

Pulpit Talk for Weekend of May 6 and 7, 2017
for our Partnering Parishes

Good (morning or afternoon.) My name is (state your name) and I am here today as a member of the Growth and Formation Committee of our partnering parishes and to represent you, the very important local members of our Church. There are just a few things I want to share with all of you today.

As promised when we introduced the change in the Mass schedule back in December, we want to survey your thoughts about the current Mass Schedule for our Partnering Parishes.

I urge you to please take a copy of our parish Bulletins as you leave Church today. Inside, there's a survey about the Mass Schedules. We'd like everybody in the parish to complete and return the survey to the respective rectories by mail or by putting the survey in the collection baskets over the next two weeks. This survey will also be available on our websites to print out and fill out. It's important that we receive your responses to this survey so we can accurately assess where we stand with our current Mass schedule and where we need to go. Once again, everyone is welcome to fill out and return the survey. There will be extra copies of the survey available in the back of the Churches..

As you will see when you look at the survey, we are looking for your honest responses. Everyone's response is important and does matter. Our hope is that we will get a representative sample that will accurately reflect the membership of both parishes. We ask only that you be respectful, complete the survey fully, and return it promptly. As your representative, I promise that your replies will be given careful and prayerful consideration as our committee meets in the coming weeks.

Secondly, let me share what our committee has been doing as we meet each month. We've been assessing the combined resources of our parishes; identifying our strengths and weaknesses, and also the challenges and opportunities we currently face. We have been looking at how we can best utilize our combined spiritual strength as we move forward as two parishes, united in one faith and one mission.

In fact, we are now in the final stages of preparing a formal plan to present to Archbishop Chaput that lays out two basic goals we can take to enhance our communities. We believe these goals form the basis of a plan that will breathe new life into our communities with your continued involvement and support.

Our proposed goals, that we believe will bring new vision and new growth to our parishes are:

1. Evangelization—strengthen those who already believe and worship; and reach out to those who are inactive or non-believers who live within the geographical boundaries of both parishes. Basically, our Churches exist to evangelize, celebrating, living and sharing our love and belief in Jesus Christ.
2. We are looking at developing a new Christian Life & Family Ministry that will try to serve the various strata of our parishes namely, the youth of our parishes by not only continuing to provide them with the solid foundations of their faith but by also engaging them and their families in other ways at all levels from pre-school through high-school. There are opportunities for us to better serve the spiritual and corporal needs of other parishioners as well; for example, the elderly, our young and single adults, our married couples, the divorced and separated Catholics of our communities, the newest members of our Churches, those among us who are discerning vocations, etc.,,

This is just the beginning. It really is a call for each of us to look inside and claim a deeper, more personal relationship with Jesus Christ and allow this wonderful, life-giving relationship to guide us as we care,

share and reach out to others as a more vibrant faith community. I truly believe that if we try our best we will accomplish our mission of growing together in faith and thriving as a better and more enlivened faith community.

In closing, I want to thank you for your time, I want to ask you for your continued prayers and support, and I want to again invite you to share your comments with any or all members of our Formation and Growth Committee whose names and e-mail addresses can be found at the bottom of the survey.

Thank you and God bless you.