

Last week, in the bulletin there was a series of questions that need to be answered as we move toward one single parish in Michigan City - with separate campuses. I just want to clarify that these are questions that will need to be answered more than direct policies that need to be followed with exactitude.

This week, please find additional information regarding the process toward unity.

Peace,
Fr. Dave

Rubric for Decisions About Mass Times in Combined Parishes

1. Care for Our Priests

- The first priority of the Pastoral Planning Process is the health and well-being of our priests. Without this, long-term ministry and vibrant parish life cannot be sustained.
- A priest who is rested, prayerful, and healthy is better able to serve the people of God.
- This is not about self-interest, but about ensuring that our priests can minister effectively for years to come.
- Diocesan policy calls for each priest to have a regular day off, time for homily preparation, personal prayer, exercise, and healthy social connections.
- For this reason, some reduction in the number of Masses is necessary, along with greater collaboration with deacons and lay ministers.

2. Flexibility and Patience

- Change is never easy, but we are living in a new reality. This process will take time and may look different at each phase.
- Individuals, families, and parishes will need to be patient and open to adjustment.

3. Fairness Across Communities

- The plan seeks to balance the needs of all our parish communities. Each campus will experience both loss and gain, but the overall goal is equity.
- Mass times or locations may change, but these changes are made to serve the wider parish family with fairness and justice.

4. Healthy Stewardship of Resources

- The diocese recommends that a church should be at least half full to justify a regular Mass. This ensures vibrant liturgy and responsible stewardship.
- Not every campus must have a Sunday Mass. At times, a church may be designated primarily for weddings, funerals, or school liturgies.

5. Integration of Parishes

- St. Stanislaus Parish will eventually be absorbed into the newly formed parish family.
- According to the Bishop's Pastoral Plan, Queen of All Saints will serve as the primary ministry site:
 - It was identified as the parish into which the others would be assumed.
 - It is already the primary ministry center in Michigan City.
 - Its Sunday Mass attendance is greater than that of the other campuses combined.

6. Phased Transition

- **Phase I: Now – January 2026**
 - Planning and preparation
 - Combined parish bulletin
 - Shared resources (e.g., OCIA, baptism prep, religious education)
- **Phase II: Beginning January 1, 2026**
 - Parishioner input and voting for new Mass times
 - New Mass schedule begins February 18, 2026
 - A single parish office at Queen of All Saints in Spring 2026

- **Phase III: Beginning July 1, 2026**
 - New parish name (while each campus retains its historic name and identity)
 - Unified website, domain, and email
 - Combined parish roster and Finance Council
 - Consolidated banking with campus distinctions

- **Phase IV: Ongoing**
 - Fine-tuning the new reality
 - Supporting parish unity and stability

7. Our Goal: One Parish, Three Campuses

- By July 1, 2026, Notre Dame will be canonically joined to Queen of All Saints, with three distinct campuses: Queen of All Saints, Notre Dame, and St. Mary.
- All offices will be located at Queen of All Saints, the primary ministry site identified by the bishop.

8. Schools

- School configurations are not part of this process.