

**DIOCESE OF DES MOINES**  
**VICARIATES/DEANERIES & PARISH CLUSTERS**  
**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

(May 21, 2025)

**I. ATLANTIC - DEANERY**

(8 Priests - Currently)

(Adair, Audubon, Cass, Dallas, Guthrie, and Pottawattamie Counties)

***Atlantic Parish Family #1***

1. Atlantic, SS Peter & Paul	261
2. Anita, St. Mary	67
3. Griswold, Our Lady of Grace	32
4. Reno/Cumberland, St. Timothy	41
5. Audubon, St. Patrick	180
6. Exira, Holy Trinity	43
7. Avoca, St. Mary	131
8. Walnut, St. Patrick	47

***Sub-Total Households: 802***

***Atlantic Parish Family #2***

9. Stuart, All Saints	190
10. Adair, St. John	57
11. Greenfield, St. John	157
12. Massena, St. Patrick (Cass Co.)	74

***Sub-Total Households: 478***

***Atlantic Parish Family #3***

13. Panora, St. Cecilia	173
14. Guthrie Center, St. Mary	122
15. Bayard, St. Patrick	69
16. Perry, St. Patrick	582

***Sub-Total Households: 946***

**Total Households: 2,226**

**II. COUNCIL BLUFFS - DEANERY**

(7 Priests - Currently)

*(Mills and Pottawattamie Counties)*

1. Council Bluffs/Carter Lake, Corpus Christi	1,421
2. Council Bluffs, St. Patrick	1,057
3. Council Bluffs, St. Peter	550
4. Glenwood, Holy Rosary	389

**Council Bluffs Family #1**

5. Neola, St. Patrick	327
6. Weston, St. Columbanus	51

**Total Households: 3,795**

**III. DES MOINES NORTHEAST - DEANERY**

(11 Priests- Currently)

*(Polk and Dallas Counties)*

1. Altoona, SS John and Paul	787
2. Ankeny, St. Luke the Evangelist	768
3. Ankeny, Our Lady's Immaculate Heart	2,333
4. Des Moines, All Saints	530
5. Des Moines, St. Joseph	815
6. Elkhart, St. Mary/Holy Cross	389
7. Granger, Assumption	526

**Total Households: 6,148**

**IV. DES MOINES CENTRAL DEANERY**

(7 Priests - Currently)

*(Polk County)*

1. Des Moines, St. Augustin	830
2. Des Moines, St. Mary of Nazareth	1,040
3. Des Moines, St. Theresa	993
4. Des Moines, Holy Trinity	1,151
5. Urbandale, St. Pius X	1,605

**Total Households: 5,619**

**V. DES MOINES SOUTHEAST DEANERY**

(13 Priests - Currently)

*(Polk County)*

1. Carlisle, St. Elizabeth Seton	253
2. Des Moines, Our Lady of the Americas	1,684
3. Des Moines, St. Peter Vietnamese Catholic Community	194
4. Des Moines, St. Ambrose Cathedral	562
5. Des Moines, Basilica of St. John	595
6. Des Moines, St. Catherine of Siena	121
7. Des Moines, Christ the King	1,596
8. Des Moines, St. Anthony	2,219

**Total Households: 7,224**

**VI. DES MOINES WEST - DEANERY** (DSM IV) (8 Priests - Currently)

*(Dallas and Polk Counties)*

1. Adel, St. John	417
2. Waukee, St. Boniface	1,817
3. West Des Moines, Sacred Heart	2,457
4. West Des Moines, St. Francis of Assisi	3,493

**Total Households: 8,184**

**VII. RED OAK - DEANERY** (4 Priests - Currently)

*(Adams, Fremont, Montgomery, Page, and Taylor Counties)*

***Red Oak Parish Family #1***

1. Bedford, Sacred Heart	30
2. Clarinda, St. Clare	75
3. Villisca, St. Joseph	12
4. Hamburg, St. Mary	80
5. Shenandoah, St. Mary	166
6. Imogene, St. Patrick	104
7. Red Oak, St. Mary	116

***Sub-Total Households: 583***

***Red Oak Parish Family #2***

8. Lenox, St. Patrick	81
9. Corning, St. Patrick	82

***Sub-Total Households: 163***

**Total Households: 746**

**VIII. NORWALK - DEANERY**

(7 Priests - Currently)

*(Clarke, Decatur, Lucas, Madison, Union, Ringgold, Warren, and Wayne Counties)*

***Norwalk Parish Family #1***

1. Norwalk, St. John the Apostle	700
2. Churchville, Shrine of the Assumption	N/A
3. Winterset, St. Joseph	576
4. Irish Settlement, St. Patrick	92

***Sub-Total Households: 1,368***

***Norwalk Parish Family #2***

5. Indianola, St. Thomas Aquinas	536
6. Lacona, St. Mary/ Milo, St. Augustin (Holy Trinity of SE Warren)	109
7. St. Mary's, Immaculate Conception	145

***Sub-Total Households: 790***

***Norwalk Parish Family #3***

8. Chariton, Sacred Heart	116
9. Corydon, St. Francis	17
10. Leon, St. Brendan	79
11. Mt. Ayr, St. Joseph	77
12. Osceola, St. Bernard	388
13. Grand River, St. Patrick	32

***Sub-Total Households: 709***

***Norwalk Parish Family #4***

14. Creston, Holy Spirit	405
15. Afton, St. Edward	89

***Sub-Total Households: 494***

**Total Households: 3361**

**IX. HARLAN - DEANERY**

(5 Priests and 1 Deacon - Currently)

*(Harrison and Shelby Counties)*

1. Harlan, St. Michael

**Sub-Total Households: 565**

***Harlan Parish Family #1***

- |                                       |     |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| 2. Defiance, St. Peter                | 112 |
| 3. Earling, St. Joseph                | 188 |
| 4. Panama, St. Mary of the Assumption | 162 |
| 5. Portsmouth, St. Mary               | 164 |
| 6. Westphalia, St. Boniface           | 93  |

**Sub-Total Households: 719**

***Harlan Parish Family #2***

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 7. Dunlap, St. Patrick  | 241 |
| 8. Woodbine, Sacred Heart                                     | 100 |
| 9. Mondamin, Holy Family <i>(Deacon/ Dir. of Parish Life)</i> | 24  |
| 10. Missouri Valley, St. Patrick                              | 212 |
| 11. Logan, St. Anne   | 135 |

**Sub-Total Households: 712**

**Total Households: 2,174**

## **DEFINITIONS AND PURPOSE OF VICARIATE AND PARISH ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES**

**PARISH:** "A parish is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular church; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under the authority of the diocesan bishop." It is the place where all the faithful can be gathered together for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. The parish initiates the Christian people into the ordinary expression of the liturgical life: it gathers them together in this celebration; it teaches Christ's saving doctrine; it practices the charity of the Lord in good works and brotherly love." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, #2179*).

Canon Law (c. 515.1) speaks of a parish in the following way: "*A parish is a certain community of the Christian faithful stably constituted in a particular church, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a pastor (parochus) as its proper pastor under the authority of the diocesan bishop*".

Can. 518 goes on to state, "*As a general rule a parish is to be territorial, that is, one which includes all the Christian faithful of a certain territory. When it is expedient, however, personal parishes are to be established determined by reason of the rite, language, or nationality of the Christian faithful of some territory, or even for some other reason.*"

**PARISHIONER:** "All Catholics who live within the territory of a parish are members of the parish. This means that they have the right to orderly access to the sacraments (if they are properly disposed), to personal ministrations from the pastor or his agents, to preaching, to religious education, and to all the other ministerial benefits (e.g., Christian funeral) that the parish offers. This right is not contingent on financial support of the parish, on participation in the liturgical life of the parish, or on the fulfillment of any other requirement. While pastors should encourage Catholics within the boundaries of the parish to register, to offer their financial support, and to maintain a certain level of activity, the failure of a parishioner to register or otherwise participate in parish life does not allow the pastor to relegate that parishioner to any special category of membership (e.g. "inactive member")" (*Archbishop Pilarczyk, 2009*).

**DEANERY:** A geographic grouping of neighboring parishes. Deaneries help in the coordination of pastoral care, common pastoral action, mutual support in the implementation of diocesan policies, sharing of pastoral concerns, and facilitation of communication. The Bishop, after consultation with the Presbyteral Council, may establish, modify, combine or suppress Deaneries according to circumstances and pastoral needs. Deaneries are known in universal canon law as a "vicariate forane."

**DEAN:** The role of the Dean is primarily pastoral. By special appointment of the Bishop, the Dean shares in the Bishop's ministry as shepherd of the diocese. It is a position of guiding pastoral care for a particular area of the diocese with the Bishop's pastoral authority. As the Bishop's representative, the Dean works in close liaison and partnership with the Bishop, the Vicar General, and any other Episcopal Vicars and officers appointed by the Bishop. In carrying out his role, the Dean should give priority to affirming, encouraging and supporting the priests and deacons of the deanery.

The Dean is the Bishop's personal representative in the deanery, and can act in the name of the Bishop when he presides or is present at liturgical functions, meetings of clergy and/or lay people, local civic events, ecumenical activities, etc. The Dean is a servant of communion and channel of

communication among the pastors and parish communities within the deanery, and between the deanery and the Bishop.

Canon Law defines some of the duties of a Dean as:

- promotion and coordination of the common pastoral activity within the deanery;
- seeing that the clerics of the deanery lead a life in harmony with their state in life and perform their duties with diligence;
- seeing that religious functions follow Church norms;
- seeing that the good appearance of churches and sacred furnishings are maintained;
- seeing that parish books are correctly managed;
- seeing that the parish rectory is well maintained;
- seeing that clerics, following the norms of the diocese and the norms of Canon 272, attend theological lectures, meetings, or conferences;
- making sure that the priests of the deanery have access to spiritual helps and aid in difficult pastoral circumstances; and
- making sure that pastors in his deanery are well cared for when they are sick or dying.
- Additionally, the dean must follow the particular norms of the diocese. Canon 555 also particularly mentions that a dean must visit the parishes of the district in accord with the regulations made by the diocesan bishop.

**PARISH FAMILY:** *A "Parish Family" or "Pastoral Unit" is an intentional grouping of individual parishes which vitalizes and supports the active faith life of all the parishioners and the evangelization of the Gospel. Each of these groupings exist within the geographical boundaries of a particular Vicariate or Deanery within the Diocese of Des Moines. This model is recognized and described by the Church in the following way:*

*42. The pastoral conversion of the Parish community, in terms of mission, takes shape and finds expression in a gradual process of a renewal of structures; consequently, different forms of shared pastoral care emerge, as well as forms of participation in it that involve the entire People of God.*

*43. Using language borrowed from Magisterial documents regarding subdivisions within the diocesan territory<sup>[49]</sup>, new expressions have been added to those of Parish and Vicariates Forane (Deaneries), which are foreseen in the current Code of Canon Law<sup>[50]</sup>, namely "pastoral units" and "pastoral regions". These appellations effectively define new forms of pastoral organization within a Diocese, thus reflecting a new relationship between the faithful and the territory.*

*44. In using terms like "pastoral units" and "pastoral regions", naturally one does not envisage that by simply giving a new name to already existing realities, a myriad of current problems are overcome. At the heart of a process of renewal, instead of passively undergoing change by supporting and going along with it, there exists today the need to individuate new structures that will incite all those who make up the Christian community to fulfil their vocation to evangelize, with a view to a more effective pastoral care of the People of God, the "key factor" of which is proximity.*

*45. With this in mind, the canonical norm underlines the need to individuate different territories<sup>[51]</sup> within each Diocese, with the possibility of these being assembled into intermediate realities between a given Diocese and an individual Parish. Furthermore, by*



*taking the size of the Diocese and its pastoral reality into account, one is better situated to delineate various kinds of Parish groupings<sup>[52]</sup>.*

*The communal dimension of the Church lives and works at the heart of these groupings, with particular attention given to specific territories, the establishment of which must take into consideration the homogeneity and customs of the inhabitants, together with the common traits of the area, in order to foster a close relationship between Parish Priests and other pastoral workers<sup>[53]</sup>.*

**(From, "The Pastoral Conversion of the Parish Community in the Service of the Evangelizing Mission of the Church, The Congregation for the Clergy, 27 June 2020).**

Therefore, this "Parish Family" or grouping of parishes could cooperate in the following:

1. Pastoral Planning for Common Mission:
  - a. Identifying common pastoral needs
  - b. Discerning and Developing a common Mission/Vision for the grouping
  - c. Articulating and Executing Common Goals for living out the Mission
2. Shared staffing for ministry and administration
3. Shared opportunities for ministry, evangelization, and outreach to those in need
4. Pastoring/Governance:
  - a. Could have multiple Pastors for individual parishes or groups of parishes – as is done currently,
  - b. Could have a singular Pastor, with several Parochial Vicars (Curates),
  - c. Could have a singular Pastor with Parochial Vicars and/or Directors of Parish Life at some locations (Can. 517.2).

**Diocese of Des Moines**

**Proposed Deanery Organization  
Draft: 1-15-2025**

**HARLAN DEANERY**

**Harlan Parish Family #1**  
Defiance, St. Peter  
Earling, St. Joseph  
Panama, St. Mary of the Assumption  
Portsmouth, St. Mary  
Westphalia, St. Boniface

**Harlan Parish Family #2**  
Dunlap, St. Patrick  
Woodbine, Sacred Heart  
Mondamin, Holy Family  
Missouri Valley, St. Patrick  
Logan, St. Anne

**Harlan Parish Family #3**  
Harlan, St. Michael

**ATLANTIC DEANERY**

**Atlantic Parish Family #1**  
Atlantic, SS Peter & Paul  
Anita, St. Mary  
Audubon, St. Patrick  
Exira, Holy Trinity  
Avoca, St. Mary  
Walnut, St. Patrick  
Griswold, Our Lady of Grace  
Reno/Cumberland, St. Timothy

**Atlantic Parish Family #2**  
Stuart, All Saints  
Adair, St. John  
Greenfield, St. John  
Massena, St. Patrick

**Atlantic Parish Family #3**  
Panora, St. Cecilia  
Guthrie Center, St. Mary  
Bayard, St. Patrick  
Perry, St. Patrick

**DSM NORTHEAST DEANERY**

Altoona, SS John and Paul  
Ankeny, St. Luke the Evangelist  
Ankeny, Our Lady's Immaculate Heart  
Des Moines, All Saints  
Des Moines, St. Joseph  
Elkhart, St. Mary/Holy Cross  
Granger, Assumption

**DSM CENTRAL DEANERY**

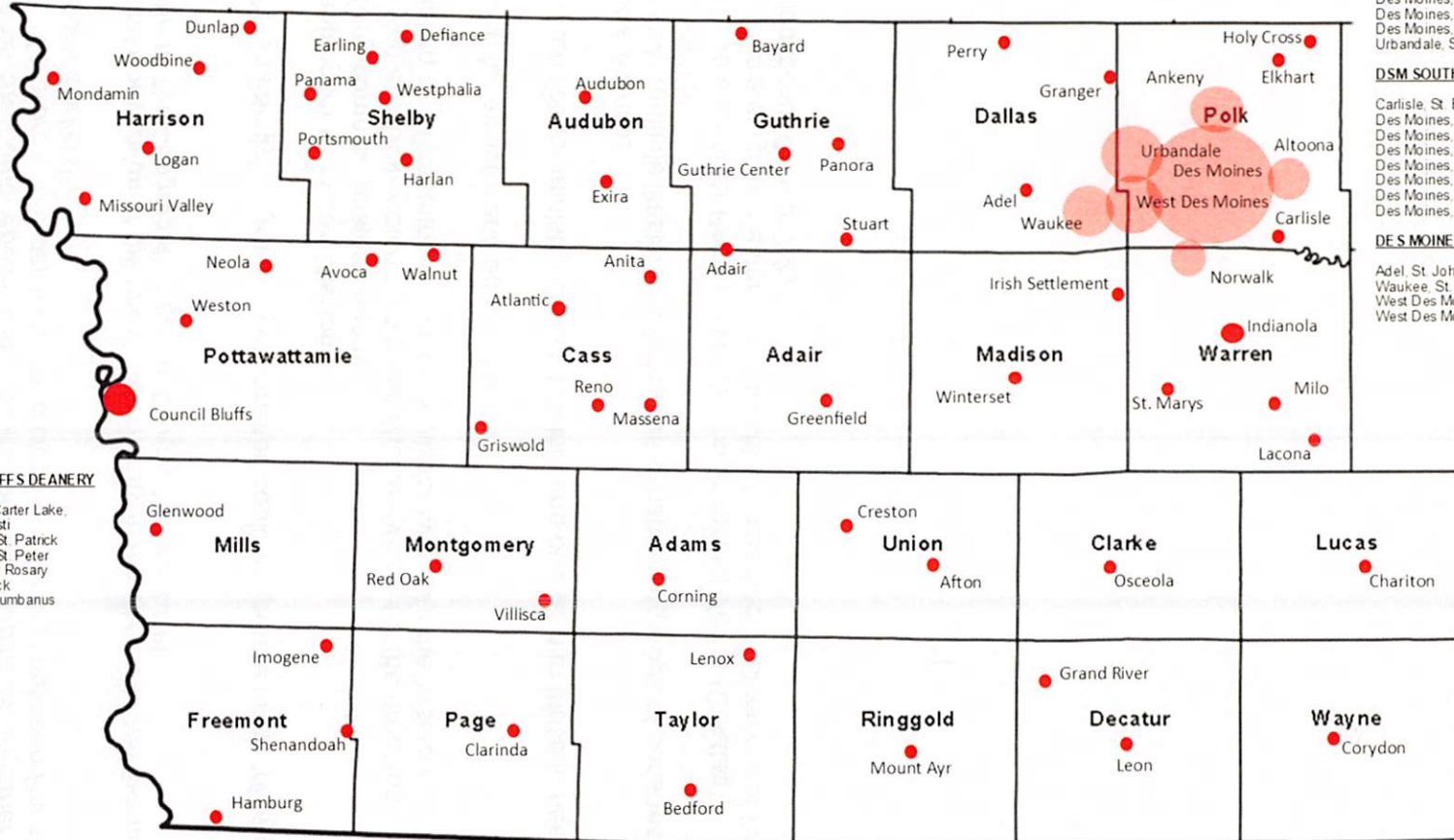
Des Moines, St. Augustin  
Des Moines, St. Mary of Nazareth  
Des Moines, St. Theresa  
Des Moines, Holy Trinity  
Urbandale, St. Plus X

**DSM SOUTHEAST DEANERY**

Carlisle, St. Elizabeth Seton  
Des Moines, Our Lady of the Americas  
Des Moines, St. Peter VC  
Des Moines, St. Ambrose Cathedral  
Des Moines, Basilica of St. John  
Des Moines, St. Catherine of Siena  
Des Moines, Christ the King  
Des Moines, St. Anthony

**DES MOINES WEST DEANERY**

Adel, St. John  
Waukee, St. Boniface  
West Des Moines, Sacred Heart  
West Des Moines, St. Francis of Assisi



**COUNCIL BLUFFS DEANERY**

Council Bluffs/Carter Lake, Corpus Christi  
Council Bluffs, St. Patrick  
Council Bluffs, St. Peter  
Glenwood, Holy Rosary  
Neola, St. Patrick  
Weston, St. Columbanus

**RED OAK DEANERY**

**Red Oak Parish Family #1**  
Bedford, Sacred Heart  
Clarinda, St. Clare  
Villisca, St. Joseph  
Hamburg, St. Mary  
Shenandoah, St. Mary  
Imogene, St. Patrick  
Red Oak, St. Mary

**Red Oak Parish Family #2**  
Lenox, St. Patrick  
Corning, St. Patrick

**NORWALK DEANERY**

**Norwalk Parish Family #1**  
Norwalk, St. John the Apostle  
Churchville, Shrine of the Assumption  
Winterset, St. Joseph  
Insh Settlement, St. Patrick

**Norwalk Parish Family #2**  
Indianola, St. Thomas Aquinas  
Simpson College Student Community  
Lacona, St. Mary/ Milo, St. Augustin  
(Holy Trinity of SE Warren)  
St. Marys, Immaculate Conception

**Norwalk Parish Family #3**  
Chariton, Sacred Heart  
Corydon, St. Francis  
Leon, St. Brendan  
Mt. Ayr, St. Joseph  
Osceola, St. Bernard  
Grand River, St. Patrick

**Norwalk Parish Family #4**  
Creston, Holy Spirit  
Afton, St. Edward