

April 9, 2018

Public Input for the Planning Committee – St. Joseph Church, Weedsport, NY

### Questions and Comments Regarding the Proposed Mass Schedules

1- How do the priests feel about the proposed changes? It seems as if there is much more consideration for the parishioners.

- *Response: Priests are ready and able. Fr. Tim shared he is pleased with the process and outcomes.*

2- Has the timing of “6 priests going down to 4 priests” been determined?

- *No. Priest changes happen at the end of June. There are no known changes at this time. No appointments have been made at this time. Change could occur half-way through the year or even later. It basically depends on how things come up later in the future---for example, if a priest is needed elsewhere in the diocese.*

3- Can priests reapply or put in requests?

- *The personnel board provides assistance.*

4- Montezuma's church closed in the late 1980's. Please think carefully before closing St. John's. Many walk to the church and will not be able to drive to Weedsport.

5- Another person commented that there is a concern regarding St. John's Church. He prefers the St. John mass.

6- It is very sad to feel there is a possibility of [a church] closing.

7- What if there was one mass a month [at a certain church]? And what happens to the parish houses?

- *Any church without a weekend Mass can be used for funerals, weddings, special occasions, etc. Other decisions will be made collaboratively to meet the needs of the ministries.*

8- In lieu of the 5 PM regional mass (in Auburn), could we find a time for St. John's to have a mass?

9- The St. Patrick's community would like a Sunday mass. It is noted that the planning team has not yet visited Cato. Also it was requested that the planning team be aware that St. John's has air conditioning and St. Patrick's had a good religious education program.

10- What happens to weekday mass?

- *It will be determined by a similar process involving pastors/parochial vicars. The determination will be made later after the priests involved are known.*

11- Montezuma's St. Michael's was closed in 1985. We need to keep the mass at Port Byron. Generations of families made their Sacraments there.

- *The church will still be available for sacraments and funerals.*

12- Someone requested more information about the regional mass asking if there is a regional mass at each cluster.

- *There is 1 regional mass in the Auburn area which will be shared by each priest. There is also a need for a youth ministry that is tied to a Sunday evening mass.*

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13- Regarding the priest shortage, why can't the bishop give us another priest and not close St. John's? We've been able to obtain priests from other countries.

*-We would welcome more priests, however immigration is a difficult process. It may be a workable option in the future. There is not a pool of people coming to our area.*

14- How will the offertory be affected? How does this impact priests who will have to travel? Have these needs been considered? Traveling within Auburn requires much less time. For example, it is easier to drive from Port Byron to Auburn than from Cato.

- *Church envelopes dropped in the offertory will go to the church of origin. Electronic giving is also an option if envelopes are not used.*

15- Is this change happening in the Syracuse Diocese?

- *Yes, but differently as their own needs are being addressed.*

16- It was requested that the Saturday 6 PM mass at Holy Family be reconsidered as traditionally there are no 6 PM masses in the Diocese of Rochester. Will it be well attended?

17- What are the ages of the 4 (remaining) priests? What kind of time frame will impact future needs?

- *Age is not the driving factor for future change. Priests transitioning to senior status are generally replaced.*

18- What is the status of current seminarians?

- One is to be ordained soon. As of August 2017 there were 10 seminarians. Not all may be ordained as they continue their discernment.
- Half of our priests are over age 70.
- One-third are over age 75.
- 3 priests are in their twenties
- 9 priests are in their thirties
- 8 priests are in their forties
- 19 priests are in their fifties
- 41 priests are in their sixties
- 48 priests are in their seventies
- 31 priests are in their eighties
- The numbers of newly ordained priests are not replacing retiring priest 1 to 1
- Auburn could have more vocations as it once did in the past
- Priests who are in senior priest status may continue to do mass, but this varies by age/health

19- A St. Joseph's member asked to have a diagram of each mass including which priest will preside at the mass in order to better illustrate the travel time and schedule of each priest.

- *There will be 2 priests per cluster who will rotate who does each Mass. There won't be cross over of priests between the two clusters*

20- How will parish houses be maintained if priests travel?

- *All ministries will be looked at how to best meet needs.*

21- Moving masses earlier is a concern in winter for people living in the Weedsport area. Older people and larger families would have difficulties.

22- St. John's was part of a clustering process in the recent past. We are a mutual cluster which is seen as a good thing. Will it remain that way since families want to remain at the churches where they made their sacraments? Even a seasonal option such as St. Ann's being seasonal is a good idea.

- *Yes.*
- *Buildings are not changing.*

24- The number of people going to Cato has dropped off. Is that going to happen in Port Byron?

- *We are unsure on the outlook. We have been looking now at current attendance rates, where people are. It is also notable that attendance numbers have decreased in every parish.*

25- One church member contributed that she is the caregiver for her husband and it is difficult to get to an early mass because of morning duties. People who live in the country and do not drive have that hardship.

26- Looking at each cluster, some churches have up to four masses and others have one. Can this be looked at again?

27- Will there be a central office for funeral arrangements?

- *That has not been considered at this time. Priests can address that if it is a future need. Each church still has its own staff.*

28- Churches have endowments to be used specifically for their own churches. How does clustering affect them?

- *All funds will remain separate.*

29- Does picking a Saturday option affect the Sunday option?

- *No. Please include your input on the yellow form.*

30- Is there a set ruling on a Saturday vs. Sunday ratio? Can we give up a Saturday mass in order to have 2 Sunday masses?

- *Please write that down on your yellow form.*