



# *You will be my Witnesses*

GATHERED AND SENT FROM  
THE UPPER ROOM

YEAR I

ARCHDIOCESAN SYNOD IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

SYNOD 2022

## YEAR 1 (JULY 2023 – JUNE 2024) ARCHDIOCESAN SYNOD IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

In the Post-Synodal Pastoral Letter *You Will Be My Witnesses* ([archspm.org/synodletter](http://archspm.org/synodletter)) I established “Small Groups” as the Synod Priority during Year I (July 2023 – June 2024) of Synod implementation. In doing so, I adopted Synod Proposition 19, from the 2022 Archdiocesan Synod Assembly, which reads:

Create or grow a small group ministry at every parish that fosters personal relationships, builds community and provides formation to help parishioners grow as joyful missionary disciples of Christ.

- Types: Bible study, faith sharing, prayer, sacramental preparation, evangelization
- Variety of formats and common interest groups: couples, women, men, single, mixed age, similar stage of life
- Parishes may collaborate with other parishes on this ministry, as desired.

I also set the following goals corresponding to the Upper Room Mysteries to implement the Small Group Priority.

- Foot-washing: establish one or more small groups that reach the marginalized and the poor
- Eucharist: use newly formed small groups in spring 2024 as a vehicle for teaching about the “beauty, form and meaning of the Mass” (Proposition 9)
- Pentecost:
  - Praying in the Spirit - create small groups that can offer a prayer ministry for those in need
  - ‘Going forth’ in the Spirit - create small groups that are in the service of evangelization (Proposition 15)

### ~ PART I ~ PREPARATION, SEVEN MONTHS OF TILLING THE SOIL NOVEMBER 2022 – JUNE 2023

Before the seed is planted, the farmer needs to till the soil. Tilling requires work, but when done with precision and care, it prepares the soil to produce a rich harvest.

November 2022 through June 2023 gives us seven months to “till the soil” in preparation for growing a small group ministry in Year I (July 2023 – June 2024). Our work in the next seven months has a two-fold aim:

- i) Enable us to encounter or re-encounter our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sower of the Seed, and allow the life of his Spirit to be renewed in us. For the members of the parish Synod Evangelization Teams, this will primarily happen by participating in the School of Discipleship.
- ii) Align Archdiocesan and parish resources and structures to facilitate this encounter/re-encounter. This will happen through specific tasks taken up by Pastors, the parish Synod Evangelization Teams, and the Archdiocesan Office of Synod Evangelization.

All of us, moreover, can respond in these seven months to the invitation to pray to the master of the harvest. All of us can encounter Jesus afresh. All of us can take concrete steps to prepare well—to till the soil—for the Year I Synod Priority.



### **1. Pastor Establishes His Parish Synod Evangelization Team (Fall 2022)**

I have directed each parish or cluster of parishes to establish a parish Synod Evangelization Team, whose mission commences in January 2023 and whose members will serve an initial term through June 30, 2026. Pastors have received separate communications with more details on Team membership.

The Evangelization Team is to be the catalyst within the parish for renewed discipleship, fruitful evangelization, and assisting the Pastor in implementing the Synod Priorities outlined in the pastoral letter. The Evangelization Team is to work in close collaboration with the Parish Pastoral Council, parish staff and other parish leadership, but has the unique purpose of building missionary disciples within the parish, not only for Synod implementation, but also to fuel a vigorous proclamation of the Good News beyond the parish.

### **2. Pastor and Evangelization Team Members Attend a Synod Implementation Kick-Off Event (January 2023)**

Pastors and their Evangelization Team members are to attend one of the three Kick-Off Events hosted by the Archdiocese and held in late January. The times and venues for these events have been communicated to Pastors and Parish Business Administrators.

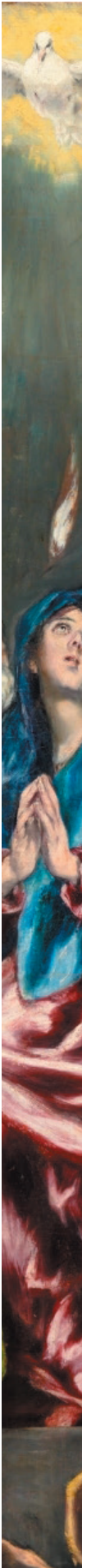
### **3. Evangelization Team Members Participate in Discipleship Formation Events (Winter and Spring 2023)**

Evangelization Team members are to participate in person in the Catechetical Institute's seven-session School of Discipleship experience being offered February – March 2023. This is an opportunity for Team members to become renewed disciples through prayer, team-building and formation. The School of Discipleship ([cistudent.com/the-experience/](http://cistudent.com/the-experience/)) will be offered in person at Our Lady of Grace Church in Edina and livestreamed to other locations throughout the Archdiocese. Following the training, participants are expected to personally engage in the "40 Day Challenge," which culminates with "The Holy Spirit in the Life of the Disciple Seminar" on May 20, 2023.

### **4. Pastor and Evangelization Team Members Engage in a "Small Group Visioning Day" to Prepare for Year I (April/May 2023)**

Shortly after Easter, each Pastor is to meet with his Evangelization Team on a day of their choosing for an approximately six-hour video-guided Small Group Visioning Day. The structure of this experience will resemble the Parish Synod Leadership Team Consultation of February/March 2022. This day will help Evangelization Teams to develop or grow their vision of small group ministry at their parish, in order to more effectively "fish" for participants for the fall 2023 Small Group Leader Formation Series.

Following the Small Group Visioning Day, I would encourage Evangelization Teams to meet monthly to pray together, learn and encourage one another in making invitations to the fall 2023 Small Group Leader Formation series.



~ PART II ~  
**SOWING THE SEED THROUGH SMALL GROUPS**  
 JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024

**5. Prospective Small Group Leaders Attend Formation Series (Fall 2023)**

I am directing each parish or cluster of parishes to host a 7-part Small Group Leader Formation series in fall 2023, using materials developed by the Archdiocese. This formation is intended for Evangelization Team members, those whom they have identified as potential small group leaders, and other parishioners interested in discerning small group leadership.

There will be a capstone Small Group Planning Day in early December for Pastors, Evangelization Team members and participants in the Small Group Leader Formation series.

If a parish has an existing small group ministry, those small groups can continue to meet. Nevertheless, the parish should also host the Archdiocesan Small Group Leader Formation series and the Planning Day.

**6. Parishes Begin Small Group Ministry (Winter/Spring 2024)**

I am asking each parish or cluster to aim to begin its small group ministry by February 14, 2024 (Ash Wednesday). Each of the three Upper Room Goals – Foot-washing, Eucharist, and Pentecost – should be included as components of that ministry.

My hope and prayer is for these small group ministries to be a fruitful part of parish life for years to come.

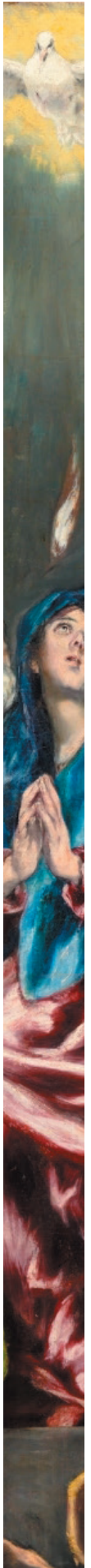
~ PART III ~  
**SYNOD IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST BY GROUP**

**I. PARISHES**

I direct each parish to:

- Offer parishioners the 7-week Small Group Leader Formation series, sometime between September 17 and November 19, 2023.
- Host a Small Group Planning Day for the Pastor, Evangelization Team members and participants in the Small Group Leader Formation series on December 2 (preferred date), 3, 9, or 10, 2023.
- Aim to begin your small group ministry by February 14, 2024 (Ash Wednesday). Small groups can take many forms and be as simple as general faith sharing groups. I do ask that some of those small groups fulfill goals related to the three mysteries of the Upper Room as noted below.

- Fulfilling the Foot-washing Goal: Each parish's small group ministry offerings are to include one or more small groups that reach the marginalized and the poor. Examples would include, but not be limited to:
  - small faith sharing groups at nursing homes.
  - small groups whose members have an apostolate with the poor.
  - small groups that provide corporal and spiritual works of mercy for those in need.
  - small groups whose members focus on Catholic Social Teachings and putting them into practice.
- Fulfilling the Eucharist Goal: Each parish's small group ministry offerings are to include one or more small groups that teach about the "beauty, form and meaning of the Mass," beginning in Lent 2024. Examples would include, but are not limited to:
  - use of a video series or other resources specially created for the Eucharistic Revival ([eucharisticrevival.org](http://eucharisticrevival.org)).
  - small groups for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to grow in their charism.
  - small groups that meet before or after the Sunday Mass to meditate on the readings/preaching of the day.
- Fulfilling the Pentecost 'Praying in the Spirit' Goal: Each parish's small group ministry offerings are to include one or more small groups that promote a prayer ministry for those in need. Ideas include, but are not limited to:
  - Invite the Evangelization Team and other members of the parish to participate in the Archdiocesan "Charismata" apostolate under the direction of the Vicar for Charisms.
  - Pray for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
  - Connect with the Archdiocesan Healing Prayer Team ministry or *Cor Jesu*, the First Friday young adult outreach of the Saint Paul Seminary.
  - Welcome a charismatic prayer group in the parish.
- Fulfilling the Pentecost 'Going forth' in the Spirit Goal: Each parish's small group ministry offerings are to include one or more small groups that are in the service of evangelization. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - With the help of the Evangelization Team, cultivate small groups based upon common interests and bonds (*oikos* cells/groups). Such groups are not directly attached to the pastoral or sacramental ministry of the parish but can serve as bridges to the community of faith. These faith sharing groups may be open to including non-parishioners and even non-Catholics.
  - With the help of the Evangelization Team, form parish-based ecumenical small groups.
  - Train members of the Evangelization Team on how to plan and host "open" cells/groups that welcome neighbors, friends, extended families and co-workers to meet the merciful Christ and hear testimonies. Recalling the example of the Apostle Matthew, these open-cell meetings are often called "Matthew's House."



In addition to the above directives, I invite each parish to do the following:

- pray regularly the Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer at Mass ([archspm.org/synodprayer](http://archspm.org/synodprayer)).
- encourage parishioners who participated in the fall 2021 Synod Small Groups to reconvene in their groups to pray, read and discuss the pastoral letter and/or to do acts of service in the parish or larger community, during the period of tilling the soil (November 2022 – June 2023).
- establish an intercessory prayer team for the fruitfulness of the Synod in your parish, in the parishes of your deanery, and in the Archdiocese overall.

## 2. PASTORS AND PAROCHIAL ADMINISTRATORS

In addition to forming a parish Synod Evangelization Team, I direct each Pastor and Parochial Administrator to:

- attend, with your Evangelization Team, one of the three Synod Implementation Kick-Off events in January 2023.
- schedule and host the Small Group Visioning Day, between April 9 and May 19, 2023.
- using the simple format we will supply, submit to me a plan for the Evangelization Team to recruit candidates for the Small Group Leadership Formation series for your parish or cluster by June 1, 2023.
- support the work of the Evangelization Team of your parish or cluster.
- schedule and host the Small Group Planning Day on December 2 (preferred date), 3, 9 or 10, 2023.
- using the simple format we will supply, submit to me a 2024 Small Group Plan for your parish or cluster that captures the fruit of the Small Group Planning Day by December 31, 2023.

Furthermore, I encourage each Pastor and Parochial Administrator to:

- participate in the School of Discipleship, the subsequent “40 Day Challenge,” and the “Holy Spirit in the Life of the Disciple Seminar,” to be held on Saturday, May 20, 2023.
- invite someone from the Office of Synod Evangelization to speak at your parish, or with your Evangelization Team or staff.

In order to prepare for Year 2 of Synod Implementation, I direct each Pastor and Parochial Administrator to:

- schedule and host a Parish Synod Evangelization Team Planning Day, between March 31 and May 18, 2024. The Pastor and Evangelization Team may choose to invite other “specialists” in the parish, especially those involved in the liturgy, to attend all or part of the Planning Day, since the Year 2 Synod Priority is the Mass.
- submit your Year 2 (2024-25) parish Synod Implementation Plan to me by June 1, 2024.

### 3. PARISH SYNOD EVANGELIZATION TEAM MEMBERS

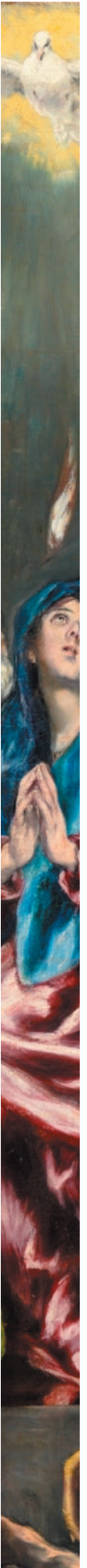
I ask each Evangelization Team member to:

- pray the Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer daily ([www.archspm.org/synodprayer](http://www.archspm.org/synodprayer)).
- read and pray with the pastoral letter by January 17, 2023.
- attend one of the three Synod Implementation Kick-Off events in January 2023, preferably with your other Evangelization Team members.
- participate in the seven sessions of the School of Discipleship, February 7 – March 21, 2023.
- engage in the “40 Day Challenge” following the School of Discipleship.
- engage in the Small Group Visioning Day at your parish between April 9 and May 19, 2023.
- participate in the “Holy Spirit in the Life of the Disciple Seminar” on May 20, 2023.
- take the practical next steps to deepen your own relationship with God, building upon the experience of the School of Discipleship, “40 Day Challenge,” and “Holy Spirit in the Life of the Disciple Seminar.”
- after the Small Group Visioning Day, identify parishioners who have the potential to be small group leaders, and invite them to the fall 2023 Small Group Leader Formation series.
- attend regular Evangelization Team meetings at the service of this implementation (frequency to be determined, although likely monthly).
- discern participation in a Life in the Spirit Seminar, offered under the auspices of the Vicar for Charisms during fall 2023 or spring 2024.
- personally participate in the Small Group Leader Formation series in fall 2023.
- engage in the Small Group Planning Day at your parish on December 2 (preferred date), 3, 9 or 10, 2023.
- carry-out the work of the Evangelization Team in keeping with your gifts and interests.
- in order to prepare for Year 2 Synod implementation participate in your Parish Synod Evangelization Team Planning Day, to be held between March 31 and May 18, 2024.

### 4. THE ARCHDIOCESAN OFFICE OF SYNOD EVANGELIZATION

*In support of parishes implementing the Year 1 Priority, I direct the Archdiocesan Office of Synod Evangelization to coordinate or perform the following actions:*

- Be available to meet with Pastors, Evangelization Teams, parish staffs, and other parish groups.
- Continue to listen to the needs and desires of Pastors, Evangelization Teams, and the faithful at large with respect to Synod implementation.
- Work with the Archdiocesan Office of Communications to develop resources to assist the faithful in reading the pastoral letter through various media, posting those options at [archspm.org/synodletter](http://archspm.org/synodletter) by January 15, 2023.
- Host three parish Synod Implementation Kick-off Events for all Pastors and Evangelization Teams in January 2023.
- Convene an Archdiocesan Synod Evangelization Prayer Team, under the direction of the Vicar for Charisms and the Director of the Office of Synod Evangelization, to provide intercessory prayer support for this Synod Evangelization, while inviting others to pray for its fruitfulness as well, by January 31, 2023.
- Collaborate with the Archbishop Flynn Catechetical Institute to offer the School of Discipleship experience to clergy and Evangelization Team members, with live-streaming sites available in the deaneries, February – March 2023.





- Support Evangelization Team members as they engage in the “40 Day Challenge” following the School of Discipleship.
- Develop materials for the Small Group Visioning Day, including materials for Evangelization Team members to recruit prospective small group leaders, by April 6, 2023.
- Collaborate with the Catechetical Institute to offer the “Holy Spirit in the Life of the Disciple Seminar” on May 20, 2023.
- Prepare the fall 2023 Small Group Leader Formation session materials by September 1, 2023.
- Develop a user-friendly list of recommended small group resources for parishes to consider using (starting in winter 2024) by November 1, 2023.
- Under the auspices of the Vicar for Charisms, make available the following offerings to interested Evangelization Team members and other members of the laity and clergy:
  - Seven-week Life in the Spirit Seminar in fall 2023 and spring 2024
  - Twelve-week School of the Holy Spirit (for graduates of the Life in the Spirit Seminar) in spring 2024
- Develop materials for the Small Group Planning Day by November 30, 2023.
- Make available support to parishes who wish to launch a prayer team ministry, including training of prayer team members and those who desire to host post-Mass prayer meetings, through the Vicar for Charisms starting in winter 2024.

*To facilitate the future implementation of the Synod Priorities for Year 2 and 3, I also direct the Archdiocesan Office of Synod Evangelization to coordinate or perform the following actions in Year 1:*

- Support the Archdiocesan Office of Worship in reconstituting an Archdiocesan Worship Commission to be available to assist parishes in formulating and addressing Year 2 goals.
- Support the Office for the Mission of Catholic Education in establishing a Blue Ribbon Commission on Parents as Primary Educators.
  - The Commission is to formulate recommendations to form and inspire parents to understand and fulfill their responsibility as the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith.
  - The Commission is to be named by September 1, 2023, with final recommendations to be submitted to me by March 31, 2024.
  - Accepted recommendations will be used by parishes to discern, as appropriate to their context, in Year 2 and implement in Year 3.
  - Support the Lay Advisory Board in developing by December 31, 2023, a proposal for the establishment of a service-oriented Archdiocesan Pastoral Council with structures that give voice to the Archdiocese’s diverse communities, regions and organizations.
- Prepare for release of the Year 2 Archdiocesan Synod Implementation Plan by January 25, 2024.
- Prepare materials for the spring 2024 Parish Synod Evangelization Team Planning Day by March 25, 2024.



## ~ PART IV ~

## INVITATIONS TO VARIOUS MEMBERS OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

I invite all members of the Body of Christ to take the actions listed below, in keeping with your state in life. As you do so, I invite you to discern:

- How is God stirring in my heart?
- What is my mission in light of this letter?
- To what next steps in following Him is Jesus calling me?

Please note that there will be additional resources developed in the coming months for listening to and praying with *You Will Be My Witnesses*, including a podcast of the letter itself. These will be posted at [archspm.org/synodletter](http://archspm.org/synodletter):

In addition, I invite all members of the Body of Christ to consider enrolling in an offering of the Catechetical Institute. The opportunities include: the Pillars Program (two-year course on the Catechism of the Catholic Church), the School of Discipleship experience, and other courses when they are offered. For more information, go to: [cistudent.com](http://cistudent.com).

**1. I invite each priest and deacon to:**

- pray daily for the fruitfulness of the Synod and to encourage others to do so.
- read and pray with the pastoral letter.
- live as ambassadors of the Synod by intentionally seeking unity in Christ and vigorously proclaiming the Good News of Jesus in word and action.

In addition (even though the Mass will not be a focus of Synod implementation until Year 2), I invite each priest and deacon to:

- meditate now on chapter 3 of Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*.
- promote the “beauty, form and meaning” of the Mass among all God’s holy people.

**2. I invite each member of consecrated life to:**

- pray daily for the fruitfulness of the Synod and to encourage others to do so.
- read and pray with the pastoral letter; perhaps with other women and men in consecrated life.
- live as ambassadors of the Synod by intentionally seeking unity in Christ and vigorously proclaiming the Good News of Jesus in word and action.

**3. I invite each lay ecclesial minister to:**

- pray the Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer daily ([www.archspm.org/synodprayer](http://www.archspm.org/synodprayer)).
- read and pray with the pastoral letter.
- walk with your Pastor and Evangelization Team members to implement fruitfully the Synod Priorities where you serve



**4. I invite each family to:**

- pray daily for the fruitfulness of Synod implementation in our Archdiocese and in your parish in particular. Perhaps you could pray the Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer ([archspm.org/synodprayer](http://archspm.org/synodprayer)) or add an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be for this intention when you pray before meals, at bedtime, or during a family Rosary.
- discern your participation in the Small Group Leader Formation Series at your parish in fall 2023.
- join a small group in winter 2024.

Furthermore, I invite all high school-aged youth to participate in NET Ministries' Lifeline/Lifeline Latinamente events ([archspm.org/lifeline](http://archspm.org/lifeline) and [archspm.org/lifeline-latinamente-2/](http://archspm.org/lifeline-latinamente-2/) ).

**5. I invite each young adult, adult single, divorced or separated, couple without children, and widow(er) to:**

- pray the Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer daily ([www.archspm.org/synodprayer](http://www.archspm.org/synodprayer)).
- read and pray with the pastoral letter during November 2022 – June 2023. Perhaps you could invite one or more friends to read it with you, including those who may not be currently practicing, and discuss it.
- sign-up for a weekly Eucharistic adoration holy hour at your parish or at a parish with an adoration chapel, if you have not already made such a commitment. Perhaps offer your weekly holy hour for the fruitfulness of the Synod implementation in your parish and for the evangelization of your friends, especially those you know who may be struggling in their relationship with God.
- discern your participation in the Small Group Leader Formation Series at your parish in fall 2023.
- join a small group in winter 2024 and invite at least one friend to attend with you, whether or not they are Catholic.

**6. I invite the homebound and those in eldercare facilities to:**

- pray the Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer daily ([archspm.org/synodprayer](http://archspm.org/synodprayer)).
- offer up your daily sufferings.
  - A possible intention during November 2022 – June 2023: for the members of your parish's Evangelization Team, that they will have a deeper encounter with Christ and the Holy Spirit during their time of preparation, so that they can be fruitful instruments of renewal in your parish.
  - A possible intention during July 2023 – June 2024: for the small group ministry in your parish to bear great fruit.
- consider forming a small group in your eldercare facility.
- consider forming a virtual small group with others who are homebound.
- share with others, especially those in younger generations, what your Catholic faith has meant to you over the years and how it has made a difference in your well-being.

**7. I invite each Catholic school to:**

- pray the Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer daily with your students, teachers and staff ([www.archspm.org/synodprayer](http://www.archspm.org/synodprayer)).
- offer small groups for parents starting in winter 2024.
- offer small groups for teachers and staff starting in winter 2024.

In addition, I invite each Catholic high school to:

- encourage your students to participate in NET Ministries' Lifeline/Lifeline Latinamente events ([archspm.org/lifeline](http://archspm.org/lifeline) and [archspm.org/lifeline-latinamente-2/](http://archspm.org/lifeline-latinamente-2/) ).
- provide opportunities for your students to read the pastoral letter and discuss it. I would welcome any high school student to send her or his thoughts about *You Will Be My Witnesses* to me directly at: [archbishop@archspm.org](mailto:archbishop@archspm.org).

**8. I invite the leadership and board members of other Catholic organizations in the Archdiocese to:**

- read and pray with the pastoral letter. While doing so, consider how your organization's current ministries align with the essence of the letter; and then deliberate how aspects of ministry might be renewed in light of the pastoral letter's call to be more evangelical: more of a Church that goes forth to help others encounter Jesus.
- consider inviting a member of the Office of Synod Evangelization to meet with your leadership team and/or board.

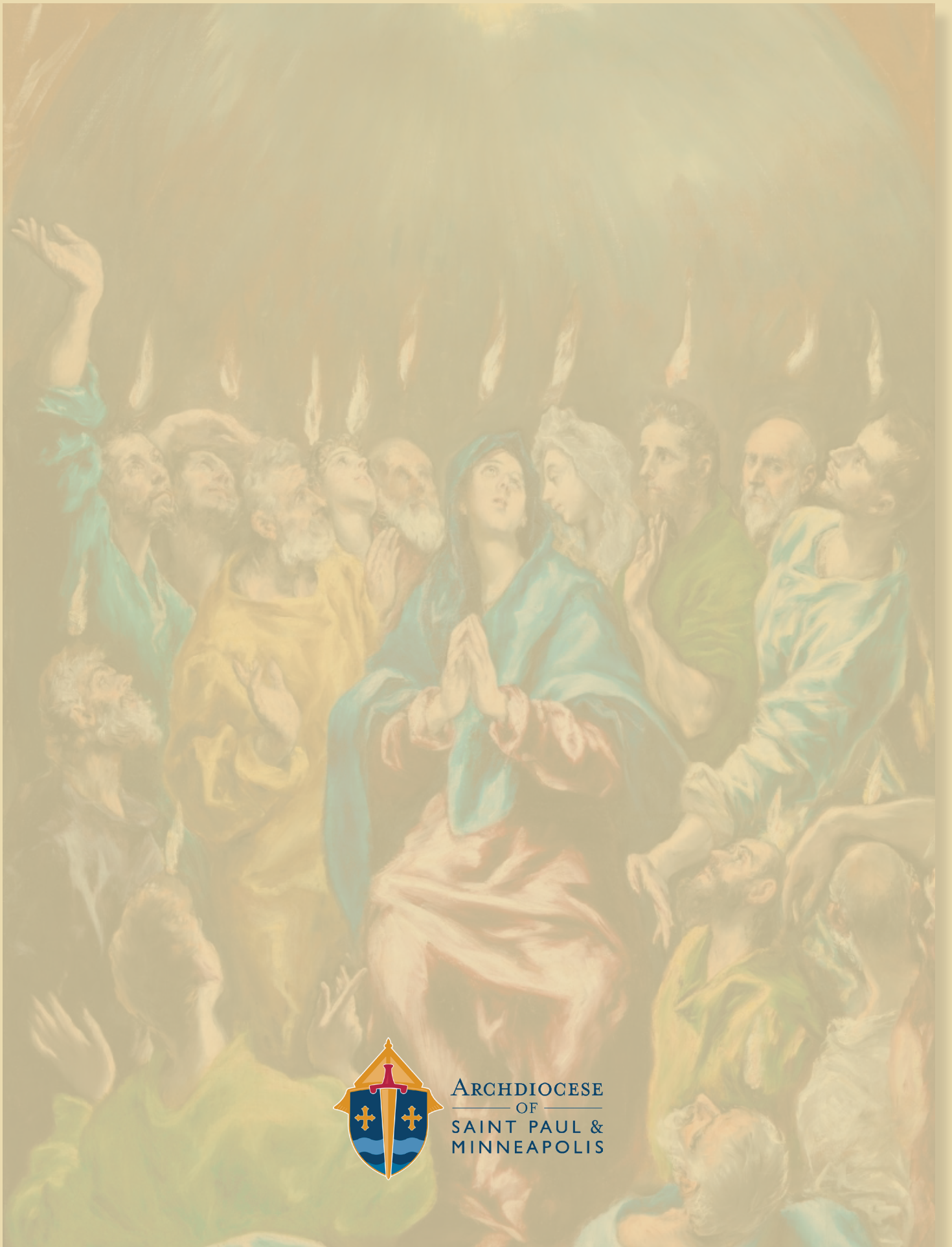
**Archdiocesan Evangelization Prayer**

*Holy Spirit,  
renew your wonders in our time, as though in a new Pentecost,  
and grant that this Archdiocese,  
united in prayer around Mary, the Mother of Jesus,  
and guided by St. Peter,  
may spread the Kingdom of the divine Savior;  
a Kingdom of truth, of justice, of love, and of peace.  
Amen.  
Saint Paul, our great missionary patron, pray for us!*

Adapted from the Prayer of St. John XXIII at the calling of Vatican II







ARCHDIOCESE  
OF  
SAINT PAUL &  
MINNEAPOLIS