

Aug. 6-7, 2016

More thoughts from the pastor,

At the Masses last weekend I gave the update on rectory living and priests at SEAS. Here is a summary. Fr. John is back in town but not staying at the rectory. He has been helping out with some Masses with Fr. Cleary gone and when Fr. Mario is not here. He is also saying the French Mass that he started here at SEAS on the fourth Sunday of each month. So he had the July Mass and will have the August French Mass at 1:15pm on the day of the parish picnic, August 28. He heads back to Togo the end of this month.

Fr. Mario Rapose put his letter of introduction in this week's bulletin. As you can see he is moving in with Fr. Don and me at the SEAS home for unwed fathers. He will be helping with some Masses this week. Most of you will be able to see him this weekend. Then he heads back to his last week of treatment. As you can see from his letter he has been receiving treatment for alcoholism. Then he gets back to SEAS on 8/18 but will be in Blair to have Masses there to say his goodbyes to the people where he had been assigned. Then he will be around for a week and be able to meet many of you at the parish picnic on 8/28. After the Labor Day weekend he will be heading off to India to visit his family for a month. Once he gets that itinerary set up we can change the Mass schedule to fit the blessing of having an extra priest.

Before I get into the Mass schedule I would like to let you know a little about Fr. Don's schedule. He is still getting many calls to help priests in the rural areas to cover for them when they need to be gone. So last weekend he was in Boyd County having Masses there. This past week and this weekend he is just on vacation but he gets back this Monday. For Labor Day weekend he will be covering Masses in Neligh and Tilden. Then he will be having Masses in Hartington on Sept. 17-18. He is a busy retired priest. It is an occupational hazard. We are always needed. That is different than being wanted and having posters in the post office.

The weekend of Sept. 24-25 I will be helping out with an Engaged Encounter Weekend. So you can see that we are not all here during the month of September. For this reason the Mass schedule will remain the same for that month. I am hoping that starting with Oct. 1-2 we can add the third Sunday morning Mass back into the schedule. Because Fr. Mario is just around until 7/1/2017 the changes would be temporary. This means that communicating these changes gets really tricky. Even with six months of warning there are usually six more months of people coming at the wrong time when Mass schedules change. For this reason I am going to have the Sunday morning Masses at 8, 9:30, and 11 instead of the old 7:30, 9, and 11 that we had for years at SEAS. For when we are down to Fr. Don and me next July the schedule will go back to 8 and 11am.

The other Mass change will be to go back to having Mass on Monday mornings rather than a Communion Service. I have decided not to restart the Friday evening Mass at this point. There are just too many times when there are conflicts and it has to be dropped anyway.

Fr. Mario will be part-time at the parish. This interim year is to help him with his recovery. He will be attending AA meetings on a regular basis and working with a sponsor. I am excited about this because we are helping a good man stay in the priesthood. I figure this should help him put in another twenty years. It will also be a big help to me this year. I am still trying to adjust to the needs of SEAS. Even with the three less Masses per week this past year it has been difficult for me to arrange an occasional day off or even get in the mandatory retreat that a priest is supposed to have each year. I do have a 2 ½ week vacation scheduled for early November but that was going to put a real burden on Fr. Don or make for a lot of Communion Services. Fr. Mario will be able to help out with those problems. Next week I will let you know more about the financial part of this.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank