

**COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, ETC. FLOOR OPEN
AFTERNOON MEETING, 10/30/17 2:00PM-4:00PM**

How many other areas are experiencing consolidation?

There have been lots of changes over the years, since St. John the Baptist, St. Cecilia's, and since Blessed Sacrament and Christ the Redeemer were formed. We do have 27 parishes with multiple worship sites in the diocese.

Anything said about decline of attendance?

Regular counts have been conducted. Usually see decline in numbers after loss of 3 Masses. May have been initial fall out, may pick back up. Attendance at Masses has been good, but probably less than before. Don't have actual numbers at this time.

Concerning 5:30 at Sts. P&P, daylight savings time is ending, coming and going on the dark. Waverly/Owego/Newark Valley have duplicate Mass times. Why can't we? I really wanted numbers! That Mass can't support itself.

Locally, we wanted to provide more opportunities, wanted a schedule that one priest could handle. Can't use retired priests for planning the schedule.

Just curious. If we do 10:30, how does that impact the 11:30?

It would be the same as the 9 & 10 Masses now.

We need to move the 5:30 at least to 5, all the time. St. Mary's is overcrowded and noisy. Can't pray. Move the 10:30 to St. Casimir's, put 7:30 at St. Pat's, for the sake of families.

Difficult because of the size of the churches.

Agree, we don't like to drive after dark.

I like the 5:30. It gives options. It works better for a lot of people.

At St. Mary's, the 1st week was crazy but now there's room. People in the back like the back, are choosing to stand. Some have shifted to the 5:30.

Re infection control, I like that the Eucharistic ministers use hand sanitizer. Why don't the priests & deacons do the same? Concerned about them not washing their hands, especially after sign of peace.

In Syracuse, each pew has hand sanitizer.

My daughter goes to HFS. I offer for suggestion having the 10:30 at St. Mary's, 11:30 at St. Pat's due to SM's proximity to HFS. Also, 11:30 is too late for families.

I have 4 children, 3 of them in Catholic school. I'm concerned about the drop in enrollment. Did the opening of Finn Academy impact enrollment?

Why is the CMA not targeted to Easter (when people get tax returns) vs. Christmas (when people have extra expenses)?

Used to be the Thanksgiving appeal to give thanks to God for blessings. New name, same timing. You can spread out your contribution over the year, until May.

According to the ushers, the 5:30 has dropped 30%. I know we have to consider the kids because they're our future, but the older people have supported these parishes for a long time and you're not considering them enough. Hospital, residents of Bragg Towers. Need to look out for our older people.

Agree with others re the 5:30. Much more convenient. Other churches don't have senior facilities nearby. The older people got left behind. Many of them were coming to the 4:00 and the 8:00.

Is there any way to rotate the 4:00 & 5:30?

It could cause confusion.

Are we tearing open an old wound regarding Mass times and locations? We really need to look at where we'll be in 18 months once the crunch comes. We have to step aside from our own pet projects and selfish interests. I come from St. Casimir's too, but I have to have strong enough faith that if that church were to close, that I would be a good Catholic still, and would find a place to attend Mass and receive the Lord.

Nothing has been said about closing churches. What is the plan? What churches will be kept open?

Still need to look at options. We can't keep them all. It will be dependent on condition of buildings, etc. Right now, all have Masses on weekends except SCB. If we attach ourselves to 1 building, we do ourselves a disservice. We are Catholics. We will have a church in Elmira, a couple of churches at least. It may not be your preference. That's ok. It's not the building that makes you Catholic. We just all have to be open.

Sales of property: OLL School & McCabe Center have a prospective offer. Convent leased to Jim Capriotti. Rectory will probably be sold.

Why is SMOM not included in this merger?

Defensive of Mass times, not so much selfish as much as an important consideration, because if the loss of some of those things make people leave we're going to have a whole new set of problems. Need to see both sides.

If we change the 10 to 10:30, will that be the only family option?

No. Kids are welcome at all Masses.

You say "don't be connected to a church". No one is less connected than the folks from St. John the Baptist. That was a family. I'm disappointed. The 4 at SPP was one of the most heavily attended and you took it away. Disappointed that we don't have the Mass attendance numbers available today.

I appreciate all the comments. People displaced from St. Cecilia's, St. Anthony's, St. John's. But at the same time, we can't look back. We have to look forward. We don't all have to go to Mass when it's dark. There are daylight Masses, Sunday Masses. How do we get people to Mass, instead of having them stay home? I remember when the Greek Orthodox priest came only once a month. July-Sept are summer vacation months. It would be nice to have the numbers, but I appreciate of our 2 active priests, our retired priests, and those involved in this process. This open process, these meetings.

I don't understand. Sounds like people here want 4 @ Sts. P&P. Why not just switch?

St. Mary's is the largest of the churches.

Collections are down because people aren't happy with the Mass schedule. I have to eat by 5.

It may not feel the same, but it can if you give it a chance. If you're open. It's only been 4 months. We will take all suggestions and discuss them. It's impossible to give everyone what they want.

We've tried to be transparent. We've been very open. We can't do everything to make everyone happy.

Can we have the next one of these meetings on level ground so we don't have to do the stairs?

Elevator here.

Yeah, but how long is the line?

Are we going to put money into only the buildings we're going to keep, and let the others go?

There is & will be a 5-year plan to look at buildings.

There are things we can do to make it work. Light sensors, etc. at the churches. Why not go Sunday in the daylight? There are choices we can each make. I've seen older & younger at all of the Masses.

Maybe we shouldn't schedule Masses for the size of the churches. People sit at the ends. Save the back for late comers.

Many have said that we forgot about the elderly. We talked about the elderly at EVERY meeting for the Mass time scheduling. We chose 5:30 for access for kids.