



Prayer - Planning - Possibilities

Tri-Parish Partnership

As part of the ongoing Pastoral Planning Process of the Diocese of Erie, it was announced in September of last year that St. Paul, St. Andrew and Sacred Heart parishes would be formed into a 'partnership' effective Monday Feb 13, 2017. Also at that time the Diocese announced that a permanent Deacon would be assigned to St. Paul.

On Friday the diocese announced the assignments of the clergy for the restructuring of parishes in the Diocese. Fr. Mark O’Hern is to be the pastor of the three parishes in our partnership, Msgr. Dan Arnold has also been assigned as Senior Associate of the partnership, and Deacon Anthony Alleruzzo is the Deacon Assistant at St. Paul parish.

It has been implied previously by the Bishop that Deacon Alleruzzo would have office hours in St. Paul parish providing clerical presence on a regular basis. Fr. O’Hern & Msgr. Arnold will at least initially be residing in Sacred Heart and St. Andrew rectories respectively to provide a priest presence at those parishes as well.

The official formation of the partnership as well as the clergy assignments will be effective February 13th.

In September the Diocese released a “Transition preparation Guideline” that was geared towards helping parishes prepare for the restructuring in February. The Diocese also promised an implementation guide to be forth coming and has recently announced that it will be out the week of Jan 29th. Supposedly this will provide guidelines to deal with some of the many details that need to be worked through in the partnering process. In the Diocese’s model, partnered parishes have a single staff and office. The needs of our respective parishes and the partnership as a whole will be reviewed carefully to discern what is prudent in regards to consolidation of staff and offices. But in the meantime the offices will remain operating as they have been until it is determined where and how consolidation is beneficial and appropriate.

In anticipation of our partnership, the parish councils of all three parishes met for a picnic back in June to start some dialogue. Since the formal announcement of the partnership in September, the councils have been meeting more earnestly to work on a new Mass schedule as well as brainstorm about the partnering process that will take many months to unfold and implement.

A designated subcommittee was formed specifically to propose a new coordinated mass schedule for the three parishes that would be manageable by the two priests. After about 3 weeks of various meetings and whole bunch of emails involving the councils, staff and the current pastors a proposal was finalized and approved by the Bishop.

Weekend Mass Schedule starting the weekend of Feb 18/19th.			
	Saturday Vigil	Sunday	
St. Paul	4:30 PM		9:30 AM
St. Andrew		8:00 AM	11:00 AM
Sacred Heart	4:30 PM		10:00 AM

In place of a daily mass at St. Paul, the Deacon Administrator will have a Communion Service a couple days a week, the day and time of which will be dependent on the Deacon's availability. Additionally the 'day off' for the two priests will have to be determined. So even though the daily mass schedule is quite similar to what we currently have it is tentative, until the clergy schedules are better known.

Weekday Mass Schedule Starting Monday Feb 13th.						
	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
St. Paul		CS		CS		n/a
St. Andrew	8:00AM	8:00AM	n/a	8:00AM	8:00AM	8AM 1st Sat
Sacred Heart	8:30AM	CS	8:30AM	8:30AM	8:30AM	n/a

Holy Day Mass Schedule		
	Vigil	Day
St. Paul		8:00 AM
St. Andrew		12:10PM
Sacred Heart	7:15PM	7PM

The redundancy of the prior Holy Day Mass schedule was eliminated and the times were spread out to provide a greater range of mass times for parishioners. This schedule is tentative and may undergo minor tweaking as has happened in the past for variances of Holy Days. Ash Wednesday, Triduum Liturgies and Christmas schedules will need to be determined after we get further in into the partnership and have feel for how things are working out.

Our councils are currently trying to determine how to integrate into a single but systematized council with layers that deal with the overall partnership and the operational details of the specific parishes respectively. Equitable representation of the parishes in the partnership is a fundamental requirement of this council. Additionally we are also forming temporary subcommittees that are task oriented towards specific details of the transition into a partnership. (The development of the Mass schedule is an example of one effort.) Although we are actively working on all this, our efforts eventually must dovetail with the guidelines of partnership that is forthcoming from the Diocese.

Although the Diocese desires to be as transparent as possible in this pastoral planning process, the trouble is that it has needed extra time to develop and vet the plan and the corresponding clergy assignments. As we move forward our partnership hopes to do better with communication of information as it becomes available. Besides pulpit announcements and bulletin inserts, information is also available at the diocesan website <http://www.eriecd.org/planning.htm> and information specific to our partnership is posted on-line at <http://sacredhearterie.org/pastoral-planning-page/>

The Pastoral Plan of the Diocese is long overdue and essential to our continuance as a Church. It is up to us to determine whether this partnership is simply palliative care to our eventual end, or if it is the conception of new life in our corner of God's kingdom. The Holy Spirit is probably voting for new life.

Feel free to talk to your council members with your questions, and pray for them as they work on our future and stay tuned as we progress.