

Update on Mass Schedule Planning Efforts, January 1, 2023

The St. Isidore the Farmer Mass Schedule Team met on Saturday, December 17, 2022 to begin the process of identifying two or three proposed options for a new Mass schedule. The Mass Schedule team came prepared to share options that they feel would best honor the Eucharistic celebration and serve the needs of the entire parish within the available resources. All options were reviewed in light of the initial criteria established and key parish data factors.

After reviewing numerous Mass schedule options and discussing similarities and differences, several common themes emerged.

1. Six Masses on the weekend—two on Saturday evening and four on Sunday morning—are appropriate based on the data and the criteria.
2. Although there would be six Masses, not every church building will necessarily be used on the weekend. That said, it is critical to note that, while there may not be weekend Mass at every church, there are NO plans to close any church building permanently. Even though some churches may not be used for regular Sunday worship, those churches will still be available to celebrate baptisms, weddings, funerals, daily Mass and other special occasions such as feast days.
3. No two Masses will be celebrated at the same time as is currently the practice (4:00 pm on Saturday, 8:00 am on Sunday and 10:00 am on Sunday).

One issue that emerged that will require further discussion by the Team is the extent of the change. Some argued that the entire schedule should be changed so that everyone is impacted by the changes to prevent a feeling of “winners” [church building x keep it’s Mass time(s)] and “losers” [church building y lost its Mass time(s)]. Others felt that the fewest changes required, based on the criteria and the data, should be made so as to minimize the disruption. Still others believe that the extent of the changes to be made need to be such that those changes are sustainable for the long term.

The Team will meet again on December 31st. All Team members were tasked with developing one, single Mass schedule proposal based on this first

consideration of multiple options. The hope is to finalize the options so that they can be shared with the Pastoral Council in January prior to seeking the feedback and input of all parishioners. Details and information will be provided on this parish-wide consultation process in January, so please watch the bulletin and website.

<https://www.stisidorethefarmer.org/mass-schedule-planning>.

While change is hard, and adjustments to the Mass schedule are often disruptive and challenging, please understand that we are all in this together as the one parish of Saint Isidore the Farmer. These decisions are never easy and weigh heavy on the hearts of all. As we consider these changes moving forward, this work is being done to honor the Eucharistic celebration and to serve the needs of the entire parish within the available resources. We know this will not be an easy transition, but working together through these changes will help us grow closer to Christ as a community of faith and build a stronger and more vibrant witness to the communion to which we are called and which we celebrate in the Eucharist.

Please join the Team at this time with your prayers.

God of love, in this time of change and uncertainty, we pray for one another, that each of us and all of us may be open in our search, imaginative about our future, daring in our faith, genuine in our devotion, tireless in our commitment, patient in our discernment, and loving in our communion.

As we enter into new phases of our communal journey as Saint Isidore the Farmer Parish, we do so with some anxiety, yet with trust in You.

Grant us the grace to bear in mind Your compassion, presence, and abounding love.

We thank You for the experiences that have brought us to this moment.

We thank You for the faith, hope and love with which You have blessed us to this stage.

Be with us as we move forward, rejoicing with You and supporting one another.

May our hearts be encouraged, being knit together in love, that we might reach all the riches of the full assurance of God's mystery, which is Christ. Amen.