

Cluster 28 Transition Committee

In the bulletin insert two weeks past reporting on our meeting this month, we mentioned that the reduction of the number of priests serving our cluster would necessitate a reconsideration of the Mass schedules of our churches: *When the Capuchins formally end their presence at St. Joseph next August, the whole cluster will be served by the Jesuit Community. We expect that the Jesuits of New England will commit four priests (one retired) to the cluster. Currently, seven priests serve the cluster churches providing a daily Mass and three/four weekend Masses at each church. Additionally, the Capuchins have a long, historic relationship with the sisters of Mercy at Frances Warde House, the Jesuits have a similar commitment to the Sisters of the Precious Blood. We would like to be able to continue honoring these commitments in some form.*

We also understand the commitment of individuals and families to certain liturgies. The challenge of honoring those commitments makes adjustments to the Mass schedule a matter for the community at large, not just this committee. Thus in that same bulletin insert, we made this request of you: *We would ask you to begin thinking & praying about your needs & concerns in this regard. After the first of the year, we hope to hold an open cluster meeting with interested members of our community to discuss with you what we might do to address this situation.*

Here are some questions to help guide you in your prayer and reflection on this matter:

- 1) What creative ways do you see that we can reduce the number of Masses and still serve our cluster's needs?,
- 2) What Masses do you attend regularly and how would the elimination of one or the other of them affect your ability to practice your faith?,
- 3) Are there particular Masses you think it would be more important to preserve than others, why?,
 - 4) Would you be open to traveling to one of the other cluster churches for Mass at least occasionally?,
- 5) Are there particular characteristics of a certain liturgy (such as music) that should be preserved, even if the times of the Masses were changed?,
- 6) Experience suggests that the elimination of a Mass can affect the financial support of the parish – how can we avoid having this happen?

As always, we pledge to communicate with you in a regular and transparent manner about our planning. We will utilize the bulletin, school news notes/letter, and websites as the first means of this communication. If at any time you have input you wish to share, please feel free to speak with one of the committee members – you can call your parish or school office for contact information. Please continue to keep us and this process in your prayers.