



*The Roman Catholic Communities of
Sacred Heart of Jesus ~ Saint Ignatius of Loyola ~ Saint Vincent de Paul
18 North Pleasant Street
North Troy, Vermont 05859
Phone: (802) 988-2608*

April 15, 2018

Dear Parishioners,

Last week in my weekly bulletin letter I gave the hopeful news that June or July should see a “full” staffing of two priests to serve the two parishes of the Barton area, and the Troy area. As I will remain pastor of both it will continue to be a parish partnership of two parishes, sharing two priests. The preferences for a common parish name for Troy, North Troy, and Lowell have been submitted to the Diocese. A name will be chosen in or by May, and the new parish will start using the name in July.

First Preference: Divine Mercy Parish

Second Preference: Holy Spirit Parish

Third Preference: Holy Name Parish

Right away, I am proposing a brand new Sunday Mass schedule for implementation on weekends as soon as another priest is available full time: St. Ignatius, Sunday at 9:00 AM; Sacred Heart, Sunday at 10:30 AM; St. Vincent, Sunday at 4:45 PM. This will seem strange, and the greatest adjustment would be to Troy-area parishioners who enjoyed the vigil Mass, and to North Troy-area parishioners who enjoyed the early Sunday Mass. However, there are several reasons that I am considering this schedule. Firstly is the issue of sharing Masses among priests. This schedule would pair with the schedule of Trinity Parish to make it much easier to have other area priests help each other for weekend Masses. Also it finally addresses the issue of Saturday Masses; leaving only the Orleans Mass as a vigil will no longer put me or other priests in the situation to offer three Masses on Saturdays whenever a funeral or wedding is planned. This is technically not allowed by church law, even though priests have been breaking the rule for decades. Finally, it presents a difficult but necessary challenge for us to make St. Vincent’s Church a place of new initiatives in the combined parish. This schedule would of course run up against St. Vincent’s bingo fundraiser, possibly making or breaking the event.

I have proposed the following strategy to work with the bingo and other various St. Vincent’s Church activities: Bingo will run under a simplified format to work with a small staff - all food offerings on Sunday nights will become a



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donation-based hospitality offering: anyone is welcome to munch with us! - all Church dinners in North Troy continue as much as possible – a “community freezer” will exchange extra food from dinners and Bingo – the church hall is open and “staffed” one day a week as a “community center” for open access of the community freezer, and possibly other services – the annual dinner and raffle (e.g. this May 20th) is a made an occasion for publicity and donations for all of the above, along with any other social outreach that we can do at St. Vincent’s Church.

I am making an office for parish business in the hall of Sacred Heart Church. I will retain a “pastor’s office” in St. Vincent’s Rectory, but turn the old office into an oratory for my days off, and for visiting priests. Both the St. Vincent’s mailing address and PO Box 109 in Troy will be used for parish business. Four years ago Sacred Heart Church started hosting the annual Family Retreat Day, and this big and growing annual event is quite enough for the whole parish to build up as a new parish activity based in Sacred Heart Church.

In the summer I believe it is well worth a shot of organizing some hospitality at St. Ignatius Church Sunday Masses (even weekly coffee hours, or monthly pot-lucks) with the specific goal of inviting any vacationing Catholics in the area. I think in particular of campers in the Eden area, who no can no longer be invited to St. Gabriel’s Church. There are surely Catholics among them. We ought also to find more opportunities to invite vacationers at Jay Peak to Masses. What is the best way to invite them?

How’s this for an outreach statement under the new parish name? “We are a community of Catholic disciples of Christ, who welcomes you and all visitors to the beautiful Northeast Kingdom of Vermont, and reminds you of the solemn obligation to give praise and thanks to God for the gift of life, and of salvation, for Catholics above all by participating devoutly in the Sunday offering of the Eucharist.” For a mission statement, we need look no further than Matthew 28.

May Jesus and Mary Bless you!

Fr. Tim