new response. *On Mission for The Church Alive!* is an effort to proactively respond to these difficult realities.

Over the last 15 years, Mass attendance, weddings, infant baptisms, and Catholic elementary school enrollment **have declined more than 40%**.

50% of our 192 parishes run annual deficits. Many parishes are rapidly depleting their savings to pay the bills.

The number of priests in active ministry will decline from **217 to 112** in the next 10 years.

Check out the reverse side of this leaflet for more information about the realities facing our local Church.

2 EVOLUTION

Over the past 15 years, the population in the six-county area has shifted. In some areas, new opportunities and industries have blossomed. In others, the reverse is true. Technology and communication have changed rapidly. Neither Facebook nor the iPad existed 15 years ago but both are now critical to communication.

On Mission for The Church Alive! is looking at which strategies, structures, and approaches will help our parishes, schools, and ministries to share the Catholic faith in ways that are relevant in the 21st century.

1 CHOICE

We want our young people to know Jesus. We want our friends to experience His peace. We want vibrant parishes that inspire and call people back to the Church. We want strong communities that can care for the least among us and continue to help all of us in times of need. We want priests who are holy, happy, and healthy. For those we love, we would do anything. *On Mission for The Church Alive!* is an opportunity for us to reflect on the choices we can make individually and collectively to demonstrate our love for God and for each other.

God doesn't make us follow Him. He invites us to choose to follow Him and ultimately that choice changes everything.

did you know?

- The fastest growing "religious" group in the U.S. is the "nones" - those who practice no religion.
- 7% of Catholics currently provide over 80% of the service and giving to parishes. The majority of these Catholics are ages 50-75.
- 17% of practicing Catholics in the United States are under age 40.
- Catholic marriages have declined by more than half in the past 15 years, leading to a dramatic decline in baptisms, first communions, and confirmations.
- With 192 parishes today, the Diocese of Pittsburgh is the 12th largest U.S. diocese by number of parishes but the 27th largest diocese by number of registered Catholics.
- Over half of the priests in active ministry today are over age 60.
- The Millennial Generation (under age 35) is now the largest living generation in the U.S. This presents a great opportunity to grow the Church!

be a part of the change

Attend one of your parish's On Mission Consultation sessions this Fall. Every parish in the Diocese will host consultation sessions between October 10 and December 1. This is an opportunity to receive information about what's going on in your local community and give feedback on proposed changes that are intended to help us grow. We need your input to help shape these proposals and make them as effective as possible.

Your parish sessions will take place: