

Parishioner Suggestions from March and April Town Hall Meetings or otherwise Submitted

Change Mass Schedule

- Maybe we need to go back to 10:30 Mass in Addison. That may be why people are attending other churches.
- Possible change of Mass times. At this time St. Catherine Sunday Mass is the same as All Saints. One complaint by families is they cannot make a 9 am. These families are now attending All Saints 11:30. If St. Catherine had a 10 or 10:30, a Mass between 9-11:30 we may be able to have families return.
- Revisit Mass times.
- Change the Mass schedule at the churches.
- I believe more people would come back to our parish if we got a Sunday Mass back at St. Joe's.
- My concern is for parents with children in CCD. They are used to Mass with CCD. Campbell has had a 9 am on Sundays for a while.
- I think you should look to changing the weekend Mass schedule to accommodate more people. You are going to lose the "lake" people if you do not have an 8 am at St. Stan's.
- I would suggest more convenient Mass times on Holy Days to accommodate people who work.
- Add back Sunday Mass at St. Joe's.
- The mass times also need to be addressed with this financial situation since we lost parishioners when those times changed.
- Could we consider adding a Sunday Mass at St. Joseph's IF we cut out some of the weekday masses? It would seem to me that attendance would be better at a Sunday Mass than it would be on a weeknight.

Evangelization

- Can we have a committee to approach parishioners that no longer attend church?
- Can we put up signs at each parish asking/evangelizing for others to join, visit, and/or COME BACK?
- Perhaps find reasons why people are no longer attending here.
- Reach out to people in the community who have fallen away from the church and invite them back.
- One way our church could be more welcoming is to have 1 or 2 greeters at the door.
- Interview people who left the parish. They can provide information as to what is wrong with our parish. Only then can we work to repair the damage.
- Encourage regular visitors to register at our parish.
- Market our small, close community of worshipers. Invite people to join us!
- Longer term relief by contacting persons on the parish roster who have not attended. Make direct invitation to come back or get reasons for not choosing to return. Address those reasons.
- Will we reach out to all parishioners, especially those who have not been attending regularly? [if so, can we then ask why they have stopped attending and what would it take to get them to start coming back???]

Finances

- I think we should describe a few financial goals that are near term, medium term and long term.
- Describe the current accumulated deficit. Each account should have a certain level of funds. What are those levels and how much is needed to replenish them?
- Give us a % to increase weekly giving to help close deficit.

- Reach out to Rochester for assistance on the large miles apart.
- A list of cost cutting must be in place. We need to live within our income!
- Can we consolidate religious education?
- Could we use the “trust” fund \$ in the event of “shutdown” rather than the \$40,000 currently designated?
- Ask and educate parishioners about suggestion of donations in collections. How much is recommended?
- Could we have a sign up with assistance for auto withdrawal from checking/savings accounts? I’d be willing to do this. I don’t take the time to do this, plus need “help” to do this. It will also ensure that I still “contribute” even if I miss Mass at my parish that Sunday.
- Set up new trust funds that use income for operating purposes. For example ask for donations of appreciated stock.
- Ensure that Community Foundation of Elmira-Corning and the Finger Lakes are advised by a reputable Investment Advisor—what are their recommendations?
- Throughout the year, there are several collections for non-Parish organizations, to include the tax the Diocese levies on each parish for its “feel-good” projects. During this period of financial difficulties for the Parish, should we consider asking parishioners that rather than donating to these non-parish organizations, they should include in their weekly donation to the Parish the amount they were planning on giving to these other organizations? Of course, the Diocese will take their tax anyway, so this would pertain to only the other outside organizations.
- I suggest a "pay till it hurts" collection to give us an immediate influx of cash to begin with. Weekly contributions need to be analyzed and parishioners need to increase them as they do for any other expense. We don't hesitate to spend on eating out, trips, entertainment, sporting/music events, the casino, etc. What we gave in years past can't be what is given now.
- Cut back on air conditioning in summer.
- Increase fee for Masses from \$10 to \$15.
- Increase the offering for a mass. Go from \$10 to \$15.
- Could we rent our facilities to the community for meetings, luncheons, etc.?
- Eliminate missals (save \$\$\$ here). We can listen just as easy as reading along.
- Bundle up envelopes and mail to parishioners only once a year.
- Suggest people leave money to the church in their wills. This could be put in a savings account to help defray unforeseen costs.
- Write a letter to all parish families on the rolls, not just those who come to church. Explain the dire circumstances and request a one time larger donation of at least \$60 per family to get us past this month. Also, explain we have lost many families and ask them to come back.
- Immediate relief can only be done by increased donations.
- Can we request that the diocese reduce our CMA given our current fiscal crisis? [note: Fr. Pat recently sent a letter to the bishop to that effect]
- We could better communicate between parish and parishioners especially regarding updates on weekly collections, expenses and reminding parishioners that if they attend mass at different parish that they should use their respective envelopes in order that the money goes to our parish {does this include different diocese??}
- We should ask our fellow parishioners to give more if at all possible in order to keep the parish running.
- A review of expenses needs to be done. May need to cut where there is no fat.

- Would it make sense to do a detailed analysis of the Parish's finances and church attendance for the years 2003, 2008, 2013 and 218 and then compare the results to see if a reason for this financial crisis can be discovered, such as growth in expenses far exceeding parishioner growth?
- I can clearly see that our current income cannot support our current expenses. Has anyone considered reducing expenses? With such a decrease in membership now, do we really need all of the staff on the payroll? I hate that someone might lose their job, but the total expended on salaries in our parish seems extremely high for a parish with so few members.
- Do we need all of those unused missalettes in the empty pews? Why not put the books at the entrance and let people pick them up on the way in, just as they do a bulletin. We could do with half the number we order (or less) and it may save money.
- Full transparency and cost cutting plan. (No effort to save on parish part means no effort to give more on parishioners' part.)

Fundraisers

- There is a big need to get people involved in fundraising. We used to have a great Christmas bazaar and made a lot of money, but people no longer want to volunteer to help. We need more than one fundraiser a year, maybe bake sales a few times a year.
- Is there a way to establish a "match" (matching fund fundraising effort)? If we can find \$10,000 to get \$10,000 matched raised by 6/1/19 to close deficit this year (total \$20,000).
- Do joint fundraisers spring and fall with \$10,000 total goal.
- Fundraisers—Breakfasts, Irish Dinner, ?Bazaar or Rummage Sale.
- We used to do the lottery over the summer months that always seemed like a big hit. I thought it brought money in for the churches. Could we do that again?
- Would any fundraising ideas be helpful or is that only a band-aid?
- Invite and encourage our parish community to get involved in fund raising (ie parish suppers, raffles, etc.).
- When it comes to fundraising or group activities, encourage others sincerely, letting them know they are welcome.
- Try some fundraising activities that could also unite the parish—e.g. parish festival, bingo.
- Do more fundraisers.
- Does someone have a used, working condition car that we could sell tickets for to make money?
- We could have a combined (3 church) rummage sale. Maybe have it at the Campbell Legion.
- Have dinner nights, bake sales, dessert sales.
- We need to think about reinstating as many fund raisers as possible.

Other

- Do a parish census to see if we are carrying "dead wood" which is counted for CMA quota.
- No one wants to close a church but St. Stan's is small, the parishioners could go to Hammondsport, Watkins Glen or Penn Yan to church.
- Use the Kepner Tregoe Potential Problem Analysis process to collect and analyze the data, identify the true problem (don't speculate what is causing the financial issues). Use the data to define the true problem, why it exists and what will fix it (use data vs. emotion). Any Corning Incorporated parishioner can get you a Kepner Tregoe facilitator to guide the Planning Committee. Suggestion is from: Mercedes Blake merceblake@gmail.com.
- One suggestion brought up in the fall was to hold communion services in addition to the mass load; since our priest is restricted to only four masses on the weekend and we can't get another priest. This should constitute a special circumstance and should be approached again.

- I heard a recommendation on the weekend, of using latest technologies, and to have the Saturday and Sunday masses where the priest is giving mass, live streamed and provided at the other 2 churches. And possibly some options around how the mass is run in the churches where the priest is not present for communion. This would allow parishioners to attend masses at the church of their choice, would bring some of the parishioners back to the masses and increase weekly offerings. A lot of details would need to be worked out, but would be similar to watching masses on TV, but would have the opportunity to still be able to attend mass in a church, either on Saturday night or Sunday morning. A big advantage for the priest would [be] to reduce from 4 masses to 2 or 3 per weekend. We keep hearing that there are no other priests in the diocese, so this could be a very interesting option.
- The CCD program needs to be encouraged. Perhaps some updates in the Bulletin. The head of the CCD program needs to reach out and find out if there is a problem that could be fixed. Especially to those that dropped out.
- Do some marketing especially around the lakes for attendance at St. Stan's.
- Look at the demographics of all 3 churches. Do we need to consider closing one? Does the attendance merit keeping it open?
- Return to a simple mass format such as Fr. O'Connor, Fr. K, and Fr. Erb followed. We had lots attending then and the collection went up.
- Throw your bread upon the waters. In my life I have several times given away my last dollar. God always makes sure it is not the last after all. I suggest we hold free simple suppers for the whole community. Be sure to do it on a different day from the Baptists. We can only draw in more people by making an outreach of charity. Let people who don't normally come to church see that we are a Christian community. Have faith in God to provide. If we hold it on Saturday after mass I can organize it, but I am not sure what day other churches are holding theirs. I am in Rochester all during the week.
- Longer term relief is by increased activities—stations, benediction, and social activities—euchre tournaments between churches in the parish—promote parish unity.
- During this time of financial crisis for the Parish, would it be possible to publish on the Parish's website the minutes of the Parish Council and Finance Committee and place a notice in the weekly bulletin to that effect along with the website?
- Although it is difficult, it seems inevitable that closing a church will have to be considered due to declining population in the area and declining church attendance.