

April 8-9, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

A lot happened between the time I wrote last week's letter and last weekend. At the Masses I announced that Fr. Mario was actually assigned as temporary Administrator for St. Philip Neri Parish by 30th and State St. The plan is that he will be moving out of SEAS rectory in a week or two, but he will be doing all the Masses at that parish so he won't be available for SEAS Masses. For that reason we need to look at going back to a modified Mass schedule like we had before he came. That would mean one less Mass on Sunday mornings and a couple less Masses on weekdays.

I also announced that the Parish Council will be helping me to put together a survey to figure out the best Mass times for the most people. This would mean that I would have people vote on their optimal times for Sunday Mass by way of their email account. If you have not received any emails from me in the last year, then you would have a hard time voting but it would not be impossible. With the vote, shortly after Easter, there will be an option to vote through the parish office. If you do have an email and aren't getting my occasional emails, please update that with the office. You can do it by email at seas@stelizabethann.org. That way you will also get the information to explain the process and the limitations that are on the Mass schedule.

As before those limitations have to do with Fr. Cleary and me. As a retired priest Fr. Don wants his day off, Friday. He wants to be able to visit people on that day so he doesn't want a Mass scheduled for him. I would love the same thing but it works better for him than me because something else always comes up that makes my day off a joke but I still want to try. The joke is a dairy farmer line: Any day with less than six hours of work is a day off because you still have to milk the cows. For that reason we will go back to having a communion service on Monday mornings and not having any Mass or communion service on Friday evening.

Our other limitation is how many Masses we have in a row. Having three in a row actually becomes physically painful for me and Fr. Don. Also we don't have the numbers to justify pushing ourselves that hard. We have well under 1500 people attending Mass per weekend. With the church able to hold almost a thousand, we have plenty room. When Fr. Don first came we switched to an 8 & 11:00am Sunday schedule. That was figured out at a town hall meeting. We won't be having a town hall this time. Even the politicians don't want to do those anymore. We will do a Mail Chimp Survey to decide if another combination of Mass times might work better. That survey will happen shortly after Easter and you will get information from me by email before you are sent the survey link. The new schedule will not take effect until sometime in May. We need some time to publicize the changes, but hopefully the emails will help parishioners with that problem. It is visitors that we have to worry about. Along with this theme, you will notice that we have a new April Mass calendar in this bulletin. That old one is totally obsolete because of Fr. Mario's new assignment.

The showing of the Passion of the Christ, with commentary, will happen at 1pm this Sunday, today depending on when you are reading this, in the parish hall. Have a Holy, Holy Week. Don't forget the Tre Ore, from noon to 3pm on Good Friday. Come to any or all of it and or any of the other Holy Week services and thank the Lord for giving His life for us. If Lent has been less than helpful for you, the Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Easter Vigil Services can bring you right back on track with the Lord.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank