

**Advantages and Disadvantages of the Mass Schedule Options
Already Suggested by Individual Members of the Elmira Planning Team**

In general, about Options A, B1 and B2

Advantages:

- All 3 scenarios include Masses at churches co-located with all of our remaining school buildings, giving the flexibility for choosing the best long-term school location.

Disadvantages:

- None of the options proposed has a weekend Mass at St. Charles Borromeo.
- One active priest cannot say all of the Masses.
- The Mass schedule should be based on having two active priests (Pastor and Parochial Vicar) and not the retired priests. So, with all current options, we would need to rely upon a Senior Priest 8 weekends per year (assuming each priest takes his 4 weeks' vacation), not to mention times of sickness and emergencies.

Option A

Saturday: 4:00 pm Ss. Peter and Paul, 4:00 pm St. Mary's

Sunday: 8:00 am St. Casimir, 9:00 am Our Lady of Lourdes, 10:00 am St. Mary's, 11:00 am St. Patrick, Regional 5:00 pm Mass St. Patrick

Advantages:

- Two Masses at each of the presently established parishes/Gives each present parish 2 weekend Masses.
- Locations of Masses are good.
- All [parishes] seem to get a "prime-time" Mass.
- Saturday evening Mass in two locations with established records of attendance.
- Saturday evening Masses early enough to provide daylight to elderly parishioners for most of the year.
- Many elderly people go to 4:00 pm Mass because it is early enough for them to get to Mass before it gets too dark and many go out to supper directly after Mass. There are three established parish Masses at this time being those at St. Peter and Paul's, Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Mary's. This is the most well attended Mass at St. Mary's and St. P&P is always packed. Our Lady of Lourdes Church has a 4:30 Mass that is well attended but there is enough room at St. Mary's to accommodate the extra amount of people. Since St. Mary's Church will probably have the most amount of change and re-adjustment to make, keeping a 4:00 pm Mass on Saturday there may help keep some stability for the parishioners.
- A 4:00 Mass at St. Peter/Paul's will continue to provide an option for St. Joseph Hospital residents who come to that Mass now; this Mass is already well-attended by people from all parishes, and there is plenty of accessible parking.
- Keeps a Saturday afternoon Mass on both the north and south sides of the city, at a time that seems to be very well accepted as affirmed by the attendance figures.
- Four Sunday Masses providing a variety of times and locations within a reasonable window for maximum attendance.
- Four Sunday Masses gives the opportunity for each present parish to have a Sunday Mass.

- The Sunday Mass locations and times are good for what already is being done in the parishes such as Liturgy of the Word for Children, Parish Choirs, Children's/Family Mass once a month, etc.
- The Sunday morning Masses provide all parishioners with good options.
- The Sunday morning schedule of hourly Masses at different locations may not satisfy everyone from the location standpoint, but it maintains a timeframe that most parishioners could find a way to make work.
- Accommodates the youth programs at both St. Mary's and St. Patrick's, with the 10 and 11 timeslots respectively.

Disadvantages:

- Mass times on Saturday will require a senior priest or substitute priest when either or both active priests are unavailable.
- Saturday offers no alternative or variation with both at 4:00 pm. People kept saying they wanted some variety of Mass times.
- Both Saturday Masses are at the same time therefore absolutely needing 2 priests. If the pastor or parochial vicar is sick, there is added chaos for the other priest to locate a retired priest to say Mass. Should we set ourselves up for this possibility when adjusting times to begin with could take care of this?
- Two Saturday Masses at 4:00 -- There is a population of parishioners who prefer a 5:00, 5:15, or 5:30 Mass (especially during the summer). We have lived with Masses at the same time for years now and people want a change. If one priest had to say both Masses, an hour and a quarter to an hour and a half in-between would be doable. The hour and a half between Masses would allow the Priest to greet and visit with parishioners which will be very important as we cluster/merge.
- Mass times on Sunday are tightly spaced requiring a bit of a rush if one priest had to cover consecutive Mass times.
- With Sunday masses being only an hour apart, if one of the priests is sick, we would have to rely on a retired priest.
- Even though the Sunday morning Masses provide all parishioners with good options, having just an hour between Masses is still a disadvantage if/when one priest must say the Masses.
- With a "new parish" with more people at fewer Masses, the presider may need more time in between Masses to be able to talk to people...if there is a baptism, time to do that...or just to go to the bathroom or have something to drink or eat.

Option B1

Saturday: 4:00 pm St. Mary's, 4:30 pm Ss. Peter and Paul

Sunday: 8:00 am St. Patrick, 9:30 am Our Lady of Lourdes, 11:00 am St. Mary's, Regional 5:00 pm St. Patrick, 7:30 pm St. Casimir

Option B2

Saturday: 4:00 pm St. Mary's, 4:30 pm Ss. Peter and Paul

Sunday: 8:00 am St. Casimir, 9:30 am Our Lady of Lourdes, 11:00 am St. Mary's, Regional 5:00 pm St. Patrick, 7:30 pm St. Patrick

Advantages of both B1 and B2:

- Two Masses at each of the presently established parishes.

- Saturday evening Masses in two locations slightly staggered to offer two time options.
- The Saturday evening Masses are at different times yet still early enough for the elderly.
- A 4:00 Mass at St. Peter/Paul's would be better. It would continue to provide an option for St. Joseph Hospital residents who come to that Mass now; this Mass is already well-attended by people from all parishes, and there is plenty of accessible parking.
- Four Sunday Masses providing a wider time spread that would allow one priest to cover all Masses in the event the second priest is unavailable.
- A late Sunday Mass option in one of the buildings near Elmira College that might attract younger parishioners and college students.
- The Sunday morning Masses are spaced 1 ½ hours apart which allows one priest to preside if needed.
- Sunday Masses give more time between them, allowing for one priest to cover all Masses if necessary
- Sunday Mass locations still allow for the programs that are in place at the Masses such as Parish Choirs, Children's/Family Mass once a month, Liturgy of the Word for Children, etc.

Disadvantages of both B1 and B2:

- Are we expecting too much from our priests? Are we setting them up for "burn-out?" Starting at 7 or 8 am and going to 8:30 pm or after on a Sunday is expecting a lot of them.
- It would be very arduous for the priests to celebrate Mass at 7:30 pm on a Sunday evening. If the same priest also had the 5:00 pm Regional Mass, when would there even be time for dinner?
- Could look somewhat unrealistic to some observers (with the 7:30 pm Sunday Mass). The only other option is A. It could look to some that option A has already been chosen as the only option (i.e. no realistic alternatives).
- Mass times on Saturday will require a senior priest or substitute priest when either or both active priests are unavailable.
- Even though both Saturday Masses are different times, the times are still too close for one priest to do both.
- The Saturday Masses at 4:00 and 4:30 -- There is a population of parishioners who prefer a 5:00, 5:15, or 5:30 Mass (especially during the summer). We have lived with Masses at the same time for years now and people want a change. If one priest had to say both Masses, an hour and a quarter to an hour and a half in-between would be doable. The hour and a half between Masses would allow the Priest to greet and visit with parishioners which will be very important as we cluster/merge.
- The 7:30 PM Mass removes one Mass from the morning schedule and may be lightly attended.
- 7:30 pm is too late to attract many people at the expense of taking away a needed Sunday morning Mass. It seems to duplicate the 5:00 pm Sunday Mass and/or compete with it.
- Taking away a Sunday morning Mass would decrease attendance and decrease needed offerings. It is the senior population that keep our doors open.
- A 7:30 pm Mass takes away a Sunday morning Mass from the schedule and may not have a good attendance....yet can take away from already established attending and financially contributing congregation.
- Would cut off any Youth Program for Sunday at St. Patrick's such as the Liturgy of the Word for Children or any musical programs that take place on Sunday morning such as choir or folk group Masses.

- There already is a 5:00 evening Mass option on Sunday that has been working out well for some time. The time and location are well-known. As we cluster and then merge, it is obvious that we need something to engage younger families and families with teens. We need education, evangelization, and youth ministry efforts to address this. I don't see a 7:30 Mass as the answer. The 7:30 Mass option takes away a Sunday morning Mass time. Mass times are needed to either preserve the existing Children's liturgies or allow for a new combined program.
- Eliminating a Sunday morning Mass in favor of the 7:30 PM Sunday evening time slot – Should offer this time on a trial basis after we get our new priests in place and see what kind of interest is generated. Perhaps the new priests would be willing to give it a try on an alternating basis.

Disadvantages of B1:

- Offers an 8:00 am Mass to St. Patrick's which is used to a later, well populated Mass.
- Would likely impact the youth program at St. Patrick's.

Disadvantages of B2:

- Offers no Sunday morning Mass at all to St. Patrick's. The two evening Masses will both be considered Regional Masses by the people ("last-chance" Masses).
- Gives 2 Masses to St. Patrick's Church but they are both afternoon/evening Masses. St. Patrick's is one of the bigger churches, holding more people, and we may need the pew capacity of St. Pat's to accommodate the number of regularly attending Sunday morning Mass goers.