

April 15-16, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

Happy Easter everyone! In a spiritual sort of way it has been a good Lent. God has given me plenty of penance. My own choices of Lenten penances went well. Between God and me I had plenty to pray about and learn. Since one of my penances was to double my prayer time at night, it also worked out that I had the format by which to do that praying and learning. That will make for some real Easter joy. The only problem with Easter joy in this life is it lasts a day or two and then it is back to reality in this world. We are back to the crosses that we must bear day-by-day. Hopefully we go at it with a little more spiritual strength each year. It is all a part of God's plan for us to face the final penance of dying and then celebrating the Resurrection joy that will bring us to what He has planned for us in the next life.

The vote for the Mass schedule change will come soon after Easter. In other words it will be this week. I will send out an email with an explanation of the situation and the limits to the situation. Much of it you will have read in last week's letter edition of this letter in the bulletin. I will put it all together so those who didn't get to read it, because they might have been out of town or out of touch, can have all the information in order to vote. We will have someone in the narthex collecting the last of the email addresses this weekend for those who don't have them to us yet. Those of you without emails can call the office on Thursday or Friday and we will have a check off sheet that you can give your preferences right over the phone or you can drop by. As soon as we have the results I will figure out the best week to start the new schedule. My guess is it will be about May 20-21. That way we have a month to get the word out and announce it at Mass for a few weeks. I sure hope this works. I am planning on staying away from the computer part of the process as much as possible so my bad luck with computers does not mess it up.

There is another decision that needs to be made. It has to do with the joy of the Emerald Ash Borer infestation. Not counting the soccer field trees SEAS has a very limited range of tree types. We have plum and locust trees on the parking lot islands. We now have two young crimson spire oaks in front of the chapel entrance. There is one lonely linden tree by the garages. The rest are ash trees. We have seven on our property and there are twelve on city property along the boulevard. The city sent a letter letting us know that they will always have the responsibility of removing the trees on their property.

Their plan for the trees near our property would be to take out about half of them and replace them with some other varieties. They would treat the others for a few years until they know the new ones are established. At that point we would have the option of treating the remaining ash trees at our own expense or they would remove them for us at that time. I am working with them to keep spacing even, but at the same time take out trees that are in bad shape and those near our entrances so we don't have to keep worrying about them draping down over those driveways and causing problems. The city crew has been very helpful in working this out. With their help there is a plan to take out seven of the twelve ash trees by the street.

I am also thinking of taking out the ash tree by the rectory right away and getting a new kind started soon. I also thought it might be good idea to save half of the ash trees north of the soccer field and get a couple of big trees started there. Then after a few years we could take out the other three ash trees and get a couple other varieties started in that area.

The good news is that Deacon Lyle Simmons from St. James Parish has volunteered his services to remove the trees and stumps on our property for free. I'm not sure our seminarian can handle that many. He would also be treating any trees we would save. With the plan I have outlined, that would cost only be a few hundred dollars at this time. Please let me know if you have an alternate plan. I am looking for ideas, even in terms of what trees to plant and where. We can't plant right where a stump has been removed because the old root system will keep the tree from thriving.

This Wednesday Archbishop Curtiss will be coming to SEAS to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation to our 8th graders. Please say an extra prayer for them this week.

For those of you who don't mess with computers, here is a quick summary to guide you if you want to vote by calling or visiting the parish office. The earliest Mass time that Fr. Don and I think makes sense is 7am. So we need to figure out the best early morning time to have a Mass. Then we need to figure out a late morning time for the second Mass. I am thinking that 9:30 would be the start of a late morning slot. There needs to be two hours between the start of each Mass so there is time for confessions and to limit parking lot congestion. So we could have 7, 7:30, 8, 8:30, or 9 for the first Mass. We could have 9:30, 10, 10:30, or 11 for the second Mass. But we can't have 8:30 and 9:30 as our decision because they are too close in time. It could be 8 & 10. Watch for the email in the middle of this week.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank