

Moving Forward Together as One Parish Family

As I have shared in recent bulletin articles, by 2030 our diocese expects to have only about 30 diocesan priests available to cover Masses across all parishes. Because of this, the Diocese of Gary is restructuring parish groupings and priest assignments so that the number of Masses offered matches the number of priests and the level of actual parish participation. These changes are intended to ensure that all communities in the diocese continue to have long-term access to the sacraments—though perhaps in a different church or at a different time than they are used to.

We have been instructed to adapt our weekend Mass schedule accordingly. The goal is to “right-size” our schedule so that it reflects the number of active parishioners and prepares us for the possibility of having only one priest serving our community in the future. It would not be helpful—or sustainable—if every time a priest is reassigned we had to create a new Mass schedule. That would mean rewriting the schedule if Fr. Jordan were moved, again in 2027 when Fr. Zach completes his assignment, and once more if and when St. Stanislaus joins our parishes. Constantly changing the schedule would create far more confusion than making one comprehensive, long-term adjustment now—a change that may feel difficult at first, but allows us to move forward and focus on the more important work of ministry and mission.

While the new schedule does reduce the total number of weekend Masses, it is designed to provide long-term stability. My hope is that by making these adjustments now, we can avoid revisiting these decisions every few months and instead focus our energy on building up the life and ministry of our parish.

This also represents a meaningful shift in how we understand the Catholic community here in Michigan City. We can no longer operate as three—or even four—separate parishes. We are becoming one parish family. That means if the Saturday evening Mass is celebrated at Notre Dame, it is *our parish's* vigil Mass for all three communities. Likewise, Sunday morning Masses—whether celebrated at Queen of All Saints or St. Mary—belong to all of us as one parish community. I know this is a paradigm shift, but it is one taking place throughout the diocese and across the country due to the number of priests available to serve parishes.

I understand that change like this can be challenging, especially when it touches something as central to our lives as the Mass. Yet I truly believe these adjustments will strengthen our unity, stabilize our ministry, and secure a strong Catholic presence in our area for generations to come.

Thank you for your understanding, flexibility, and faith as we continue moving forward together.