

IMPORTANT LETTER FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Parishioners:

We hope you're doing well and enjoying our beautiful summer. Our children are back in school, and both parents and teachers, are working together to support each other to make lives easier. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for your continued support in our journey. We have accomplished a lot over the last two months. Though it was a little tight with many meetings it's worthwhile. This letter is to let you know about the important updates in our clustering process. Please take time to read it carefully, since it reflects important changes.

One Bulletin for the NW Parishes

The awaited one bulletin is becoming a reality beginning September 15, 2024. This will make the communication among the parishes easier. We will have an 8 page bulletin. Each parish will have their own page. Your feedback will be welcomed to make our bulletin better.

Office Location

We are going to one location for our parish offices effective, October 1st 2024. The office location will be at St. Paul's, where we are blessed with enough space to accommodate all of our staff. The Planning Committee which met on August 14th 2024, has approved the necessary changes in the office space usage and the change of location. The Cascia Hall (the monastery building at St. Rita's) situation and the necessity of working together as a team, accelerates this transition. Though the building is secure at St. Mary by the Lake, just one staff at that location doesn't serve the purpose. The leadership, and everyone involved, are being consulted and they all understand the situation and the importance of being in one location. The staff will keep their same positions and job descriptions until the end of the fiscal year. At that time, we will have the design for the cluster staffing.

How do these changes affect Parishioners?

Moving our staff to one location will not affect parishioners or parish life. You will still use the same phone numbers to call your parish, to set up masses and address any other need you have. There will be a drop box for envelopes in the respective parishes. For funeral planning and your other needs, the convenience of the parishioners will be respected. We already have a working system between St. Paul and St. Louis. So, details for funerals and other parishioner needs should be easy to figure out.

New Weekend Mass Schedule

Saturday:

St.Paul the Apostle: 4:00PM

St.Rita: 4:30PM

Sunday:

St.Louis: 8:00AM

St.Mary: 8:30AM

St.Paul: 10:00AM

St.Rita: 10:30AM

The Subcommittee, after due process with the Planning Committee, submitted their proposal for the new weekend schedule. The Planning Committee, aware of the pros and cons of this new Mass schedule, unanimously approved the proposal. The new Mass schedule will be in effect beginning, November 30th 2024.

We know change is not easy. But we must do what is best for our parish and our staff. Though we are losing three weekend masses in the NW cluster, we believe we have chosen mass times close together, with enough space in each location. This Mass schedule change will help us priests to abide with the rules of the number of masses we can celebrate in a weekend, and this change allows the priests time to spend with parishioners after mass, without rushing to another church. It will also help us to be present in each of the other three parishes every other week. We really appreciate your sacrifice and willingness to adapt to the new realities. Let's try to continue to be more positive.

Weekday Masses

We will continue the existing schedule for the weekday masses except, a slight change at St. Rita's for Thursday school mass. The mass will be at 8:15AM, as the school has requested.

Holy day of obligation

Schedule will be published in advance based on the day of the week.

Pastoral Council

One of our goals this year is to form one Pastoral Council for the cluster. The Planning Committee felt the need to form one council at the earliest so that they can work on the vision and mission of our cluster. By the end of December 2024, the current pastoral council will cease and the new Pastoral Council will be formed. Two members from each of the existing councils will be discerned for the new council. Along with them two trustees from each parish will form the new council which will come into effect in January 2025. Their terms will be determined and after 18 months a normal election process will take place, to replace the outgoing members.

We know that this is a lot to understand now. But if we don't let you know about these decisions right away, rumors can kill the right information. Feel free to talk to us with your questions and feedback. Once again, we really appreciate your patience, support and understanding.

Peace,
Fr. Thomas and Fr. Marco.