



ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

June 25, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am deeply grateful to the thousands and thousands of you who accepted my invitation to take part in conversations about the Church of Philadelphia and the path we will walk toward a vibrant future. Your presence, candor, and heartfelt sentiments moved me deeply, and it was clear the Holy Spirit was working through you.

What I Heard from You

Your voices revealed both honest struggles and vibrant hope. While some shared difficult experiences of hurt and frustration with our Church that were difficult but necessary for me to hear, many others expressed hope and enthusiasm for this new era in our Church's life. The themes that you brought forward most frequently are outlined below.

Reaching out to Everyone: You echoed my sense of urgency and sadness that 83% of baptized Catholics are not engaged with our Church. At the same time, you emphasized the importance of supporting those who have remained faithful while also evangelizing those who have never encountered the person of Christ and his compassionate love through the Catholic Church.

Understanding why People are Away: Many of you courageously reminded me of the many reasons that people either distanced themselves from the Church or felt pushed away through stories about your faith journeys and those of your loved ones. We must continue to listen with open hearts and true Christian charity in order to bring them closer to Christ.

Ensuring Accountability: You emphasized the need for transparency, accountability structures for Missionary Hubs, and addressing potential resistance to this new model. You also raised important questions about sustainable funding and the need to endow this missionary initiative for the good of the long-term growth and sustainability of the Church.

Supporting Existing Ministries: My heart was filled with joy to hear wonderful witness stories about initiatives already flourishing in our Church. These great works must continue! I'm especially grateful for testimony from lay and consecrated women about their essential leadership and desire to expand their impact.

Practical Implementation: Your insightful questions about how this plan affects existing processes will be answered through pilot missionary hubs launching this year. Please join me in praying for our pioneer parishes as they begin this journey!

Fostering Collaboration: Many of you expressed desire for greater collaboration and resource sharing among parishes to build stronger community and mutual support. Our communities have diverse gifts, and we needn't duplicate efforts. This plan aims to empower each community to leverage its unique strengths.

Moving Forward Together

Over the next six months, we will launch our pilot Missionary Hubs, appoint Parish Life Directors, and begin discerning the first wave of Hubs. We will also ensure every parish leader can engage with insights from our recent parish survey and explore sustainable funding for our missionary focus.

I look forward to continuing our conversation through smaller leadership gatherings and comprehensive digital outreach efforts. Please watch for my next update on the first anniversary of my pastoral [letter](#) this January.

Let us remember Christ's mandate and promise: "*Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the world.*" – **Matthew 28: 19-20.**

May we all continue to accept the invitation to trust and hope in our Lord and to pray for one another.

Sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nelson J. Pérez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D.D.
Archbishop of Philadelphia