

Letter to the Faithful: Next Phase of Unleash the Gospel

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Jesus is risen! Praise to him now and forever! Easter blessings to all of you, Christ's faithful in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

With great joy we celebrate these 50 days of Easter, and in these days, we are renewed and ready for mission. It is the same mission as that of the apostles, and the other men and women who were the first witnesses of the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. We too are sent into the world to witness Christ's victory over sin and death. This is the message that we are called to proclaim, the Gospel we are called to unleash: Christ is truly risen!

On Easter, we renewed our baptismal promises. By Holy Baptism we were given a new birth, and by water and the Holy Spirit, we have been forgiven of our sins. Through our Baptism, we have been consecrated as witnesses to the Gospel, so that every talent we have, every ability God has given us of heart and mind, must be used to spread the Good News. *Unleash the Gospel* is about this commitment, to do everything we can to help people encounter the Risen Christ.

And in this spirit, I would like to announce the **next phase of our movement to Unleash the Gospel: the renewal of our parishes**. For the Gospel to truly be unleashed, we must re-found our parishes so that everything we do — how we pray, how we minister, how we serve — leads us to be more effective witnesses to the Gospel.

This next phase of our missionary journey will require prayer, innovation, and hard work so that our parish communities become what God made them to be: places where individuals and families encounter Jesus anew, grow as his disciples, and are equipped to be witnesses of the Risen Christ.

This is about realizing the fruit of Synod 16, the work that began in 2014 when we were united with Mary and the Twelve and prayed for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We heard God calling us to move from maintenance to mission and to go out and unleash the Gospel.

Each parish in the Archdiocese will create a plan to realign all its activity and ministry to our shared mission to Unleash the Gospel. These missionary strategic

plans will provide the direction and focus for each parish's missionary transformation.

Starting this summer, a small group of parishes will begin the process of creating these plans. Other parishes will follow early next year and more will continue after.

This is nothing short of a complete overhaul of our Church in Detroit. A task too great to do on our own. But we are not alone. Christ is risen. We cannot fail, because we are in communion with the risen Jesus and act in the power of his Spirit.

So, I ask you to join me in prayer. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit to come and transform our parishes. Let us pray for boldness in our plans and efforts. Let us pray that each one of our parishes may discern how it is called to unleash the Gospel with its unique set of gifts and circumstances.

With our eyes fixed on Jesus, through prayer and work, together, we will become who God wants us to become, a band of joyful missionary disciples in southeast Michigan. In the spirit of Blessed Fr. Solanus, and through the intercession of Our Lady, Star of the New Evangelization, I am thanking God ahead of time for our missionary transformation.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend Allen H. Vigneron

Archbishop of Detroit