



St. Mary & St. Matthew Cluster

Vol. I, No.5

Frequently Asked Questions

June, 2007

We are delighted that interest in the clustering process remains high. We encourage you to continue to submit your questions. For your convenience, you may use the FAQ box near the entrance to church. If you identify yourself, we will answer you directly. If you prefer anonymity, we will print the most frequently received questions and answer them in bulletin inserts like this one.

1. Why do we have restrictions on the number of masses that a priest can say on the weekends? Are there ever any exemptions?

The limitation of the number of Masses at which a priest may preside is rooted in canon law and at least partially based on the need for a prayerful celebration by both priest and congregation. Also, our tradition's ideal is that a faith community gathers as one for the celebration of Eucharist. We should institute multiple Eucharists out of necessity, not past practice or convenience. Bishop Clark has listed as an additional reason the increasing average age of our clergy. Occasionally exemptions have been made on a temporary basis when there was clear necessity for a fourth Mass, no priest available to say it, and a clear path forward to when it would no longer be needed.

2. Would St. Mary's be able to have a communion service offered on Saturday evenings for the summer season? Is it possible to have communion services at St. Mary during the summer?

Except in those parts of the world where it is not possible to have a priest present to preside at Mass every Sunday, Catholics are obligated to participate in Sunday Eucharist (or the anticipatory Saturday celebration). While communion services are a fine type of shared worship and acceptable on weekdays when a mass is not being offered, they are not the same as Mass.

3. Another question that arises from the previous question is: Can the church that is not having daily Mass have a communion service on that day?

One of the goals of clustering is to share resources between communities. To do this, we need to offer opportunities for people to get to know one another. If a communion service was offered at the church that did not have daily Mass, the opportunities for this would be greatly diminished. It is hope that by attending daily Mass at both St. Mary's and St. Matthew, it would enhance the possibilities of shared liturgy and community.

The parish cluster can be very successful when the parish being clustered with is viewed as an extension of the home parish.

If you have any other questions that you would like us to answer, please use the space below (or use your own stationery). If you would like to remain anonymous, simply leave your name off this sheet. You may either leave your questions (in an envelope marked "FAQs") with an usher the next time you come to Mass, use the FAQ box, or mail them to us at:

St. Mary's Church
PO Box 725
Honeoye, NY 14471

St. Matthew Church
PO Box 77
Livonia, NY 14487

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone Number _____

Email Address: _____

My question is: _____