

**Parishioner Church Hall Meetings
March 27, 2017
Compiled Input via the Parishioner Response Forms**

Input received regarding the Mass schedule (so that the planning team can use it when they meet on April 5 to determine the weekend Mass schedule beginning in July). Expressions of gratitude have not been included, nor have general comments such as “just let us know where and when—we will be there.” Questions and comments regarding the proposed merger of the three parishes will be added later.

SATURDAY EVENING MASS SCHEDULE – which is best?

Two Masses at 4:00 pm: 20

Masses at 4:00 pm and 4:30 pm: 31

Instead of the above, one Mass at 4:00 pm and the second at 5:00 or 5:30 pm: 115 (of those who stated a preference between 5:00 and 5:30, 3 preferred 5:00 and 42 preferred 5:30)

Comments:

5:00 or 5:30 Comments

- 5:00 or 5:30 Mass is too late because it's too dark in winter.
- Saturday Masses at 4:00 and 5:30 would allow more time for priests to move between Masses if needed. It is also redundant to duplicate times. The schedule should be spread out to maximize opportunities for parishioners to attend Mass as well.
- Many of us do work until 5 pm on Saturdays.
- As someone that can only attend Mass on Sat. night due to my work schedule...I think the proposed schedule is fair. Thank you for that.
- I personally would prefer the variety [4:00 & 5:00/5:30] but I don't think those who usually attend the 4 pm Masses would like it.
- I have no strong preference on Saturday Mass times. Staggering times may be most helpful though.
- Recommend trying out a new Mass time.
- I would expect the 5 pm Sat. Mass to be more popular with families that have children in sports; maybe fewer people are affected by the idea of “driving after dark” (4 pm Mass would appeal to seniors).
- 4 and 5/5:30 would not only give a priest some room but also would give options to parishioners.
- I feel that you need to have at least 1 ½ hour between Masses to allow for one priest to do both if needed. Would also suggest having both Masses at one church—would suggest Ss. P & P. Easy access and parking.
- It's hard to do activities on a Saturday, knowing you have to quit early to get cleaned up for 4 pm Mass. The 5:30 pm Mass would be much more convenient.
- Option for seniors to attend during daylight at 4 and 5:30 good for anyone.
- Think multiple Sat. evening options are great.
- 4 and 5/5:30 would help young couples with little children.
- A 5:30 Mass is too late and dark during the winter.

- 4 and 5:30. We'll need two priests because one priest cannot do both Masses.
- 5/5:30 is too late for many seniors—darkness, driving issues. Please consider your population.

Other Comments

- Need a 4:00 pm Saturday Mass—don't drive at night for safety reasons. (multiple responses)
- Keep 4:00 pm Mass at Ss. Peter and Paul as that has the most room for everyone.
- OLL is the farthest church so the 4:00 or 4:30 Mass on Sat. is more convenient for the older people than having two on the same streets.
- Do not change time for standard and daylight savings time.
- We do not need 2 [Saturday] evening Masses plus the regional 5:00 Mass. A total of 2 is plenty.
- Prefer 4:30 Mass at Christ the Redeemer.
- 4:00 Ss. P & P, 5:30 SM
- 4:00 at St. Pat's can hold more people than Ss. P & P.
- 90 minutes needed since may have only one priest in emergencies.
- There are not enough priests to ensure coverage of a 4/4:30 or 4/4 combination.
- Could it be helpful to unify the parishes to one parish with a single Saturday Mass?
- 4/4:30 seems to be more workable for all.
- No preference!
- Both Saturday Masses are on the southside of Elmira. Perhaps one could be scheduled at OLL—as it is now or at least consider geographical locations. It appears that OLL is being treated as “the red headed step-child.”
- Just because St. Pat's, St. Mary's and Ss. Peter and Paul have large churches they shouldn't get 4 or 4:30 Masses.
- Having both Saturday afternoon Masses within Elmira may make it difficult for those living out of town (especially older folks) to get to a Saturday Mass which many people prefer, especially when the weather is bad.
- 4 pm (Ss. P & P) and 5:30.
- 4 pm Ss. P & P (more elderly and handicapped) and 5:30 St. Mary.
- Whatever works out best for priests.
- Leave the 4 pm Mass as it is at St. Mary's.

SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Additional advantages/disadvantages

Advantages:

- Excellent plan to have a variety of Mass times on Sunday—need that on Saturday.
- Staggering of the Masses is what's needed.
- I like the idea of a Sunday evening Mass—perhaps it could be a weekly youth/young adult Mass?
- Plan A—like the sequence and locations, am only concerned that the close time spacing would make it impossible for one priest to do two consecutive Masses if needed.
- The 7 or 7:30 pm Sunday Mass is a good idea for working people and young people.
- From 9 to 5 Masses is workable for parish needs and hopefully for priests.
- Option A seems to meet all age groups and parish locations.

- There should be no objection to a 7 or 7:30 Mass on Sunday. I have children ages 35 to 50 whom it is only time to attend. However, they arrange their day as a family whether Sat. or Sun. Things are done after or before a Mass time. A great way for a family to end their weekend or starting a new week as a family.
- Work has been challenging but options are very well thought out.

Disadvantages:

7:30 Comments

- Don't think a 7:30 pm Mass would be well attended. (multiple responses)
- 7:30 pm Mass doesn't meet needs of numbers (stated criteria).
- With regional Mass at 5:00 pm and Mass at Elmira College, no need for a 7:30 pm Mass. (multiple responses)
- Getting ready for bed by 7:30 pm.
- 7:30 pm on Sunday not a good choice at all for anyone especially not good for our priests. (multiple responses)
- Don't see any reason for a 7:30 pm Mass. Teenagers and young people don't go to Mass.
- 7:30 pm Mass is not a good option for families with young children—they have school in the morning.
- 7:30 Mass is too late. If the non-Catholic churches aren't doing a service that late, it likely won't be successful for us Catholics.
- 7:30 pm in the winter time is not very safe for senior parishioners.
- 7:30 pm Sunday Mass should not be a part of the Mass schedule—better to honor the current Sunday Mass going patterns as the stated guidelines of the planning committee direct. This is no time to experiment with Masses.
- Forget the idea of the 7:30 pm Mass.

Other Comments

- Not all churches have a Sunday Mass.
- OLL hasn't had a Sunday Mass in about 8 years. Will you get people at this Mass?
- Having so many churches and having to have a Mass at each.
- 43% displaced with ending Ss. P & P 8:00 Mass (against criteria to minimize disruption to parishioners).
- Masses at St. M and BS are basically the same. CTR Mass times are totally different from current times.
- Give priests more time for travel and discussions/chats with parishioners. 90 minutes in between Mass times from start to finish. (responses from 2 parishioners)
- Dislike eliminating morning Mass at SP by adding Sun. evening Mass.
- I'm concerned that we might be asking too much of our priests and that we should petition for a third priest to come into the parish to spread the workload.
- Mass times are too close together! Can they be a minimum of 2 hours apart?
- Using OLL for one of the "prime time" Sun. am Masses doesn't make sense. It is the smallest, least central, and least beautiful of all the churches on the schedule. If music continues to be important, OLL has by far the worst organ, poor sight lines from organ to altar and inferior acoustics and sound system.
- As a lifelong member of St. Anthony's church I have been displaced three times: once to close St. Anthony's, second by taking away 8:00 Mass from St. Pat's, and now taking away 8:00 Mass from Sundays at either St. Pat's or Ss. Peter and Paul.
- Inconvenient Mass times at SP is an issue—8:00 am or 7:30 pm?

What has the planning team missed or overlooked in their work to create a healthy weekend Mass schedule which serves the needs of all as best as is possible?

Number of Worship Sites and Expense Comments

- Too many churches—need to close churches which are not being used to full potential. Waste of \$.
- This is not bringing the parishes together—we need to go to 2 churches.
- Keeping all churches open is expensive. Can we consolidate further to cut costs? Is it cost effective to heat/care for buildings that are hardly used?
- Have you thought of consolidating more worship sites? Seems very expensive to have so many buildings being used so little. Let's unify at one worship site. After all, the community is the people—NOT the building.
- Are we considering the costs per building when looking at Mass times/locations? In being fair, are we putting ourselves further in the hole financially?
- 2 churches. Masses should be at different times. We do not need 2 Masses at 8 or 10 in different churches.

Priests and Time Between Masses Comments

- Do not rely on retired priests. Their health and other considerations need to be remembered and respected.
- Giving one priest time to get to each Mass.
- Mass schedule should be based on 2 priests. Retired priests should not be counted—health issues, age and planned activities. Plan/consider short-term emergencies. Priests' visibility is vital; also priests' safety for next Mass travel. 90 minutes between Masses to allow for this visibility (stated criteria).
- Need to ensure a healthy Mass schedule for the 2 permanent priests. Need 1 ½ hour in between each Mass. Will never be able to please everybody but need to assist with transition to assist priests in difficult times.
- The priests need to sit down and determine the logistics of travel, vacation, illness—this should be the driving force for the Mass schedules. As one woman spoke at the afternoon sessions, when an individual wants to attend Mass they find the place and time that works for them. When on vacation out of the area you find the nearest church and determine a time that works for you. (several similar responses)
- I think it is unreasonable to believe that two priests can be expected to do all these Masses and extra duties. It should be up to the two priests to decide what the Masses are and what they can handle without illness or burn out.
- Should be up to the priest of the parish.
- Why can't the priests come up with the hours of Masses? We can't burn them out.
- Have maximum time between Masses to allow for getting from parish to parish.
- Make sure there is enough time between Masses for priests.

Faith Formation Religious Ed Comments

- I hope that faith formation classes are regarded in the planning of Mass times so families may conveniently attend Mass prior to or after classes.
- Keep the children safe after religious education program.

- I was surprised to find nothing concrete about faith formation and I believe that how FF and Mass work together should be an essential consideration. Our goal should be to maximize participation, and we need to prioritize the needs of children and youth families. By not including/referring to the FF schedule, I feel the implication is that they are second tier or don't really matter. (I have neither children or grandchildren.)
- Religious ed times should dictate Mass time at St. Casimir's—perhaps that time could be encouraged as a children's or family Mass.

Other Comments

- Special Masses which run longer (i.e. First Communion). Is 90 minutes between Masses enough or will they be scheduled at other times?
- We should use SCB until such time it is sold. Newer church, facilities, access.
- The distance of how far to drive from OLL.
- I feel you will lose most of the parishioners at SCB by the complete non-concern for those who are in the heights.
- Suitable worship! Logistics are important but spiritual needs must not be neglected.
- College students are home for breaks and summer (not always present). Have 5:00 pm Sunday and Elmira College has 6:00 pm.
- Should look at age distribution of parishioners at each parish.
- 8:00 Mass based on numbers has most attendees at Ss. P & P. Therefore, displacing largest number of people. Seems not really looking at numbers.
- How many churches are air conditioned?
- Has the planning team taken a look at the Mass ministers to see if there will be enough to help serve the new Mass times? As a minister at 5 pm we often do not have enough help so would there be enough help at a later Mass?
- Obviously St. Cas is saved—this should be revisited—cost to renovate for safety. This site offers a big cost to have to consider as it becomes obvious you have saved this site. You have blindly chosen your church sites for Mass—many people walk to Mass, many cannot drive in darkness or too far. We must start attracting people to our faith! Not one church offers any items of religious value.
- Youth and family input.
- Marketing/communications/evangelism.
- I hope that confession times can be planned to allow accessibility of parish members to receive reconciliation—perhaps offering a third opportunity on a different day/time.
- Too many on Sunday. Snow removal will be impossible with the amount of Masses. 3 at most.
- Put all daily Masses in one church—easier for maintenance team.
- Look at the numbers. Churches having times with the larger attendance should stay as close to that schedule, i.e. if SP and SCas have best numbers at 10/10:30, keep them near those times.
- Consider those who work on Sunday and may only be available for a later Mass.
- Hoping for every effort to avoid us and them prejudice and bring parishes together as #1 present and future priority.
- The first study should have been on the physical structure of each church! How much did the steeple repairs at St. Pat's cost? What about the cracks in the altar area at OLL and structural cracks in the choir loft area which are not easily visible? We must keep SCB now that it is not going to be sold. It is in the best shape! It is easiest for older folks (like my 98 year old uncle who was first here in 1920 at SCas and has a vertical lift for church community meetings!

- I think we need to be more proactive in bringing young families into our Church community. I just don't feel one Mass a month is enough!
- Could a youth/teen/young adult Mass be created?
- Can we have a regular youth Mass?
- Please take care of all age groups—children, teens, young adults, families and seniors. (suggested by 2 people).
- Why are we selling one of our best properties? Sell priest residences and make them share a rectory. Keep 10:30 at SP. Sunday mid-morning at SCas for children's faith formation. Rent out buildings not being used, e.g. convent at SCas.
- What about daily Masses? Move SCas daily Mass to SCB so SCB has some Mass at least. Easier winter maintenance (possibility).
- If we are all one parish, how can we come together as a parish community if there is Mass occurring in two different churches at the same time?
- Where would the deacons be assigned?
- I think you need to try 7 Mass to see how they work.
- The youth Mass needs to be provided.
- We have an older population and need to keep them in mind!

Specific ideas for ways to improve any of the Mass schedule options that have been presented

- Ss. P & P at 4:00 cannot absorb people displaced by loss of 4:00 Mass; St. Pat should have 4:00 and Ss. P & P have 8:00.
- There should be weekday Masses at St. Charles. It makes no sense to leave the building unused, especially since we must still pay for the space.
- Restore St. Pat's Sunday morning family Mass. 10:30 or closer. 11:00 is hard due to children's sports scheduled early afternoon. (several people said this)
- St. Casimir's should still have a 10:30 Mass as we have faith formation center for our children on Sundays. (multiple responses—also that it should be a family Mass).
- Need to have the Sunday St. Casimir Mass close in time (less than 30 minutes) to religious ed.
- 8 am at St. Casimir's is good in winter [for those who don't want to drive at night].
- Maybe a second 8 am Mass (instead of 7:30 pm). St. Casimir's is one of the smaller churches.
- Sun. 8, 9:30, 11; regional at 5:00, 6:00 or 6:30 pm (no 7:30 pm Mass).
- 10:30 am at St. Pat's should be kept as Arlene suggested. It is well attended by many with the choirs, etc.
- Consider having a 7:30 am Mass to accommodate people wanting to attend earlier than 8 am. St. Mary's could have this!
- Have at least one Sunday Mass at every church.
- 2 Sunday am Masses would be sufficient possibly 8 am and 10:30 or 11:00 am.
- It would make more sense to add another early Sunday morning Mass and remove the 7:30 pm Mass. I would suggest a 7:00 am/7:30 am start time on Sunday morning. Try it and see if the numbers for attendance support the time after there is one parish (not just a cluster).
- I feel it's not right that St. Charles is not getting a Mass at weekends. The 5 pm Mass should be at St. Charles or St. Casimir's and maybe give St. Charles the 8 am Sunday.
- 8:00, 9:30, 11:00, 12:30 (suggested by 4 people). Additional comment: places/churches to be determined as per input from parishioners.
- 7:30, 9:00, 10:30, 12:00 (suggested by 3 people)
- The facts provided concerning Mass attendance show that Ss. P & P 8:00 Mass is the 8:00 Mass with the highest attendance but is the 8:00 Mass that is not being considered? It has been

stated that times would disrupt the least amount of people—then 8:00 at Ss. P & P should remain.

- 2 Saturday pm Masses, 3 Sunday am Masses (8:00, 9:30, 11), regional Mass.
- Blessed Sacrament has the best attendance at 10:30 Mass (per statistics), with music ministry is successful. Therefore, I believe that BS should continue to have a mid-morning Mass. (2 responses)
- Have a spread of hours to help the priest travel when one is missing.
- Keep a 10/10:30 Mass available for families at St. Casimir's!
- St. Casimir's should have a "prime time" Mass because it is more beautiful/better suited to divine worship than OLL, St. Patrick's and St. Mary's. Ss. P & P is also very beautiful.
- Possible noon Mass a good idea.
- Would love to see 8 am at St. Pat's or Ss. P & P.
- Since there have been 3 10:30 Masses in Elmira, I think there should still be a 10:30 Mass somewhere (draw straws if necessary)
- I like the idea of a 12:30 Mass on Sunday.
- 10 or 11 am works well for our family.
- 8 St. Casimir, 10 OLL, 10:30 St. Pat's, 12 St. Mary's. If just one priest is available, the 10 am Mass could be moved to 10:30 at St. Pat's. Also, if St. Mary's sells, it will be an easier move to transition to 10:30 at St. Pat's.
- I had attended Mass at St. Mary's for many, many years at 12:30 pm—it was always very popular so I would suspect that an 8 am Mass would serve your "early birds" while an 11 or 12:30 Mass appeals to families who struggle to get 5 or 6 bodies up/dressed/fed and out the door. 11:00 might be necessary to retain those involved in sports.
- Sat. 4:00 St. Patrick (based on capacity of St. P), 5:30 St. Mary's. Sun. 8:00 Ss. P & P, 9:30 St. Mary's, 11 St. Casimir's, 12:30 OLL. Regional 5:00 St. Patrick.
- Young adult Mass later on Sunday—noonish or the evening 6ish – 7ish.
- If faith formation continues to be at its current location, and if most attendees go to Mass following FF, have 11 Mass at St. Casimir or possibly St. Pat. Making all FF students and families drive across town to attend 11 Mass at St. Mary's seems like an unnecessary inconvenience for them.
- Have Mass at SCas immediately after religious ed. so families don't have to travel to another church.
- With B1 and 2 options: have 9:30 Mass at St. Mary and 11 at St. Casimir's (or possibly St. Pat). Then schedule the other Masses around these, perhaps OLL at 8.
- Try to possibly keep Masses at churches that they have had. Ex. St. Cas 10:30 because they only have one Mass.
- Sun. 8 St. Mary's, 9:30 OLL (or Sat. 5:30), 11 St. Cas, 12:15 St. Pat.
- Sat. 4 St. Patrick; Sun. 8, 9 or 10 (St. Mary), 11, 5 Ss. P & P
- Sat. 4 and 5:30 Ss. P & P; Sun. 8 SM, 9:30 SP, 11 OLL, 12:30 SCas.
- Schedule Masses 1 ½ hours apart. SP 4 pm Sat. (It's big enough to absorb the people from OLL. Ss. P & P is already packed on Saturday and cannot); SM 5:15; Sun. 8 Ss. P & P, 9:30 SM, 11 SCas, OLL 12:30, regional 5:00 SP.
- Fr. Rick: 4 pm Sat. Ss. P & P, Sun. 11 SP, 5 pm SP; Fr. Scott: 4:30 Sat. SM, Sun. 8:30 Ss. P & P, 10:30 SM.
- Changing the 5 pm regional to 6 pm might be a good compromise if not having the 7:30 pm Sunday Mass. If you are out of town for the weekend, you might be back for 6 pm Mass.
- Eliminate early Mass—move 8:00 to 9:00.

- Sat. 4 pm Blessed Sacrament, 5:30 St. Mary's.
- Would love to see the 11 Mass at SP. The 10:30 is currently very well attended with a variety of age groups and offers children's lit. Would like to see some Masses designated to a teen Mass. To get teens more involved.
- Can the Elmira College Mass time and place be added to the bulletin?
- Let the people know in advance what priest will be presiding—maybe a monthly schedule in the bulletin.
- Why can't SM have early on Sunday (9-9:30)? There was only 1 10:00, rest 11:00 am.
- Sat. 4 or 5:30 SM, 4 or 5:30 Ss. P & P; Sun. 8:00 SP, 9/9:30 OLL, 10 SM, 11 SCas, 5 pm SCB.
- Move Sun. regional Mass later—perhaps 5:30 or 6, then not have 7:30 pm.
- Possibly consider a 3:30 Mass on Sunday or 6:30 vs. 7:30 pm.
- Adopt schedule A as long as the SM Sunday Mass moves to 9 am and OLL to 10 am. This future plan is traumatic as we might lose Fr. Scott and Fr. Rick; by giving one priest a Saturday afternoon Mass and a Sunday Mass at 8 am (SCas) and 10 am (OLL).
- Two 7:30 am (or 7:30 and 8), 9:30, 10, 11, 5 pm.
- I like the idea of having a 5:00 Mass at SCB on Sunday—better parking and we don't want them to move to SMOM because they have no Mass schedule.
- Prefer 8 am Mass at SP for people from the southside.
- Consider a 9:30 Mass on Sunday at OLL!
- Why not a 4 pm Mass at OLL Has easy access for older parishioners or disabled.
- We would like an early Mass Sunday (8:00 am). Thank you.
- An early morning Mass at SM on Sunday.
- Don't want a Mass any later than 10 am at SM.
- Please keep 8 am Mass at SCas.
- Keep mid-morning Mass at SP to support music ministry.
- SP needs to have a mid-morning (between 10 and noon) Mass to accommodate the music ministry.
- We need an early Mass on Sun. like 7 or 7:30 am.
- I would like the 10:30 Mass at SP to continue.
- Why do we need 6 Masses total? Can we have 5? 2 Saturday, 3 on Sunday over a larger time frame: 8, 9:30, 11.
- A suggestion was made to move the 5 pm regional Mass to 6 pm. However, "if it's not broken don't fix it."