
Catholic Parishes in Partnership Parish Family

St. Peter de Alcántara, Ewing
St. Theresa of Avila, Clearwater
St. John the Baptist, Deloit
St. Francis of Assisi, Neligh
Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Tilden
St. Boniface, Elgin
St. Bonaventure, Raeville
St. John the Baptist, Petersburg



**Journey
of Faith**



The Memorare Prayer

REMEMBER, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly to you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to you I come; before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.



Agenda

1. Current Numbers / Reality / Trends
 1. The Call to Evangelize
 2. The Challenges of our Present Reality
 3. Evangelization is essential to our Future
2. Proposals/Changes that were presented
3. Results of Meeting w/ Fr. Hastings (Tues Oct. 4)
 1. Two Options for Going Forward

Priests

Fr. John Norman, Priest Convener

Fr. Pat Nields

Fr. Joe Sund



**Journey
of Faith**

One Church: Encountering Jesus, Equipping Disciples, Living Mercy



Omaha
Archdiocese
Vision





“Within the next six years, every parish in the archdiocese will become a
‘missional community.’”

– Archbishop Lucas (*Archdiocesan Pastoral Conference, 2020*)

—

**Evangelizing is in fact
the grace and vocation
proper to the Church,
her deepest identity.
She exists in order to
evangelize.**

Pope Paul VI,
*Evangelization in the
Modern World* #14

—

“I dream of a ... missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today’s world rather than for her self-preservation.”

(Pope Francis, The Joy of the Gospel #27)



Three Current Realities



1

Declining Mass Attendance



240,000
Archdiocese
Catholics

Only 22% Attend Mass

Within our own parish communities, the majority of Catholics no longer participate in the life of the church.

- Weekly mass attendance is under 1 in 4
- Parish activities attract only a small percentage of parishioners
- Fewer young adults identify as Catholics or members of a parish

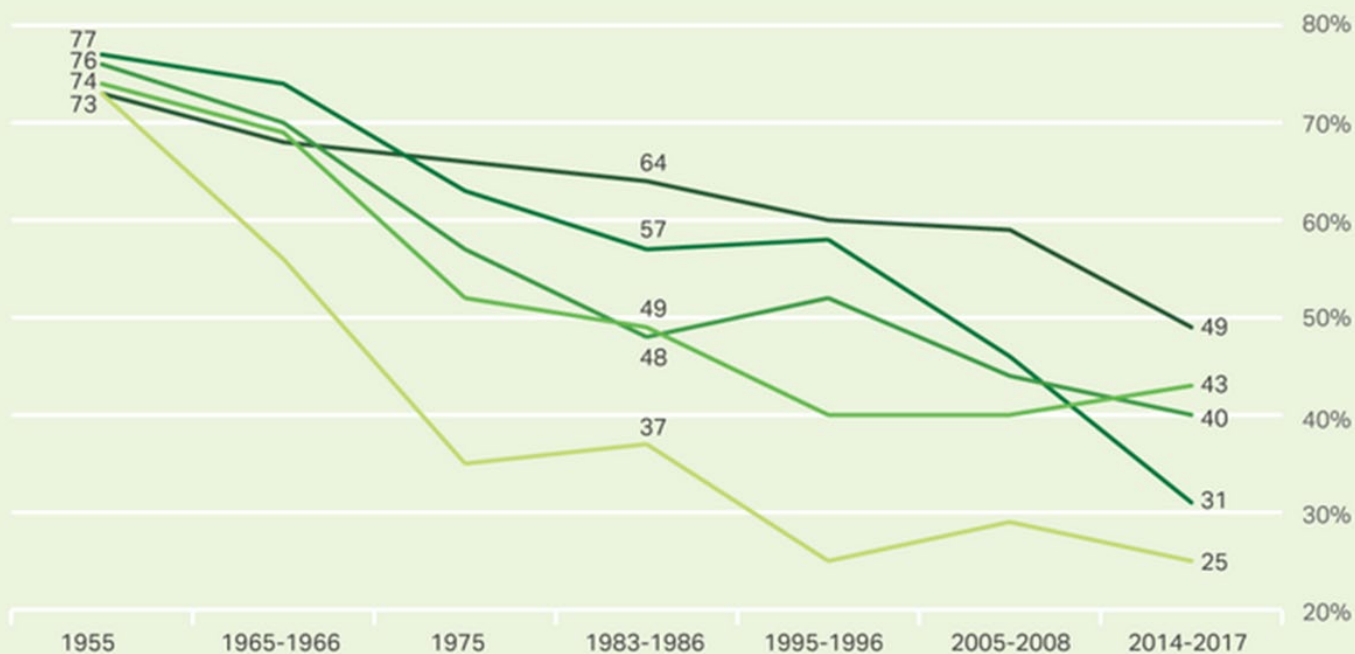
Source: Archdiocese of Omaha census

U.S. Mass Attendance

Church Attendance Among Catholics, by Age

% Attended church in past seven days

21-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+

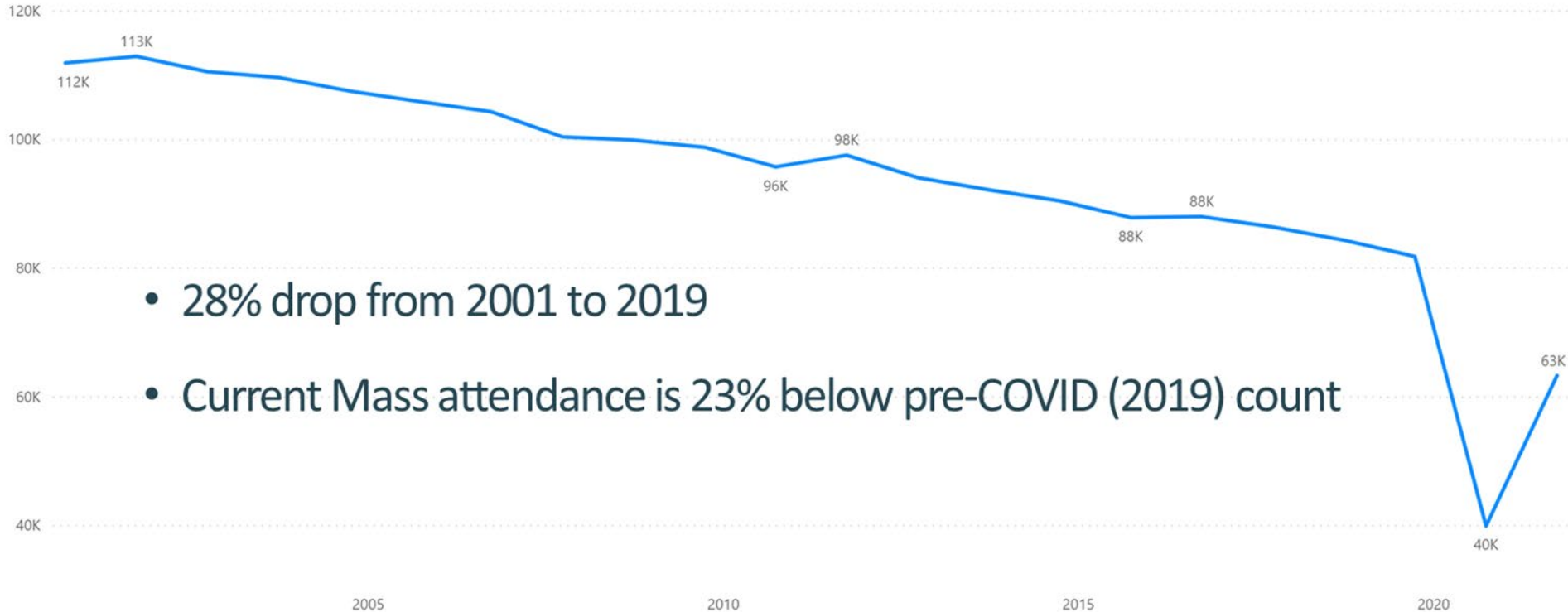


Gallup April 9, 2018

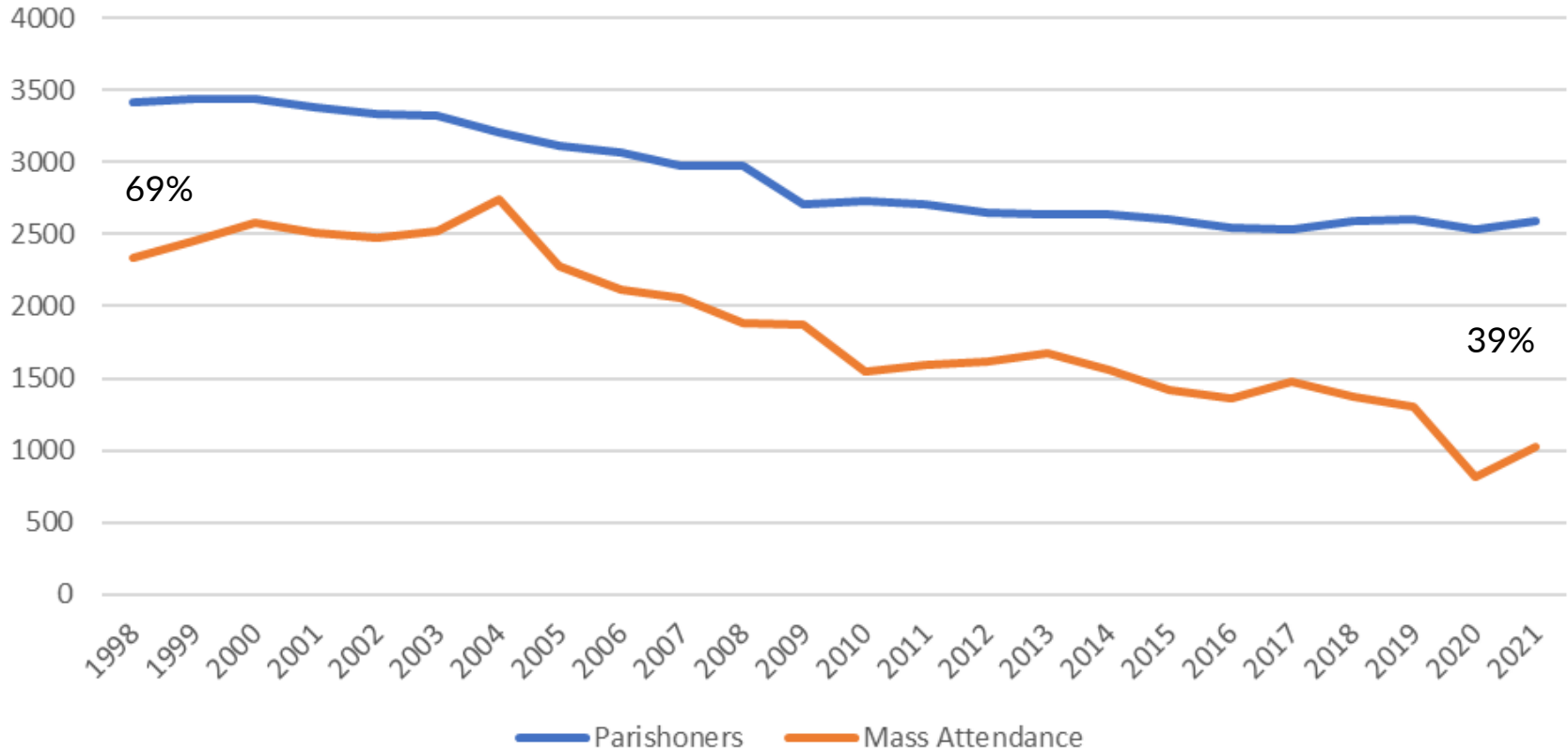
Catholics' Church Attendance Resumes Downward Slide



Archdiocese of Omaha Mass Attendance



Family K Mass Attendance

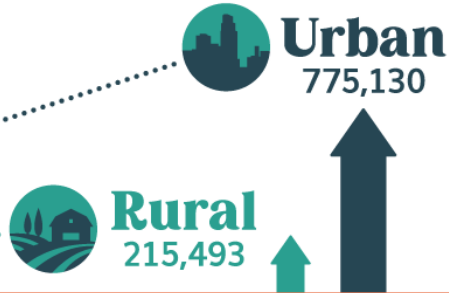


Source: Pastoral Report Statistics 2003-2021,
Archdiocese of Omaha.

2

Shifting Regional Demographics

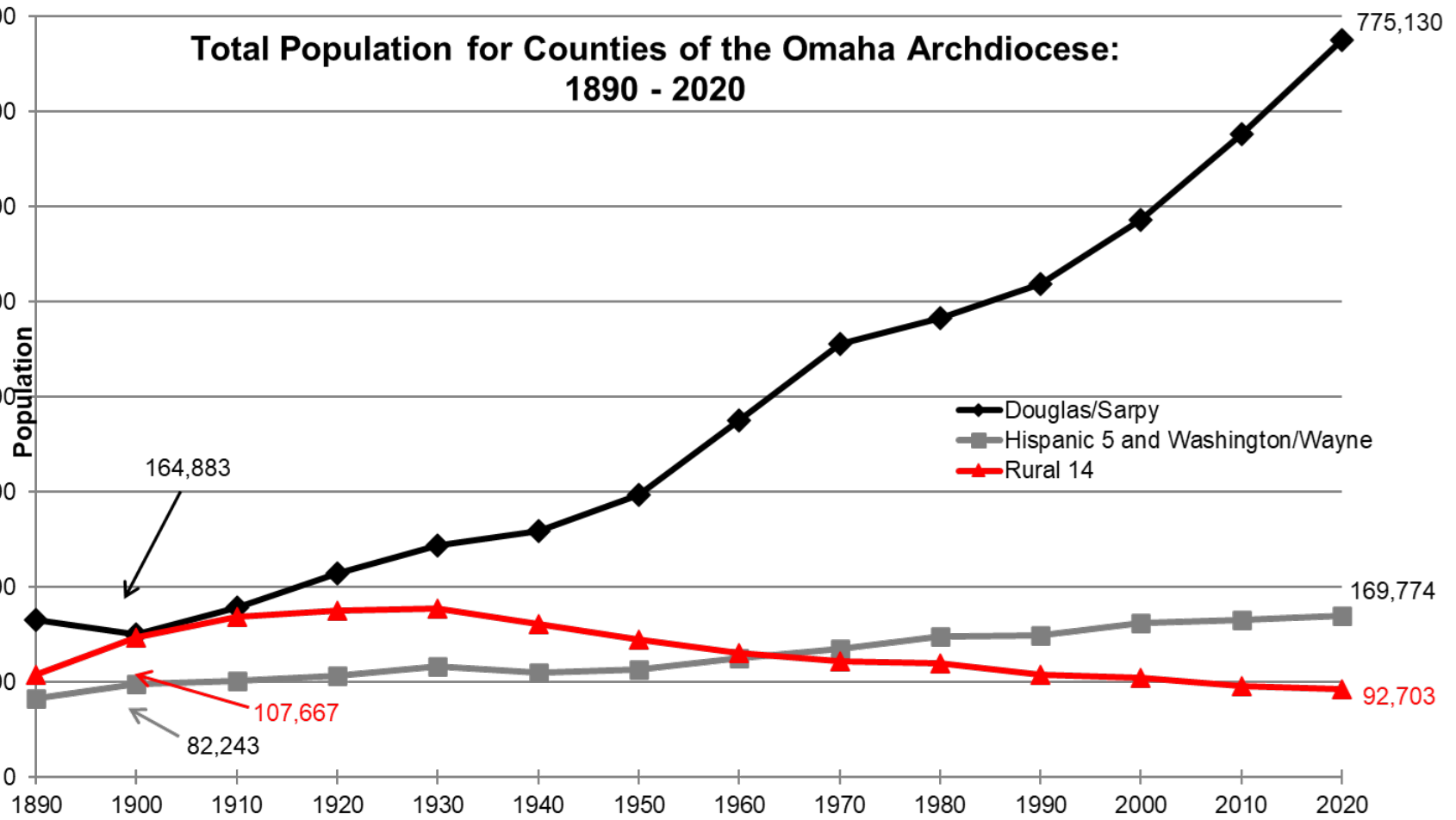
Major Population Shift



**Omaha Metro Grows
By Nearly 100,000**

The population shift from rural to urban communities is undeniable. We value parish life in every corner of the Archdiocese and must find ways to make faith more accessible to more people.

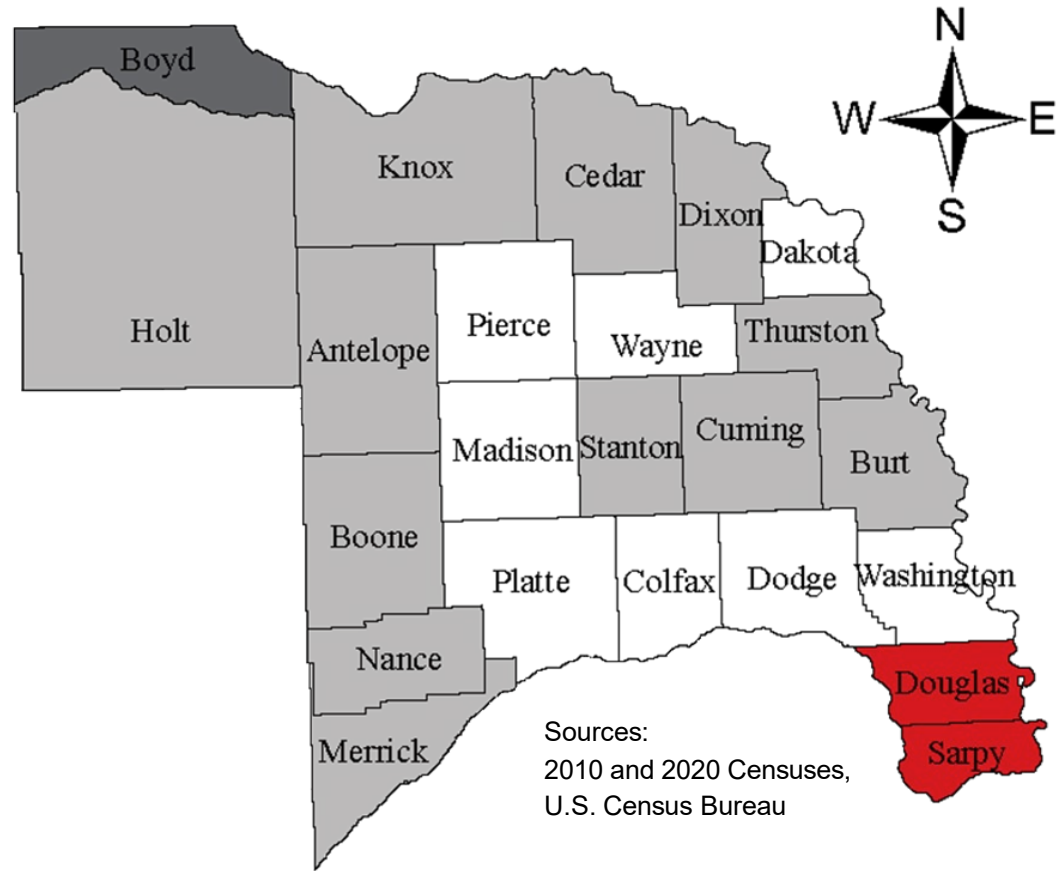
Total Population for Counties of the Omaha Archdiocese: 1890 - 2020

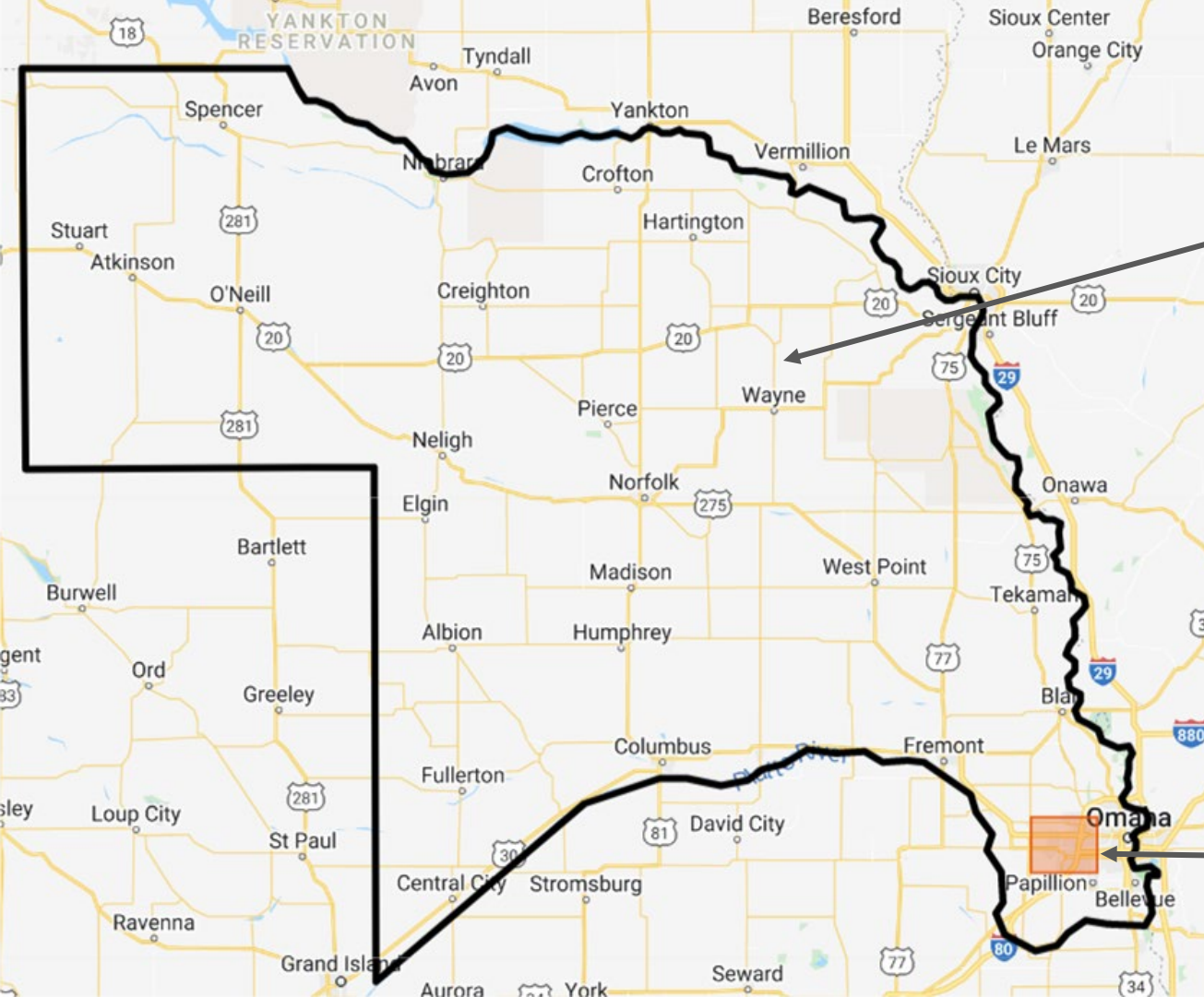


Sources: Decennial Censuses, 2017 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

Compiled and Prepared by: UNO Center for Public Affairs Research

Population Change in Counties of the Archdiocese: 2010-2020





The entire rural part of the Archdiocese makes up 30.8% of the total Mass Attendance

- Exclude South Sioux City, Norfolk, and Columbus the rural area make up only 18.8% of the total
- Our 8 Parish Family is 1.4% of the total

The greatest concentration of Mass attendance in the Archdiocese is in West Omaha between 204th - 72nd Streets and Giles – Fort Streets (36%)

Smaller Families

1790	5.79
1850	5.55
1960	3.33
2000	2.62
2021	2.52

Note: Data labels are for 1790, 1850, 2010 and 2018.
Average household size is not available for the years between 1790 and 1850.

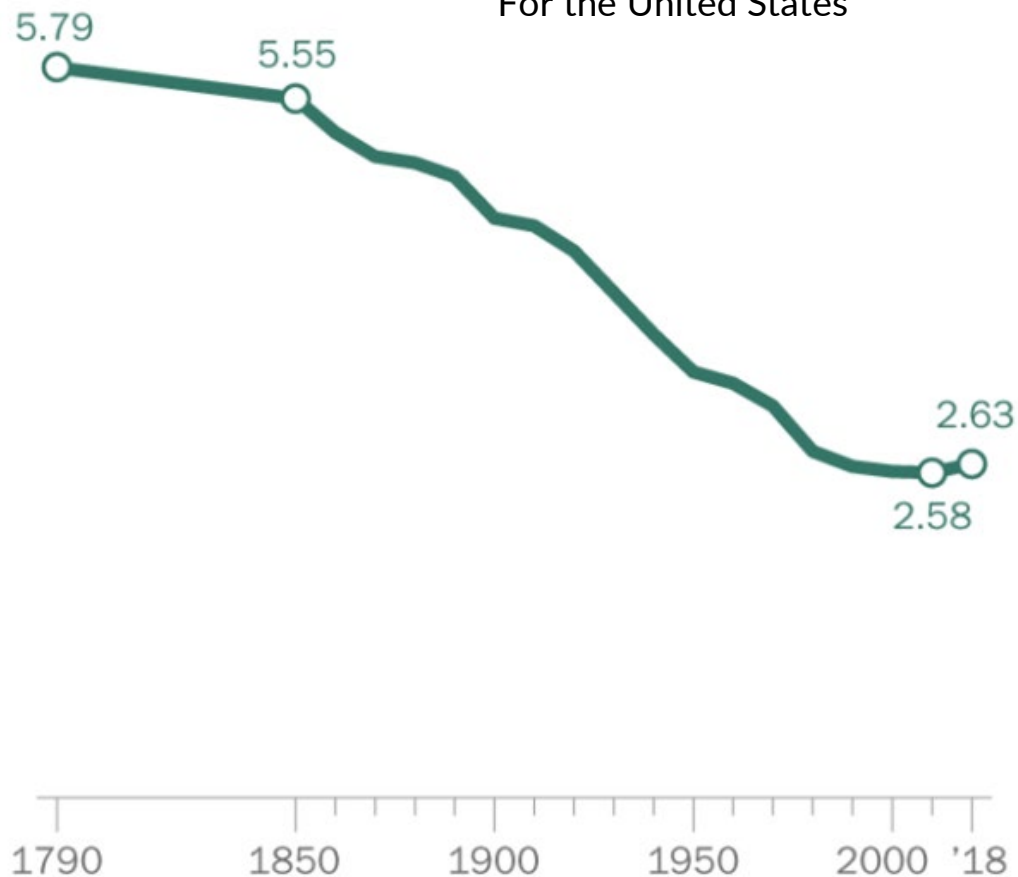
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Census historical statistics, 2010 Census SF1 data and 2018 American Community Survey.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Statista Research Department, Feb 22, 2022

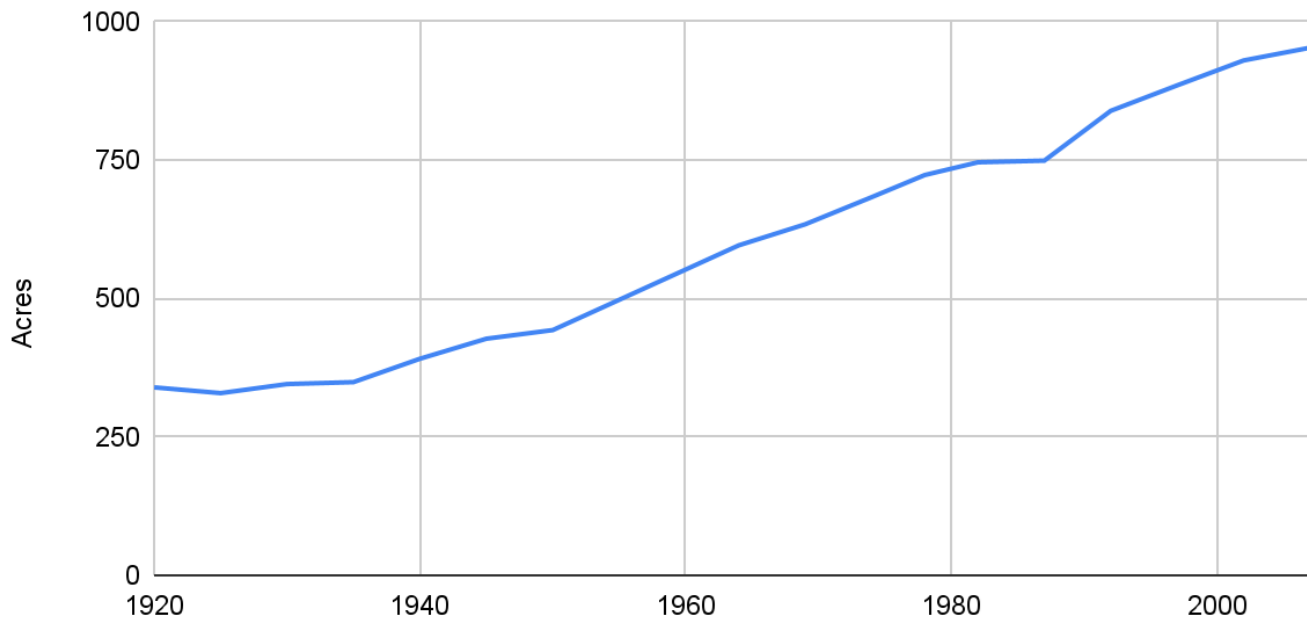
Average number of people per household

For the United States



Larger Farms

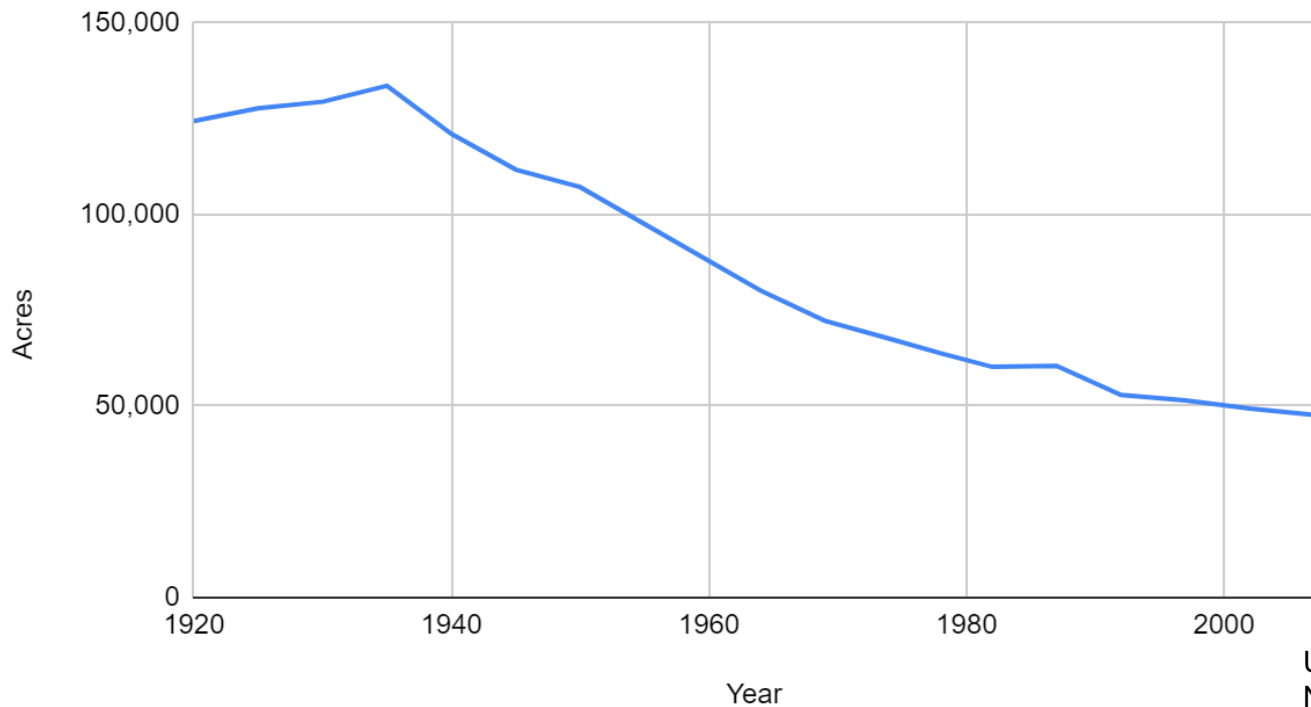
Average Size of Farms in Nebraska



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

Fewer Farms

Number of Farms in Nebraska



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

A More Multicultural Church

Rapid Growth Challenges Hispanic Ministries



Rural
Nebraska



35%
up

45%
up

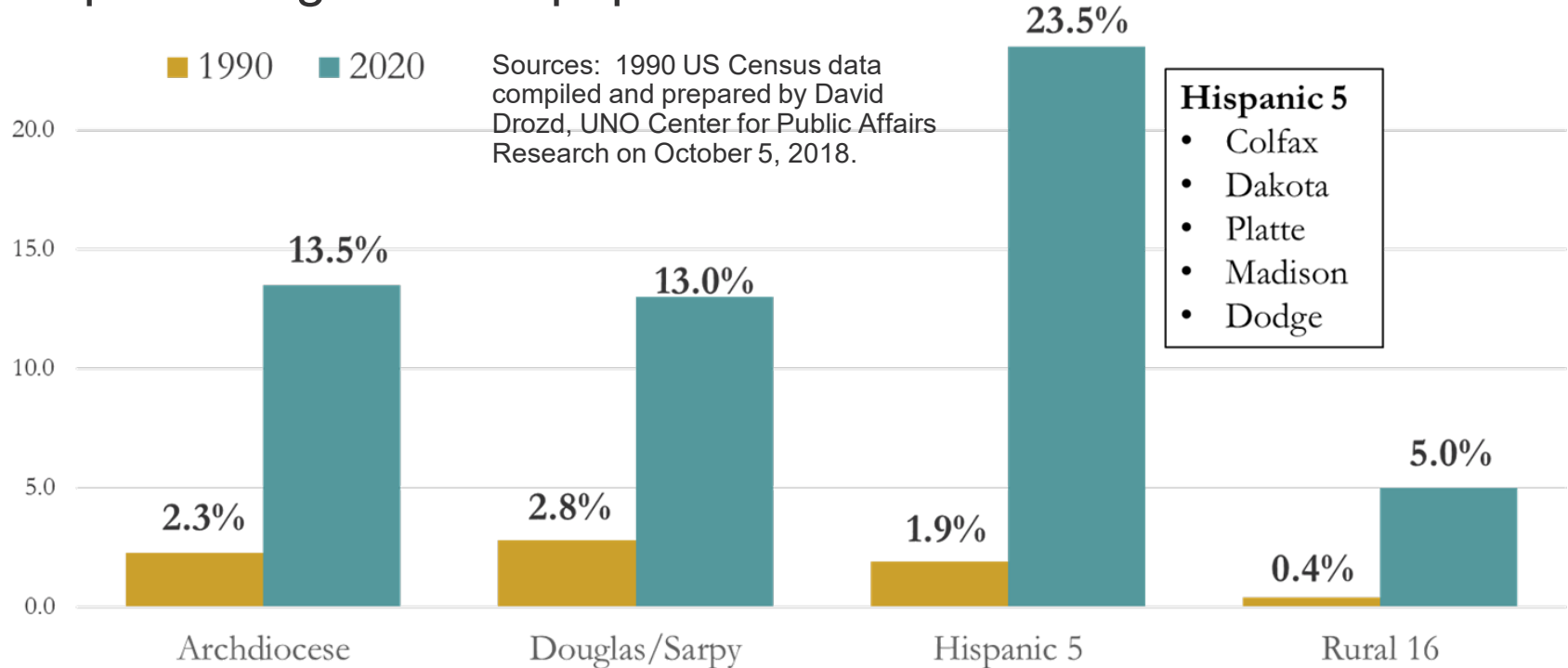


Urban
Omaha

As the Omaha metro area moves towards a million people, more diverse parish communities are flourishing in our urban and rural counties. We must be prepared to walk new roads in faith.

Archdiocese of Omaha Hispanic Population Gains

As a percentage of total population



3

Declining Priest Availability

Stretched Too Far

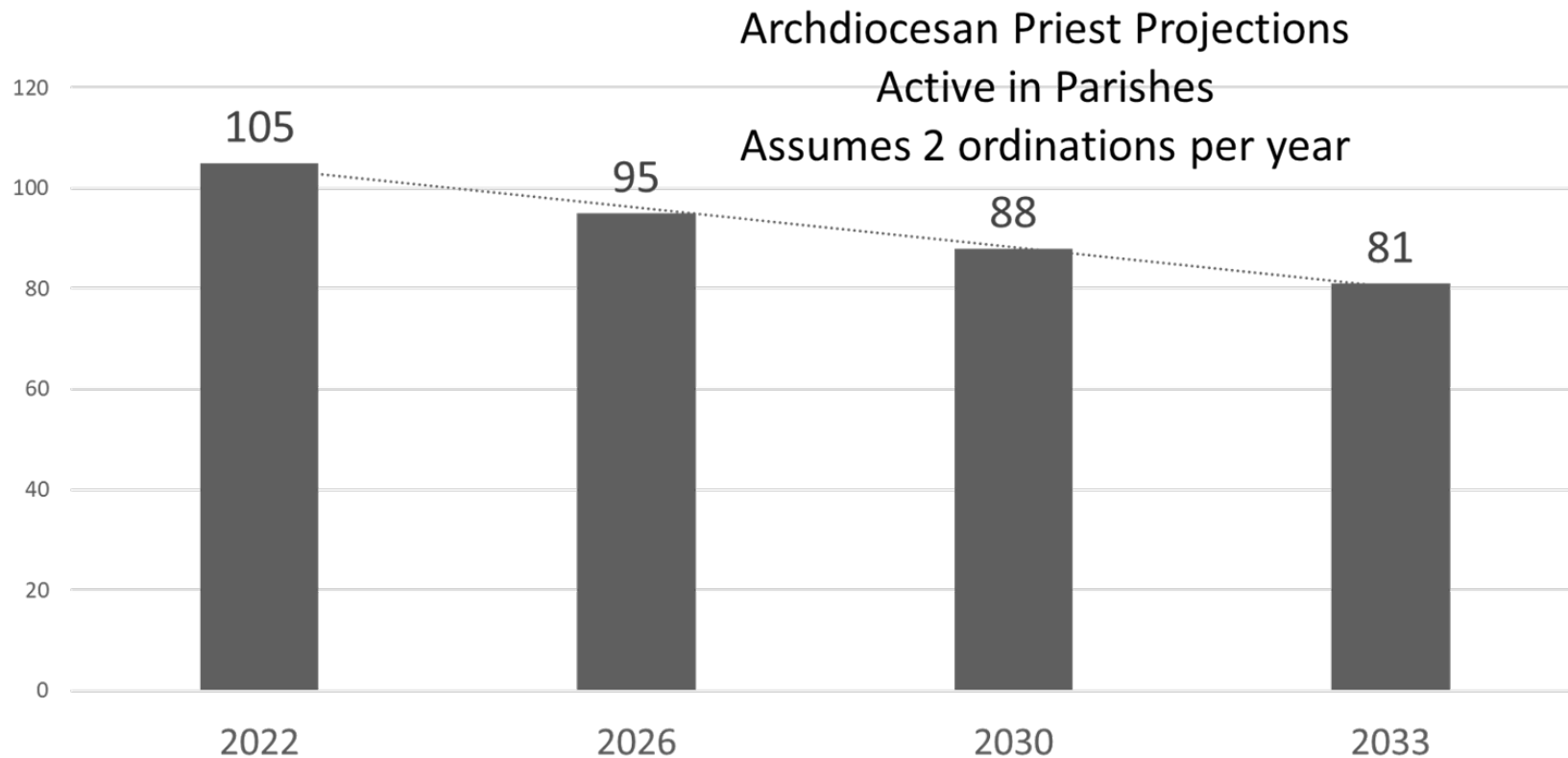
Fewer Priests



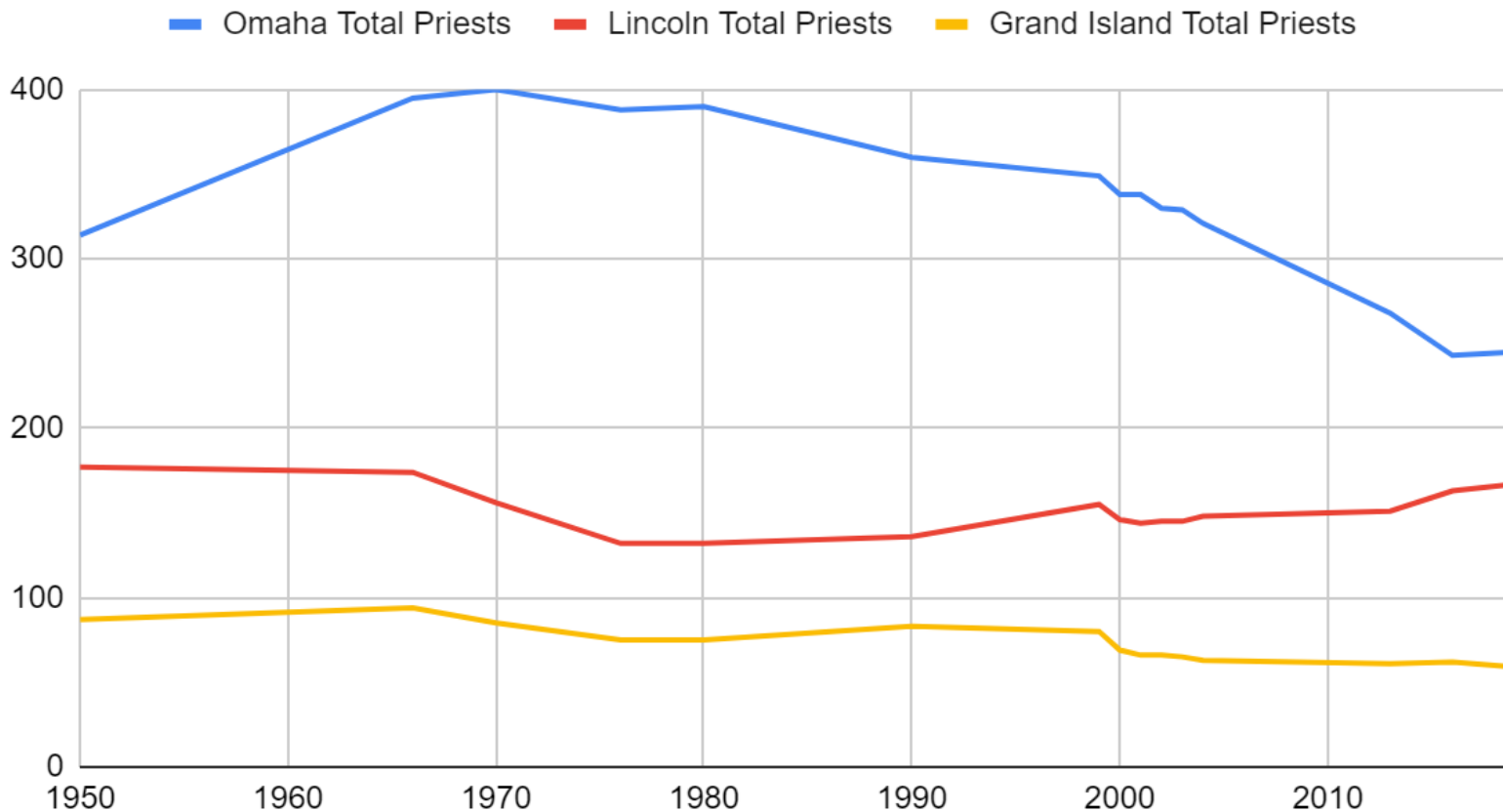
Over the next ten years, the number of available priests will drop steadily. For parish communities to have vibrant ministries, we must see the conditions which limit our priests:

- Growing stress from unmanageable workload
 - More retirements than replacements
 - Aging, underutilized structures
-

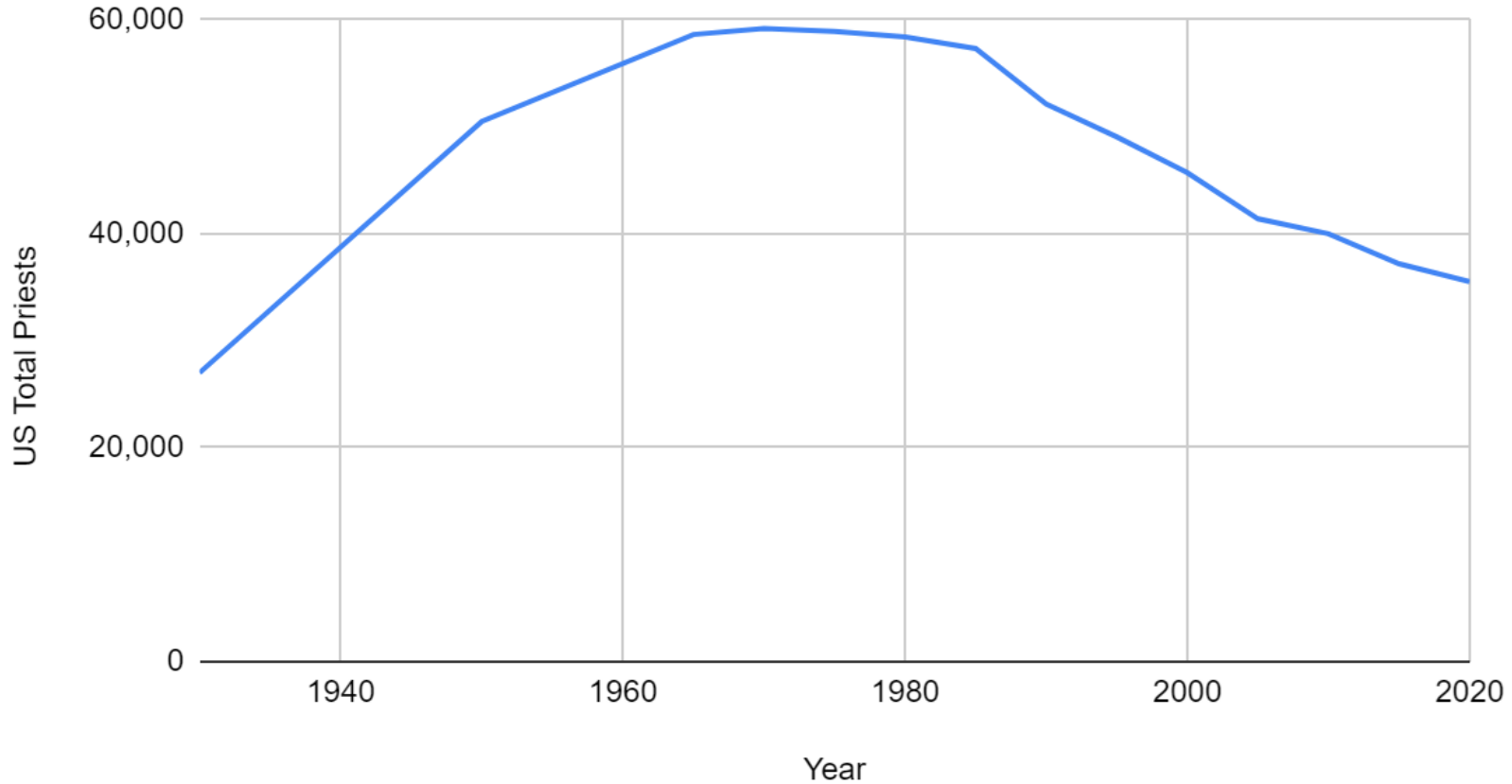
Archdiocese of Omaha Priest Projections



Nebraska Dioceses Priests 1950-2019

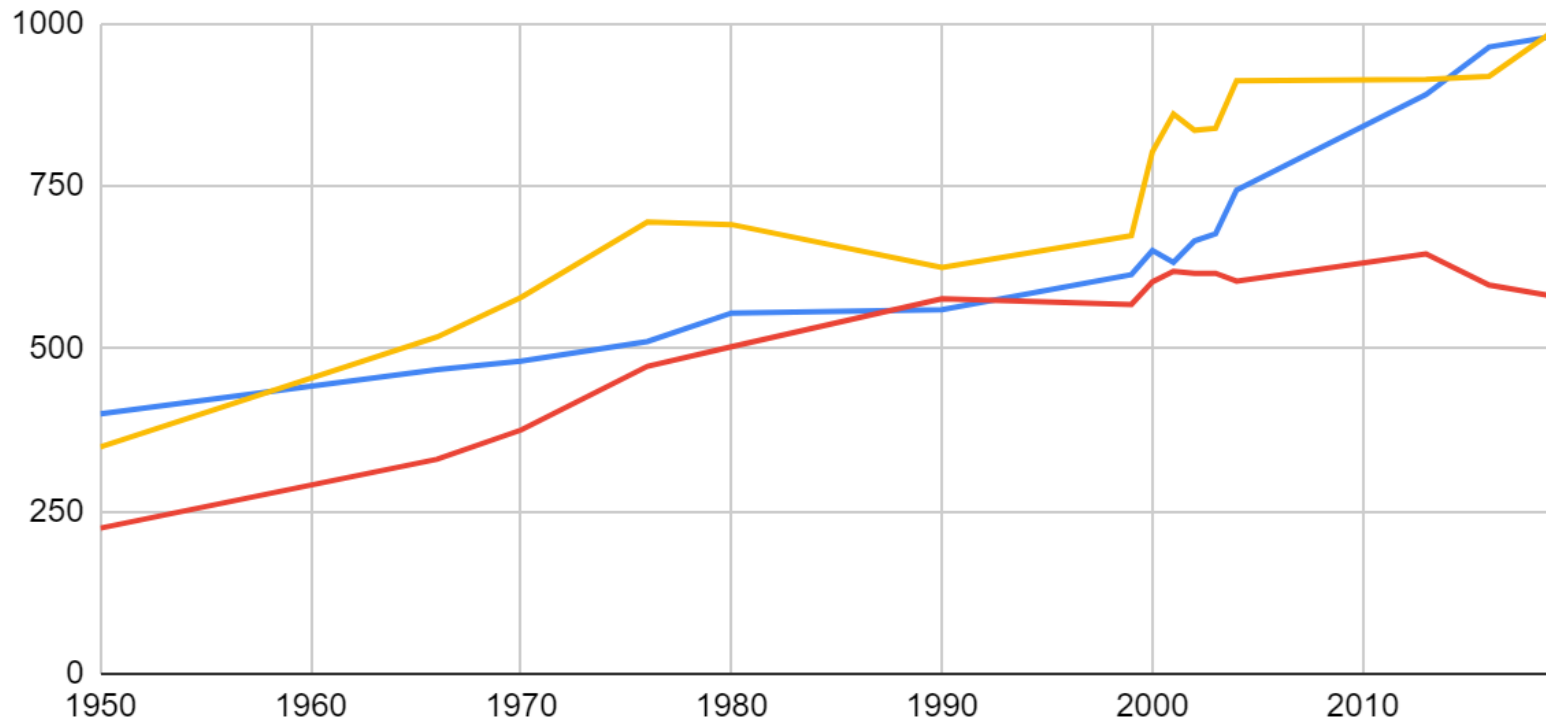


Priests in the US (1930-2020)

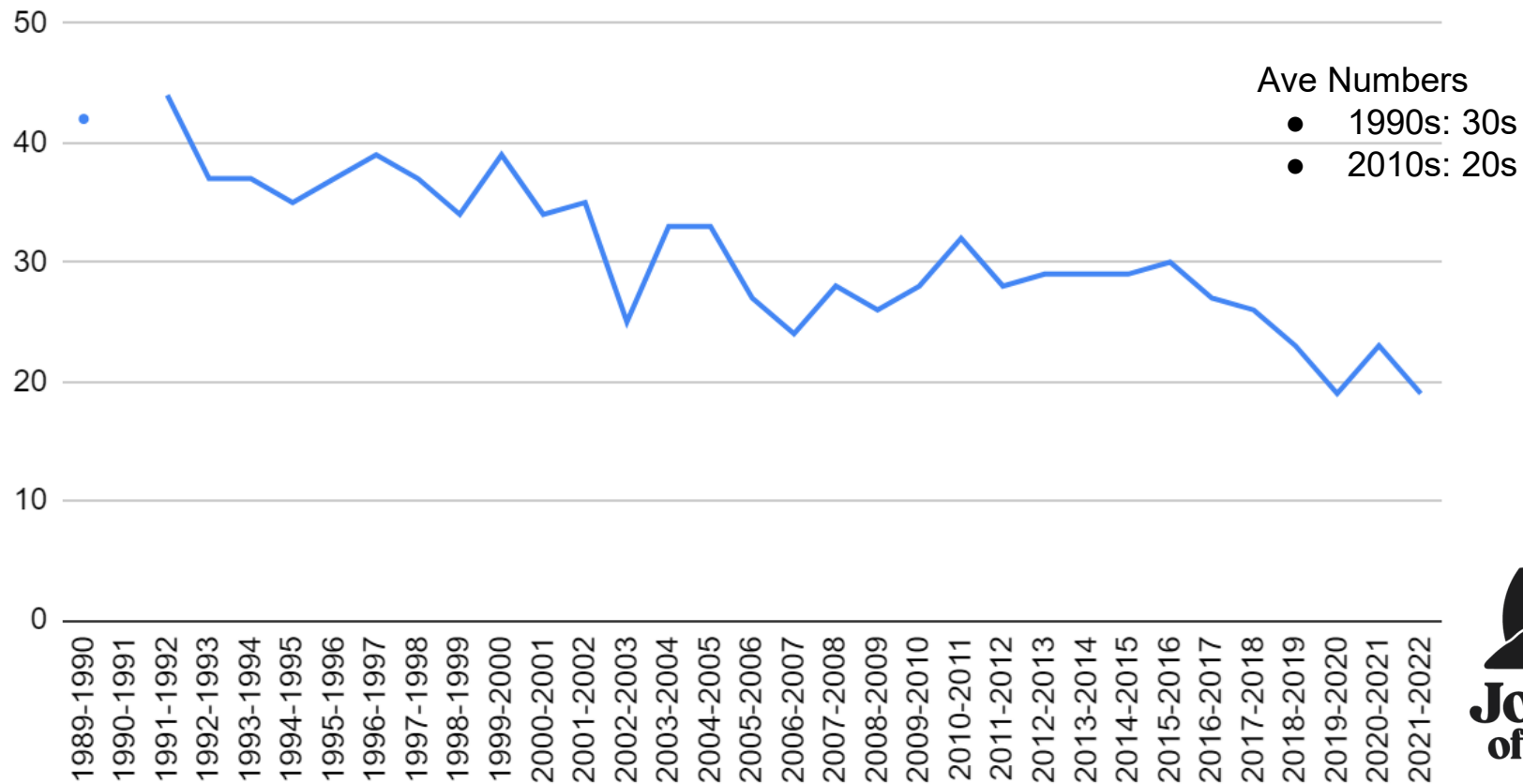


Nebraska Dioceses Catholics per Priest 1950-2019

— Omaha Catholics Per Priest — Lincoln Catholics Per Priest
— Grand Island Catholics Per Priest



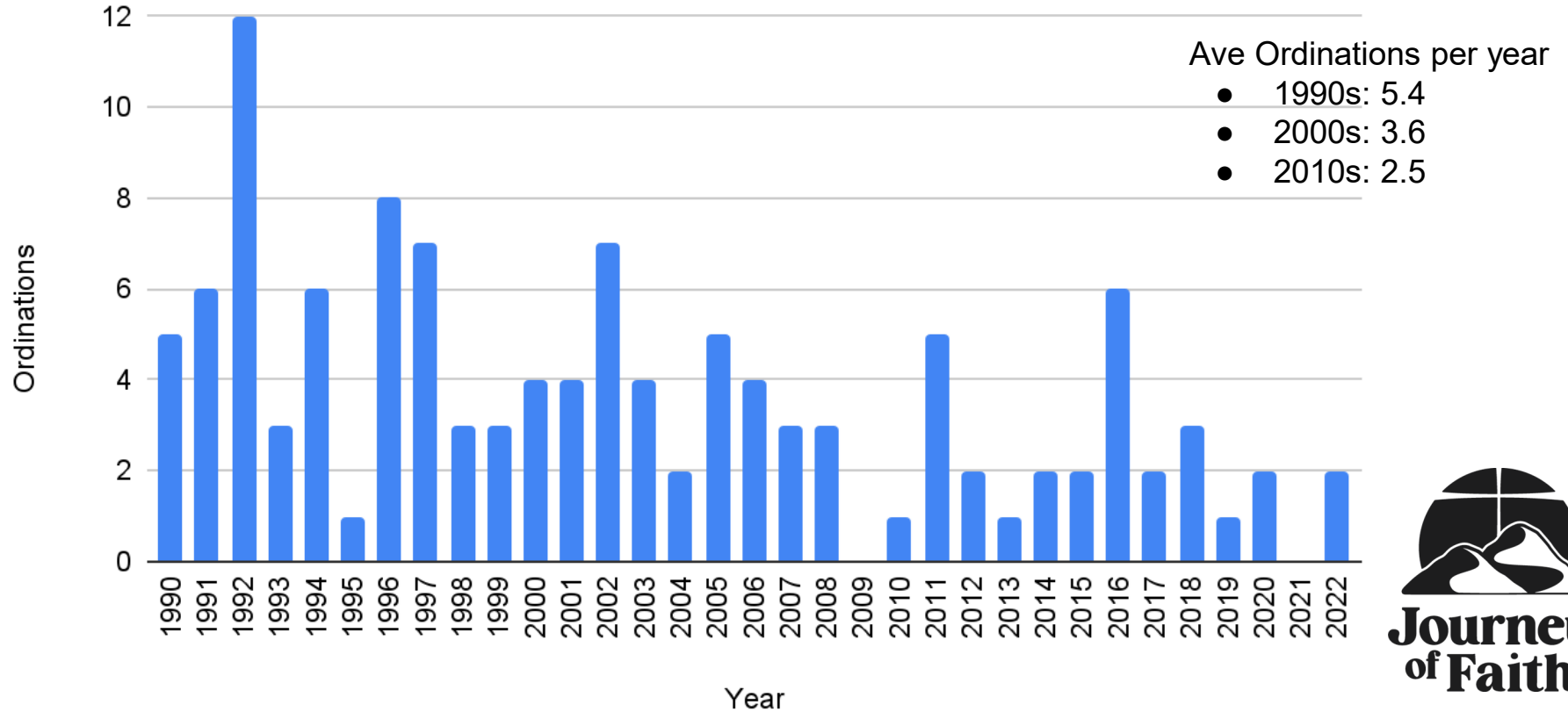
Archdiocese of Omaha Seminarians 1989-2022



Archdiocese of Omaha Directory

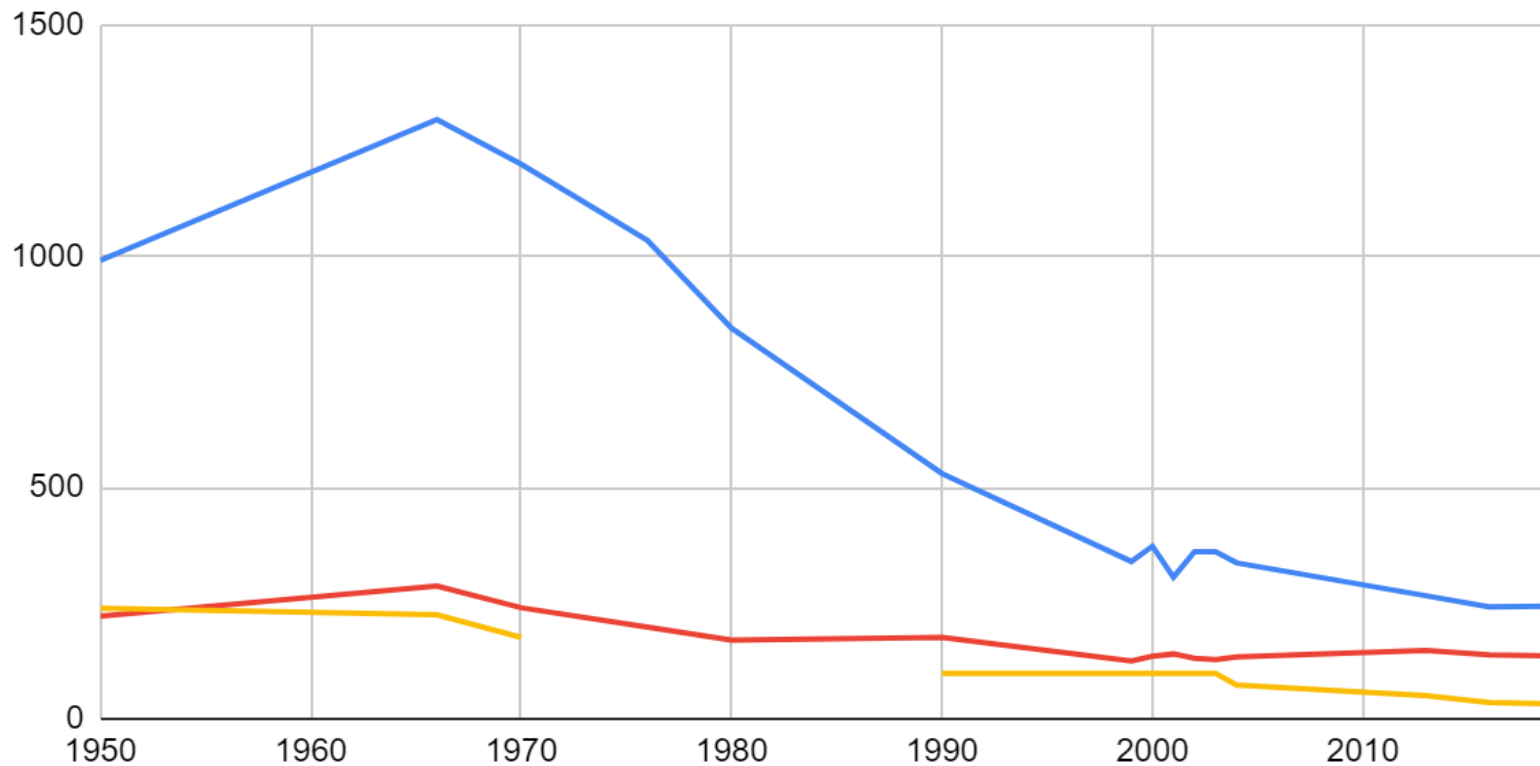


Ordinations Per Year



Nebraska Dioceses Women Religious 1950-2019

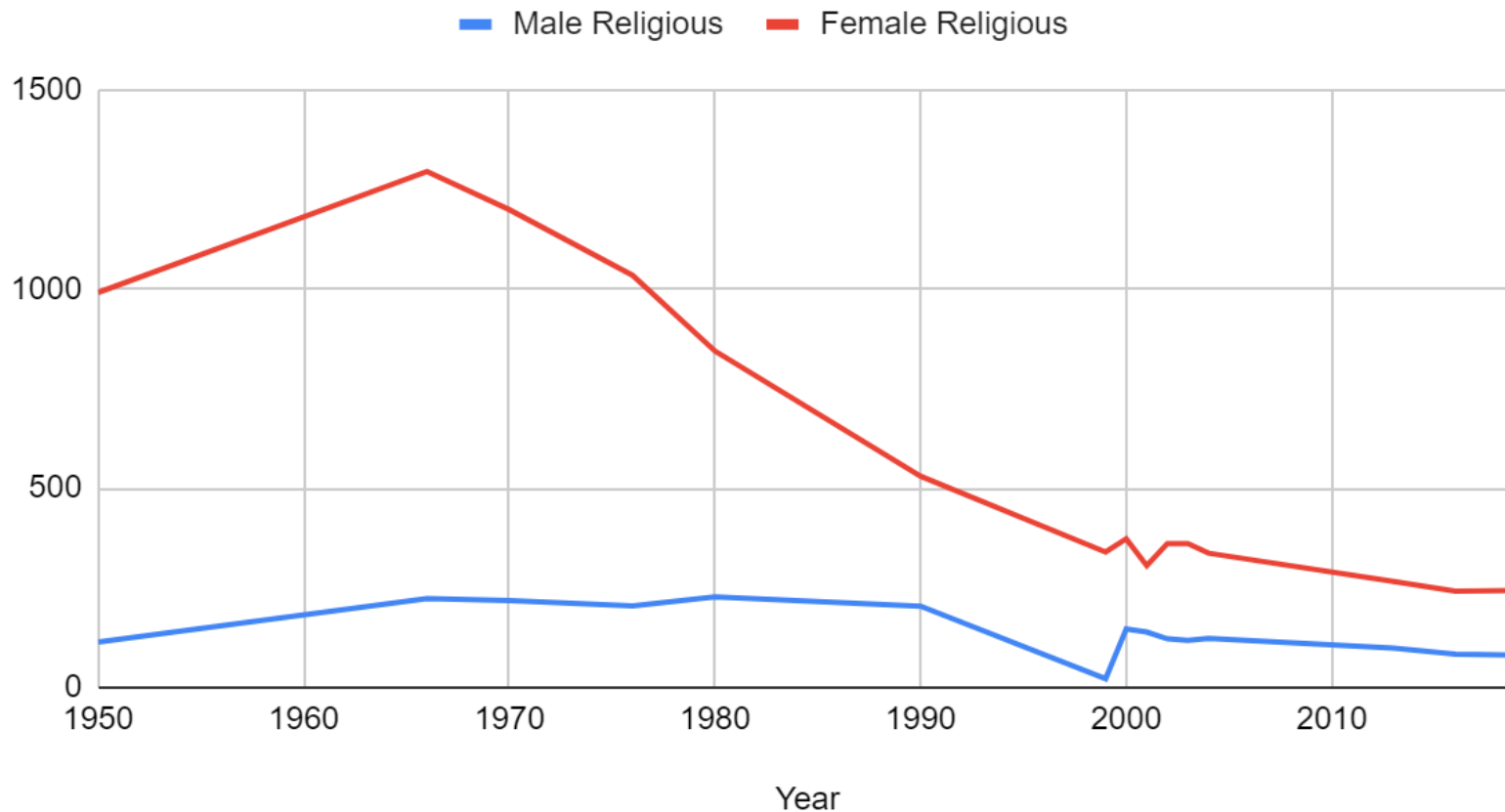
Omaha Female Religious Lincoln Female Religious Grand Island Female Religious



www.catholic-hierarchy.org



Omaha Archdiocese Religious 1950-2019



Planning Process Timeline



2021

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

JULY-DECEMBER

Pastoral Planning Team completes research, data review and drafts summary of Current Reality.

2022

LEARNING AND PLANNING

FEBRUARY

CLERGY CONFERENCE

– Diocesan priests share feedback on process and guidelines.

ARCHBISHOP LUCAS CALLS FOR A JOURNEY OF FAITH

MARCH

PASTORS IDENTIFY PARISH LEADERSHIP REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL/MAY

SPRING PLANNING KICKOFF SESSIONS

The Challenge

– Sharing Current Reality

Choices for a New Reality

– Families of Parishes

Select Family Pastoral Planning Teams

Conduct Townhalls (optional)

JUNE

SUMMER CLERGY CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER

FALL PLANNING SESSIONS

– Solidify Families of Parishes plan

OCTOBER

FALL PASTORAL CONFERENCE

FALL CLERGY CONFERENCE

20-DAYS PUBLIC COMMENT

NOVEMBER

FAMILY OF PARISHES PLANNING PROPOSALS TO ARCHBISHOP LUCAS FOR APPROVAL

DECEMBER

ANNOUNCE FINAL PASTORAL PLAN

2023

FAMILIES OF PARISHES PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

WAVE 1 FAMILIES OF PARISHES

2024

WAVE 2 FAMILIES OF PARISHES

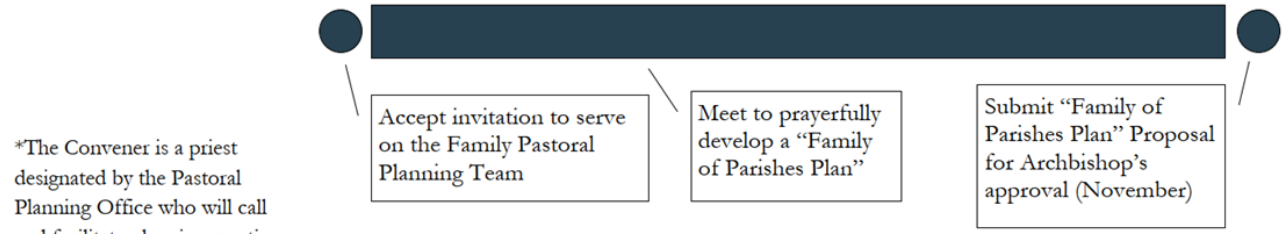
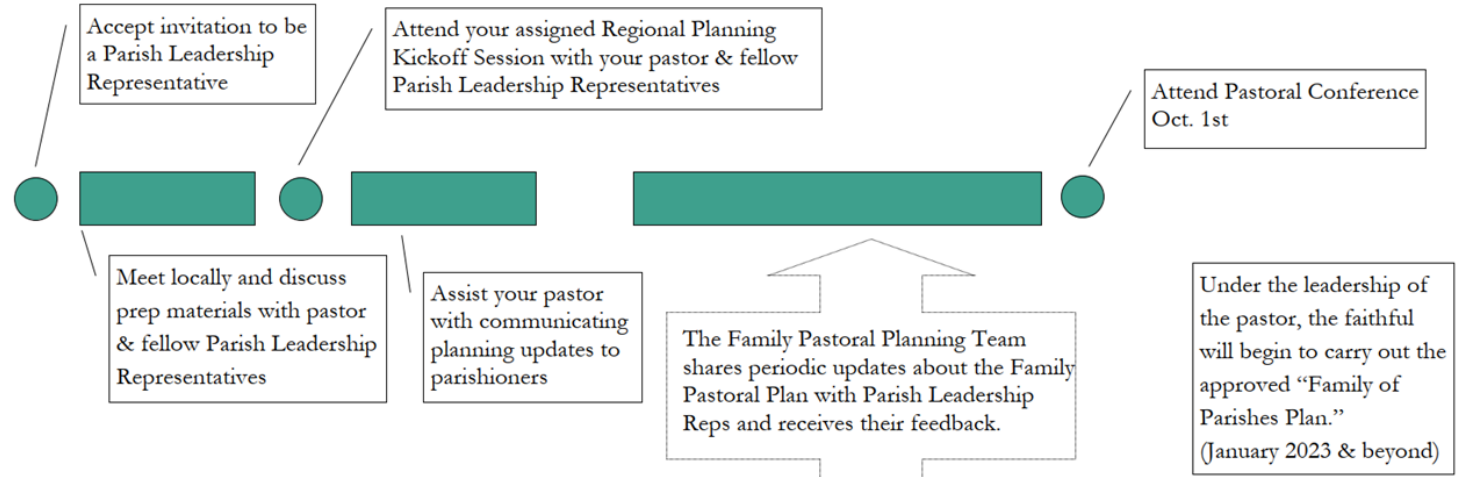


Journey of Faith



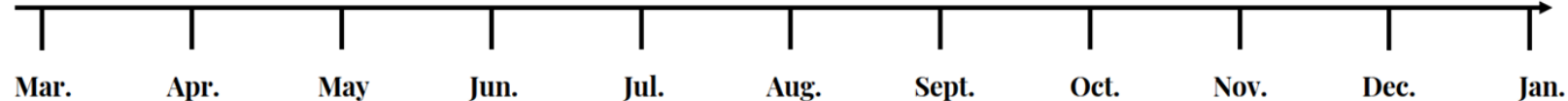
Family Pastoral Planning Team
with leadership of convener & priests

Parish Leadership Reps
with pastor leadership



*The Convener is a priest designated by the Pastoral Planning Office who will call and facilitate planning meetings.

2022 **2023**



Parameters: Family of Parishes





Family of Parishes

- Two or more parishes collaborate in intentional ways in support of the mission of Christ. Each parish retains its own unique identity, similar to how each sibling has a unique role in a family.
 - Wherever possible, each Family of Parishes will build upon natural affinities and existing relationships within faith communities.
 - The depth of collaboration will exceed what we've generally experienced in our parish groupings thus far.
-



Family of Parishes

- The Family of Parishes establishes a stable and sustainable mission field that aligns our priests and parish resources for mission in support of the needs of the faithful through June of 2033.
 - Each Family takes a different form depending on local conditions.
-

Family K

Single Pastor

2023: 3 priests 2033: 2 priests

St. Boniface
Elgin

St. Bonaventure
Raeville

St. John the Baptist
Petersburg

St. Peter de Alcántara
Ewing

St. John the Baptist
Deloit

St. Francis of Assisi
Neligh

Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Tilden

St. Theresa Mission
Clearwater

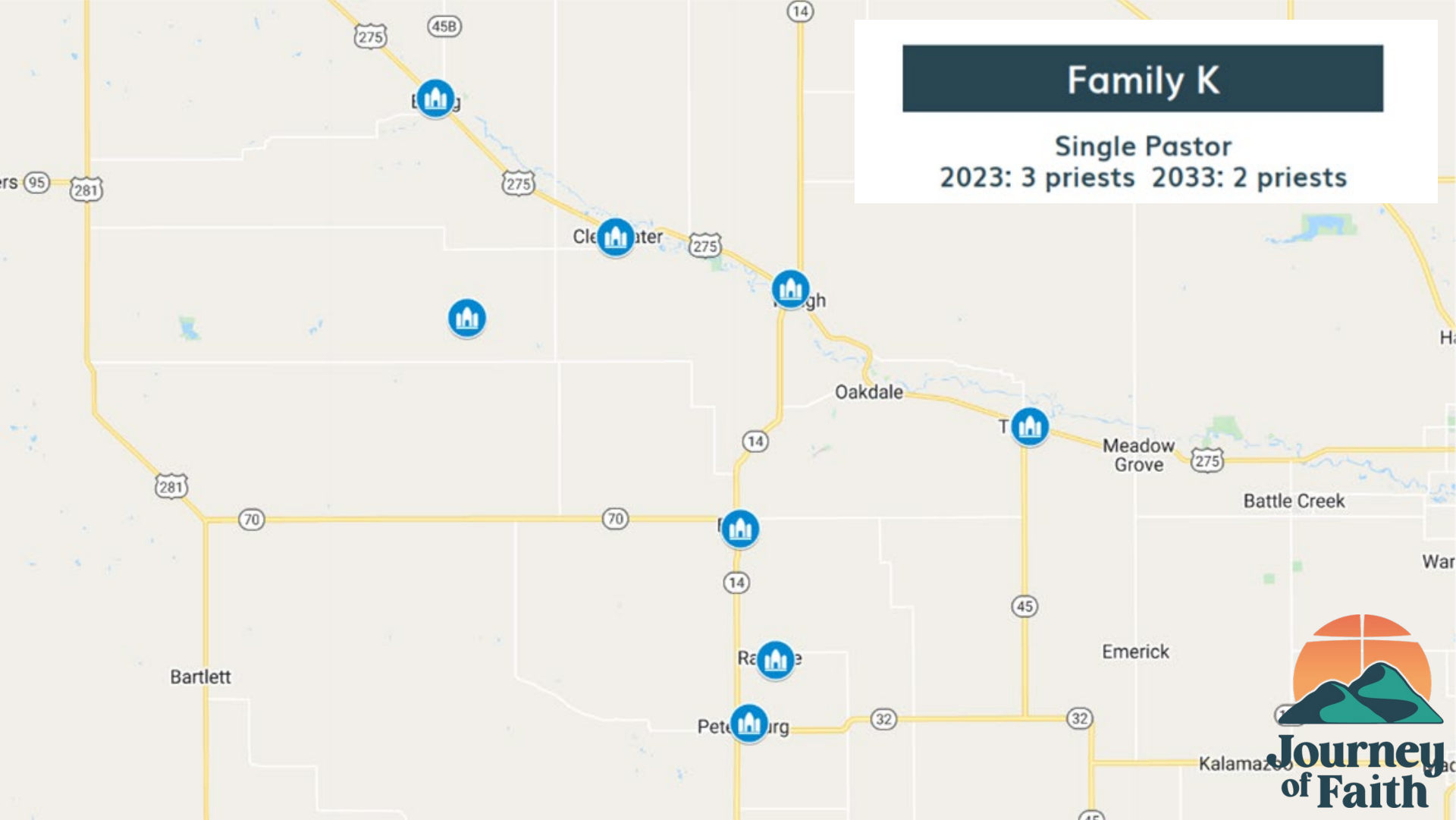
SCHOOLS

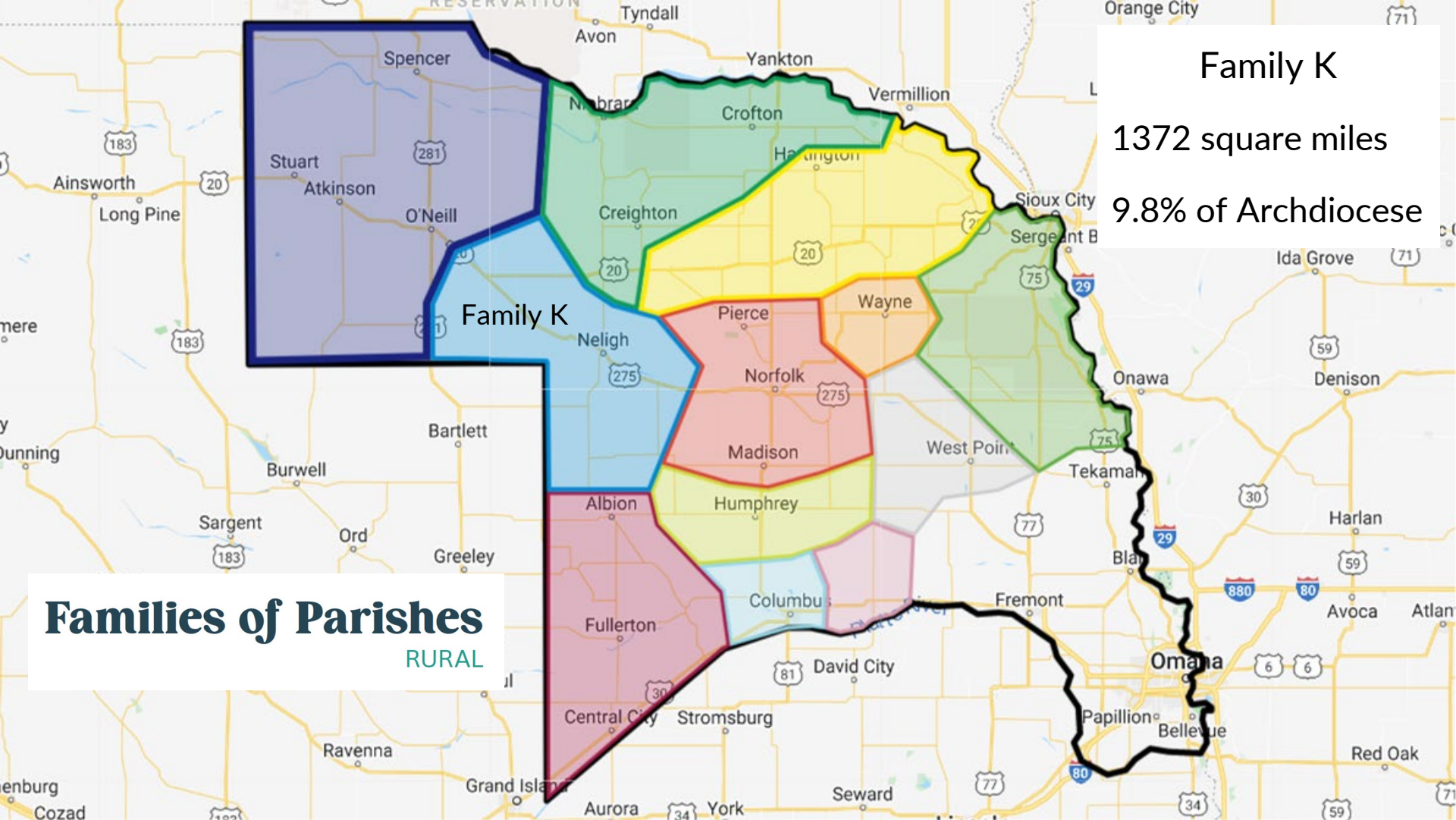
St. Boniface Elementary School
Elgin

Pope John XXIII
Jr/Sr High School

Family K

Single Pastor
2023: 3 priests 2033: 2 priests





Family K
1372 square miles
9.8% of Archdiocese

Families of Parishes

RURAL

Parameters: Priest Distribution



Priest Availability

To promote equity as One Church, and to provide for priestly flourishing through their mutual support and fraternity in support of mission, we project:

- 27 priests in the rural area
- 54 priests in the urban area



**Journey
of Faith**

Two-by-Two Assignments

1. Rural assignments in groups of at least two
 - a. One pastor, rest associates
2. Allow priests to live together where possible
3. Pastors schedule weekly times of non-business fraternity (meals, prayer, visits) with the other priest(s).



**Journey
of Faith**

Parameters: Sunday Masses



Driving Distance

People should generally not need to travel more than about 20 miles for a Sunday Mass.



**Journey
of Faith**

Sunday Masses per Priest

Each priest in a parish or family may celebrate:

- Up to 4 Sunday obligation Masses at up to 2 locations per weekend
- Up to 3 Sunday obligation Masses at up to 3 locations per weekend



Sunday Masses per Priest

For each priest, no more than 4 Sunday obligation Masses can be scheduled per weekend.



**Journey
of Faith**

Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest

Sunday Communion Services are NOT permitted

- Except for emergency and with prior authorization from the chancery.



**Journey
of Faith**

Sunday Masses

Our Current Situation





Current Masses

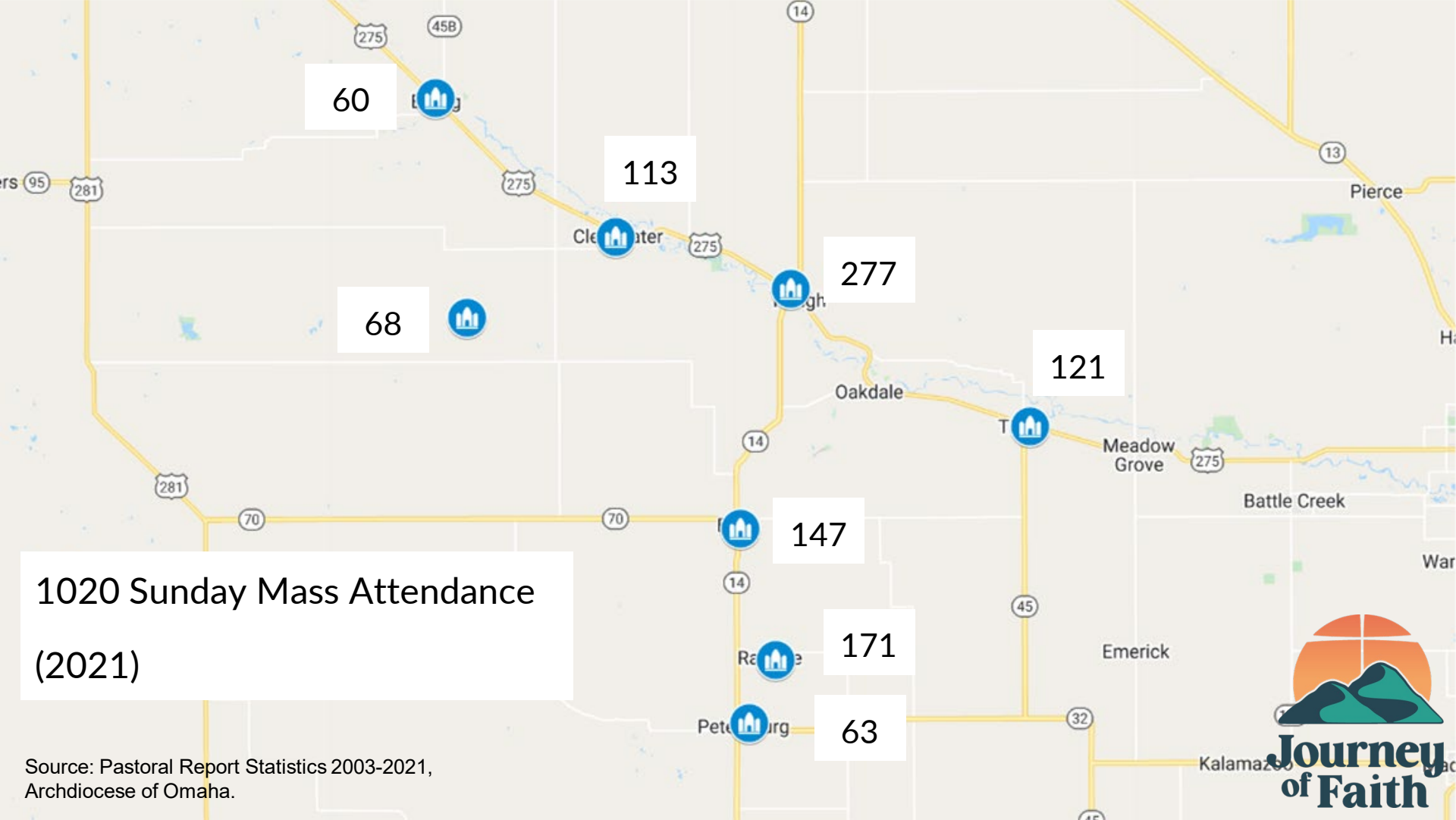
10 Weekend Masses, 8 Locations

- 4 Saturday, 6 Sunday
- From 5:00 pm to 11:30 am

15 Weekday Masses, 10 Locations

- 2 at Nursing Home / Assisted Living

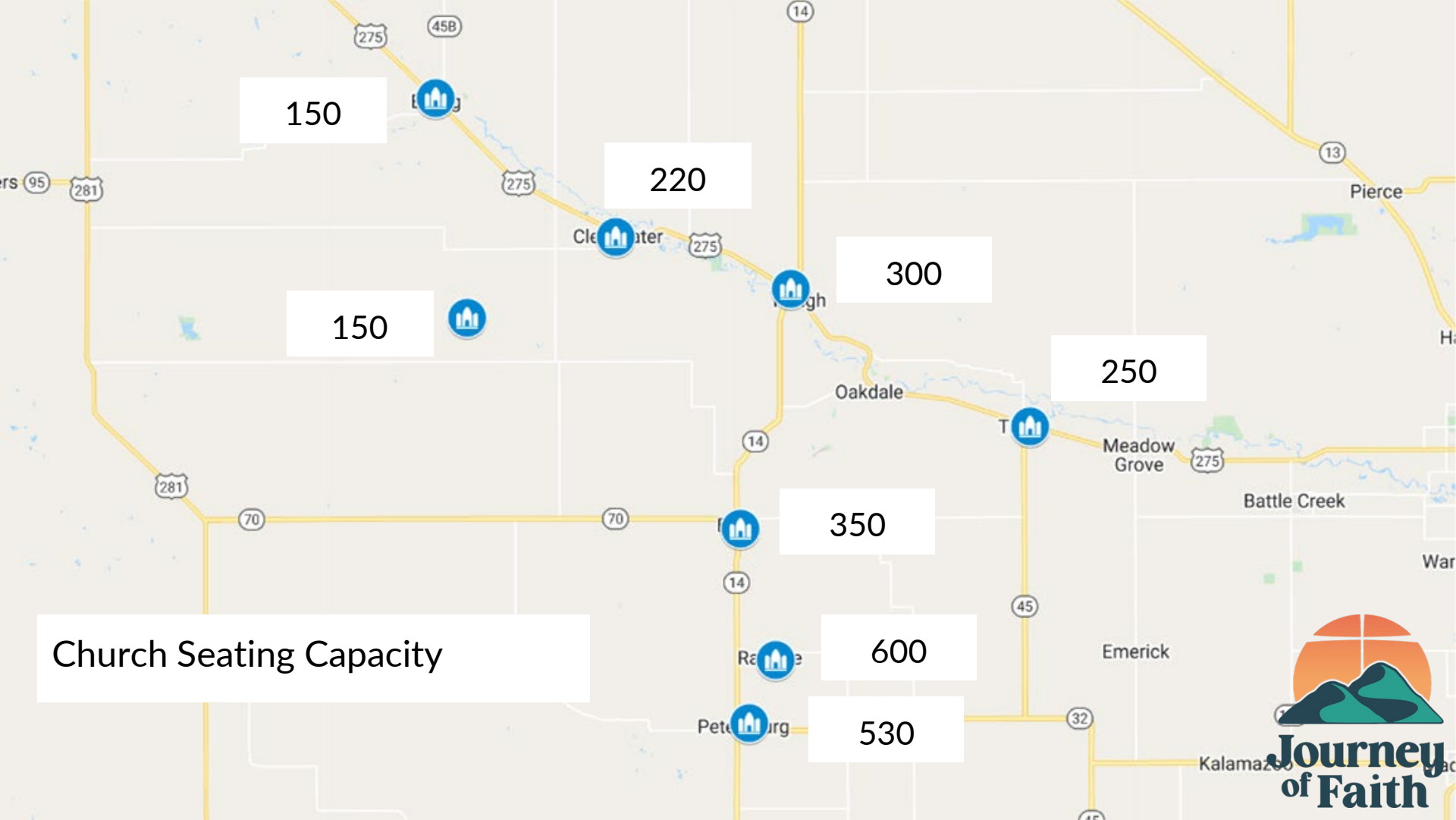
Confessions - 6 hrs



1020 Sunday Mass Attendance
(2021)

Source: Pastoral Report Statistics 2003-2021, Archdiocese of Omaha.

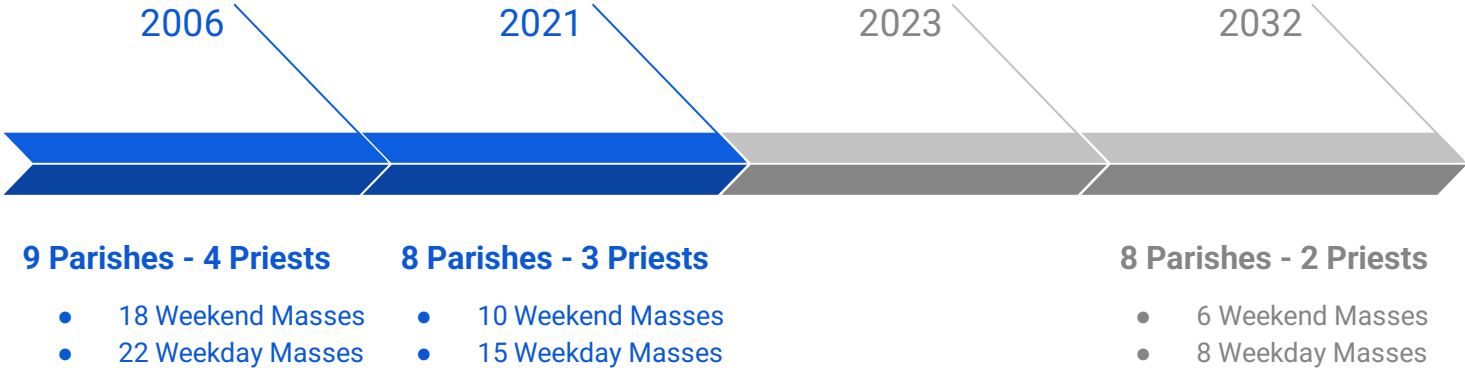




Church Seating Capacity

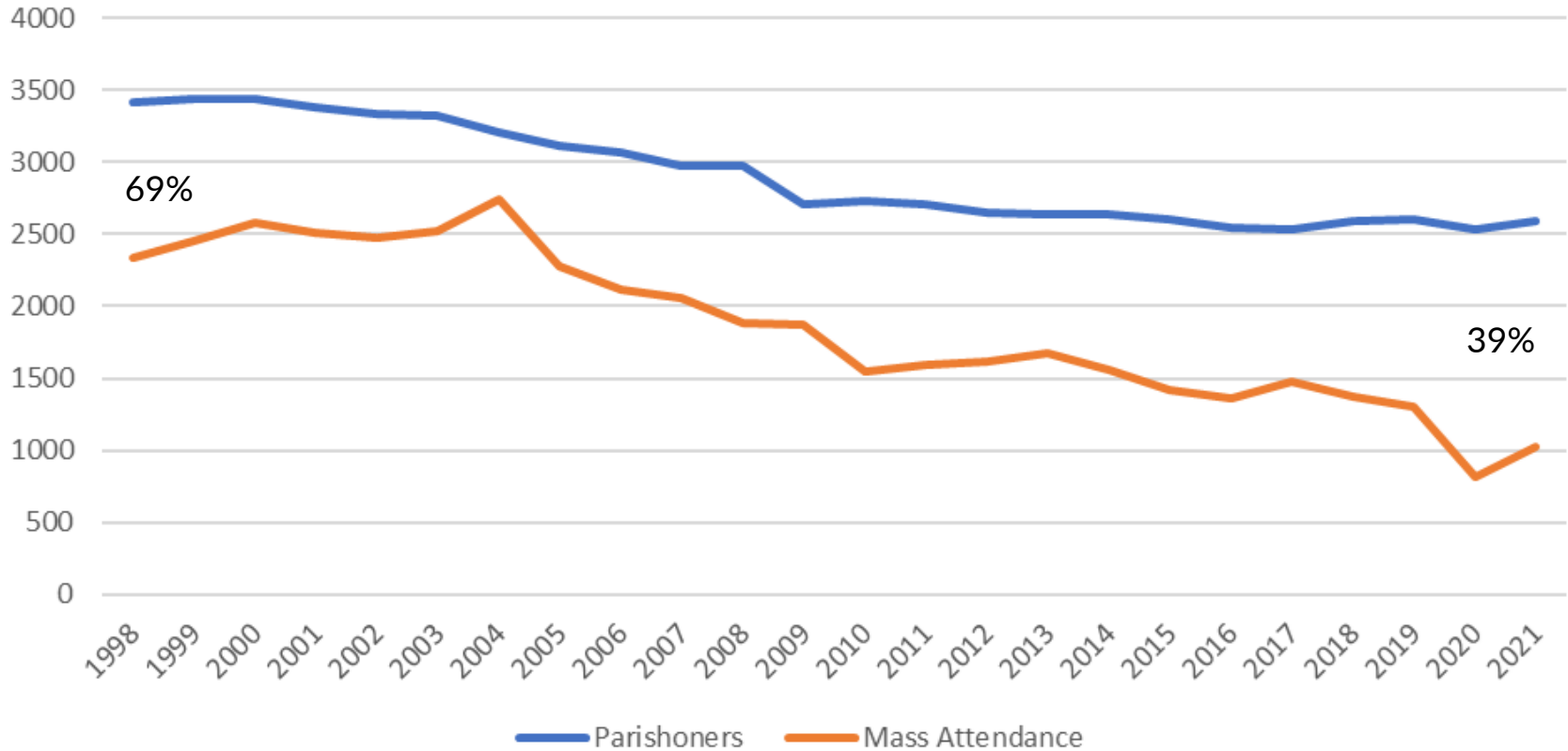


Masses over Time



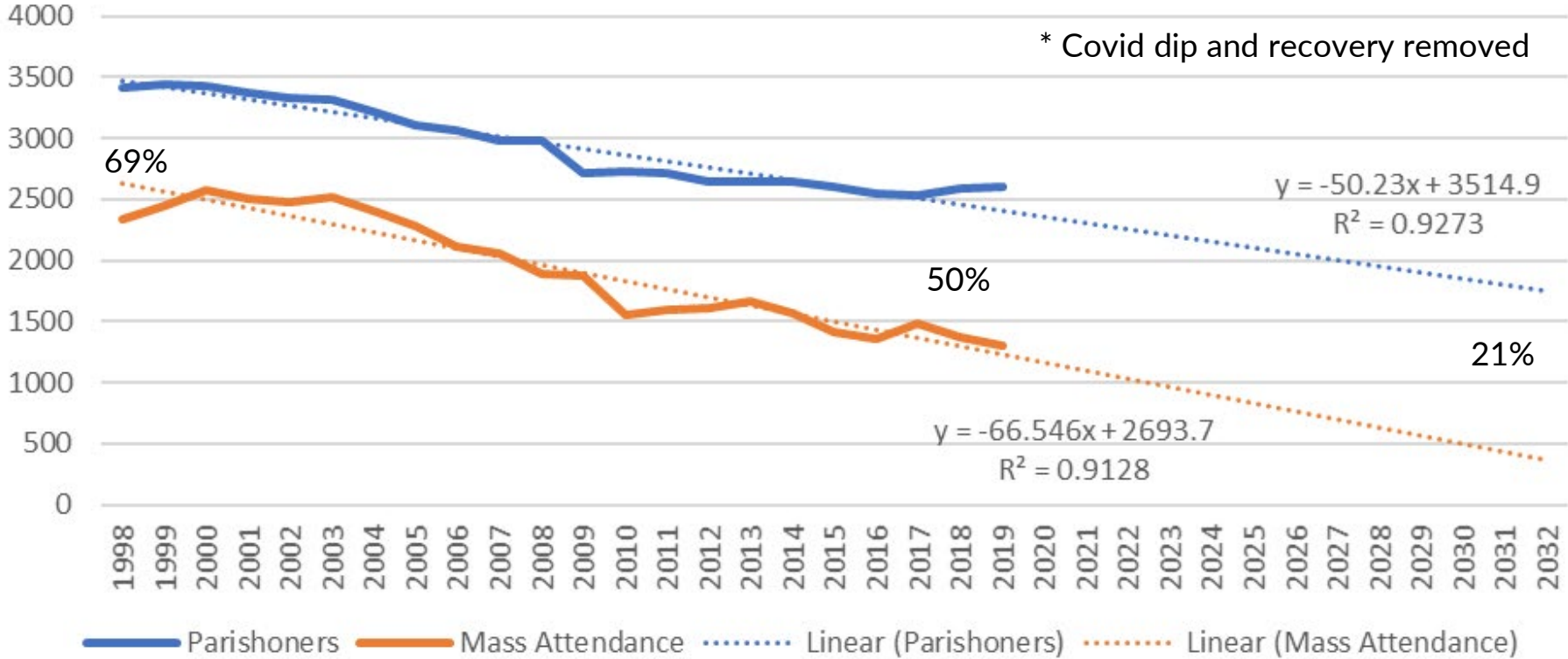
Masses per Parish	2	1.25		1	Sunday
Masses per Priest	4.5	2.7		3	
People per Mass	117	105		165	
Masses per Parish	2.4	1.9		1	Weekday
Masses per Priest	5.5	5		4	

Family K Mass Attendance



Source: Pastoral Report Statistics 2003-2021, Archdiocese of Omaha.

Mass Attendance Trendlines



Source: Pastoral Report Statistics 2003-2021, Archdiocese of Omaha.

By 2032: 1757 Parishioners 365 Attendance

Driving Distance

Distances in Miles



Petersburg

9.1 to Elgin

13.3 to Albion

Raeville

7.4 to Elgin

17.9 to Albion

4.0 to Petersburg

Rural St. John

11.1 to Ewing

10.2 to Clearwater

21.5 to Elgin

Tilden

14.1 to Neligh

20.6 to Norfolk

Ewing

10.4 to Clearwater

20.9 to O'Neill

<https://maps.google.com/>

Parameters: Daily Masses





Daily Masses

Priests can celebrate no more than 2 Masses per day on weekdays. Daily Mass is a private devotion and not a requirement or obligation for the faithful. Order of Priorities:

- Funerals
 - School Mass
 - Nursing Home/Care Facilities
 - A 'Normal' Parish Mass
-



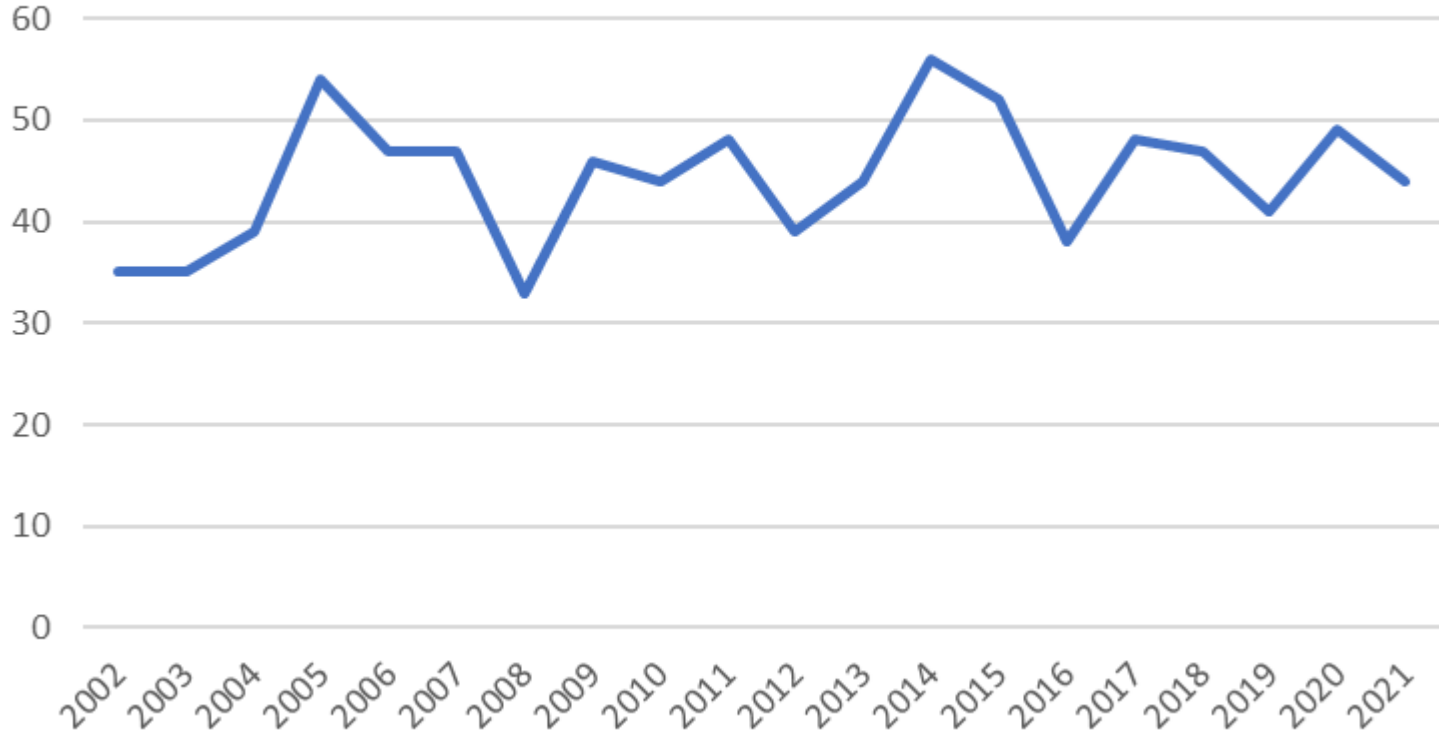
Mass Cancellations

Masses can be cancelled without substitution for

- Priests' funerals
- Family of priests' funerals
- Clergy conferences
- Priest convocations
- Days off
- Retreats

A Communion service on these days would be optional.

Funerals



Average:
46 Funerals
per Year

Parameters: Priest Workload





Time Priorities

First Priority: Things only Priests can do.

1. Preside over Masses: Sundays, Weekdays, Funerals
2. Confessions
3. Anointings
4. Sacramental visits to the sick and homebound
5. Priestly support of the Pastoral Vision



Time Priorities

Pastors must do:

1. Leadership for Evangelization
2. Oversight of temporal goods administration
3. Oversight of school support



Time Away

1. Six-day work week
 2. Day off - 1 per week
 3. Vacation
 - a. 24 weekdays, 3 weekends
 - b. Non-archdiocesan ministerial events, pilgrimages, retreats for non-archdiocesan groups count as vacation.
 4. Annual Retreat - 1 week
 5. Priest funerals, priest family funerals, clergy conferences, priest convocations
-

Oversight of temporal goods administration



Leadership in Evangelization



Do Catholics feel Equipped to Evangelize?

Identifier	Archdiocese	% of Catholics
Total Population	993,500 ¹	n/a
Number of Registered Catholics	235,500 ²	100%
Attend Mass on a Given Weekend	87,900	37% ²
Living as Intentional Disciples	16,500	7% ³
Disciples Equipped to Evangelize	1,400	0.6% ³

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, July 1, 2016. This figure is the aggregate of the population figures for the 23 individual counties in the Archdiocese.

² Archdiocese of Omaha, Pastoral Statistics Report, Oct 2015-Sept 2016

³ The Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic, The Dynamic Catholic Institute, 2013. Matthew Kelly refers to the "7%" of registered parishioners who contribute 80% of volunteer hours and 80% of financial donations in a parish as "Dynamic Catholics". While we are aware that these external criteria alone do not provide a perfectly accurate measure of interior commitment to Christ, we have chosen to use this percentage as an approximation of those who are living as intentional disciples. Additionally, in further research conducted by the Dynamic Catholic Institute, 99.4% of respondents claimed they had never been taught to evangelize.

Missionary Disciples in the Archdiocese of Omaha

Identifier	Parish of 2,500 HH*	Parish of 1,000 HH*	Parish of 200 HH*
Total Population	31,600	10,500	2,100
Number of Registered Catholics	7,500	2,500	500
Attend Mass on a Given Weekend	2,700	925	185
Living as Intentional Disciples	525	175	35
Disciples Equipped to Evangelize	45	15	3

*HH stands for Households





Jesus



Peter, James & John



The Twelve



The 72

255 = 25% to change the culture
 1020 = Mass Attendees
 2595 = Registered Catholics
 ? = Total Population

Spiritual Multipliers

Year #	Priest 10/Yr	1	2	3	4
1	10	1	1	1	1
2	20	2	3	4	5
3	30	3	7	13	21
4	40	4	15	40	85
5	50	5	31	121	341
6	60	6	63	364	1,365
7	70	7	127	1,093	5,461
8	80	8	255	3,280	21,845
9	90	9	511	9,841	87,381
10	100	10	1,023	29,524	349,525
11	110	11	2,047	88,573	1,398,101
12	120	12	4,095	265,720	5,592,405
13	130	13	8,191	797,161	22,369,621
14	140	14	16,383	2,391,494	89,478,485

Changes are Coming



J. William Worden

Grief Counseling *and* Grief Therapy



A Handbook for the
Mental Health Practitioner

FOURTH EDITION

Change involves Grief 4 Tasks of Mourning

1. To accept the reality of the loss
 2. To process the pain of grief
 3. To adjust to a world without the deceased
 4. To find an enduring connection with the deceased in the midst of embarking on a new life
-

J. William Worden

Grief Counseling *and* Grief Therapy



A Handbook for the
Mental Health Practitioner

FOURTH EDITION

TEAR Model of Grief

the tasks of grief

T = To accept the reality of
the loss

E = Experience the pain of the loss

A = Adjust to the new environment
without the lost person

R = Reinvest in the new
reality

Some of the Necessary Changes





1. Centralization of Administrative Offices

All staff will be required to work out of a centralized (large) office space.

Most parish business is conducted by phone/email rather than in person. Local phones can be redirected to the shared office.

Centralizing check writing, parish business planning, etc. is necessary for the health/sanity of the priest.

2. Reducing to 6 Weekend Masses Proposed (DRAFT) Mass Schedule (Family 'K')

Mass Times	Saturday	Sunday
8:00 AM	Current Schedule (2022)	OLT - Tilden SBR - Raeville
10:00 AM		SBE - Elgin STC - Clearwater SFN - Neligh
11:30 AM		SJD - Deloit
5:00 PM	SFN - Neligh	
5:30 PM	SPE - Ewing	
7:00 PM	OLT - Tilden SJP - Petersburg	



Mass Times	Saturday	Sunday
8:00 AM	Proposed for 2 Priests	STC - Clearwater SBR - Raeville / SJP - Petersburg
10:00 AM		SBE - Elgin SFN - Neligh
5:30 PM	SPE - Ewing / SJD - Deloit OLT - Tilden	

The proposed rotation is a 1st/3rd/5th and 2nd/4th weekend rotation.

Under a Single Pastor Model, with the (above) proposed mass schedule, there is a reduction of 10 masses to 6 masses. There is also a simplification of the times when Mass is offered from 6 different times to 3 different times. (5:30PM Vigil / 8:00AM / 10:00AM)

The 5:30 PM Mass is assigned in the East and in the West of Family 'K'.

The 8:00 AM Mass is assigned in the North and in the South of Family 'K'.

The 10:00 AM Mass is assigned in the two largest communities of Family 'K'.

Ewing and Deloit are 10 miles apart. Petersburg and Raeville are 4 miles apart.



3. Common Residence for 2 Priests

Two of the priests will live in the Petersburg Rectory.

- The house layout has 3 apartments and common space
- The house is located between the hospital in Neligh and the hospital in Albion (which we have emergency calls for)
- The house is located off the highway.
- The house does not have any office space in the house.
Total separation protects priests for Safe Environment.

Redirection Conversation w/ Fr. Hastings (Oct 4)





The conversation on Tues Oct. 4 stated that the presented changes were inadequate and would not be approved as a JoF Plan.

Fr. Hastings outlined what he saw as the two acceptable options forward.

Option 1: Two parishes will cease Sunday/Weekend Mass on July 1, 2023.

Option 2: Adopt a radical reorganization through canonical mergers to streamline administrative complexity.



Option 1: Cease Sunday Mass at 2 Church sites

Likely Impact:

- Two parishes will likely become fiscally nonviable and will eventually close. The parish assets will be liquidated or transferred to a 'receiving parish'
 - Responsibility for care of the parish cemetery, etc. would also be transferred to the receiving parish.
 - Endowments and funds would be evaluated to best reflect donor intention.
-



Option 2: Parish Mergers to Streamline Administration

- Proposed as two resulting parishes,
 - 1) Parishes on Hwy 275 would become a new parish (e.g. Transfiguration Parish, St. Peter Church or St. Francis Church, etc.) Every parish from Ewing-DeLoit to Tilden would become a single parish... combining all assets and liabilities.
 - 2) Parishes on Hwy 14 (Elgin, Raeville, Petersburg) would become a new parish with three churches.
-



Option 2: Parish Mergers to Streamline Administration

- The larger 'Parish' gains control over the future of member churches.
 - The Archdiocese can merge or close parishes, not churches within a larger parish.
 - Each 'Parish' would have a single Parish Council and Finance Committee (down from the eight parish councils existing today).
 - Mergers would have to be completed by July 1, 2024
-

Catholic Parishes in Partnership Parish Family

St. Peter de Alcántara, Ewing
St. Theresa of Avila, Clearwater
St. John the Baptist, Deloit
St. Francis of Assisi, Neligh
Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Tilden
St. Boniface, Elgin
St. Bonaventure, Raeville
St. John the Baptist, Petersburg



**Journey
of Faith**