

HOLY CROSS, ST. FRANCIS SOLANUS AND ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE

Determining a new Weekend Mass Schedule

Spring 2016

The planning team has created this bulletin insert to share with parishioners some information about what is being weighed in determining the times and locations of Masses and the two options that seem best to meet our needs and capabilities.

Why the Mass schedule will change

Given the attendance at our current Masses, Bishop Matano has given his blessing to our local development of a weekend schedule with one Mass each at Holy Cross and St. Francis Solanus and two at St. James the Apostle rather than his original direction to have regular Masses at only two of our three churches. Our task is to move to a four-Mass schedule that can be handled by one priest. We are currently fortunate to have Fr. Bernard full-time and Fr. Brendan part-time (he works half-time in prison ministry and also serves in the diocesan migrant ministry.)

The planning team agreed on the following as important principles to guide selection of a new Mass schedule:

- Choose Mass times and locations that help unify the parishioners of the three churches.
- Minimize the disruption to parishioners in their current Mass attendance patterns as much as possible given the challenge of fewer Masses.
- Select Mass times and locations that displace as few people as possible.
- Consider the financial impact of whatever decisions we make.
- Allow enough time between Masses so that the priest(s) can spend some time with parishioners after a Mass, occasionally visit faith formation classes and then travel to another church.
- Ensure that families can both attend Mass and have their children participate in faith formation classes (with acknowledgement that the faith formation programs may change in the future).

Planning team members identified the following considerations that the Mass schedule should accommodate as best as possible:

- Having the Holy Cross Mass on Saturday evening or having a Sunday Mass that began after 11:00 am would be difficult for the music ministers.
- Because St. Francis Solanus has only had a Sunday Mass for a lengthy time, we should not move to a Saturday evening Mass but the time of the Sunday Mass can be flexible.
- St. James the Apostle should continue to have a Saturday evening Mass and also a Sunday morning Mass that accommodates those attending the two current Sunday times.

The two options being brought to the parishioners for feedback before Fr. Bernard, Fr. Brendan and the rest of the planning team make a decision:

The planning team brainstormed and evaluated 19 different schedules. These included scenarios with two Saturday and two Sunday Masses, a scenario with different schedules during daylight savings and standard time, and several with one Saturday and three Sunday Masses. The following two options remain:

- Option A: Saturday 5:00 pm at SJA; Sunday 8:00 am at SFS, 9:15 am at HC, 10:45 am at SJA.
- Option B: Saturday 5:00 pm at SJA; Sunday 8:00 am at SFS, 9:15 am at SJA, 10:45 at HC.

Please see the bulletin or the website for the dates and times of parishioner meetings. The planning team will meet on Thursday, April 14 to review parishioner feedback and choose the new Mass schedule. After ample notification of parishioners, we will begin the new Mass schedule sometime this spring.