

A Note from the Pastor's Desk

Dear Parishioners,

I am writing this week about Mass schedules. In early October, I reported that the only Christmas Mass in the Stone Church this year would be the 5:00PM on Christmas Eve. Since Christmas Eve is a Sunday and Christmas Day is a Monday, there are many Masses over the course of three days to be celebrated by the three of us priests. Since our weekend assistant, Fr. O'Keeffe, will not be with us on Christmas or New Year's Weekend, there will be no morning Masses in the Stone Church on December 31st either. I realize some parishioners look forward to those Masses but we have to be realistic with the Mass schedule. The Main Church has enough space for all of our many parishioners who come to worship on Christmas Day. The important fact is that we have Masses so that everyone can attend.

Many Catholics in the Archdiocese of New York are not aware that Cardinal Dolan has asked all Pastors to try to cut down on the number of Masses in all our parishes due to several factors: fewer people coming to Mass; fewer priests available in parishes as well as rising costs for everything involved in having too many Masses.

In our parish, in the near future, it might happen that the two regularly scheduled Masses in the Stone Church on Sundays would be combined into one. Because of the Cardinal's strong recommendation, I have been considering that. However, after consulting with our associate priests, I have decided to keep the schedule of Sunday Masses as is at least until the Summer Mass schedule starts in July. At that time, a decision will be made about the Mass schedule after the Summer. I honestly do not want to cut back on Masses (neither does the Cardinal) but it is for practical reasons that it is even being considered. Let us thank the Lord that we have Masses to allow us to come together and give glory to God.

We must keep praying that our faith and our parishes remain strong, with God's help.

Sincerely in Christ,

Monsignor Giandurco