

ST. ISIDORE PARISH
QUAKERTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

Monday, October 2nd, 2023

Dear friends,

I am so very grateful to all of our parishioners who, at our parish Masses this past weekend participated in the survey to determine our new Sunday Mass Schedule, which will be formally inaugurated on the first weekend of January, 2024. After nearly a month of my presentations and our together preparing for this important moment, it was abundantly clear that our parish family approached this opportunity with fervent prayer, careful thought, and renewed hope for the future. I am especially grateful to the members of our Parish's Pastoral Council who have spent so much time and energy with me discerning how best to get ready for the future as a parish family. I extend my thanks, as well, to the various volunteers who assisted with distributing, collecting, and tallying the surveys. I am happy to now be able to share the results!

First things first—the biggest question to answer... What will be the new Mass Schedule be? By a significant majority, the new Sunday Mass Schedule preferred by our parish family is:

8:00 A.M. – Mass in English

10:30 A.M. – Mass in English

1:00 P.M. – Mass in Spanish

Therefore, that will be our new Sunday Mass Schedule, starting the weekend of January 6th and 7th 2024. (For the sake of clarity, I mention here again that the 5:00 P.M. Mass in English on Saturday will not be changing.)

Now that the biggest question has been answered, I would like to share some more details about the survey and the information obtained through the other questions that were asked. It is worth noting that the total attendance at our Masses this past weekend was 962 persons. From among that number of persons, 782 surveys were completed and submitted—that's about 81% of those who were in attendance.

I said above that our new Sunday Mass schedule was preferred by a significant majority; I would like to explain what I mean by that. The second preference of parishioners was the 7 A.M. (English) - 9 A.M. (Spanish) - 11 A.M. (English) option at 30% of the vote. The least preferred option of parishioners was the 7:30 A.M. (English) - 9:30 A.M. (Spanish) - 11:30 A.M. (English) at 16% of the vote. However, the 8 A.M. (English) - 10:30 A.M. (English) - 1 P.M. (Spanish) option took 54% of the vote, more than the other two options combined. It should also be mentioned that our

new Sunday Mass Schedule was chosen as a second preference by nearly an additional 25% of the total number of those voting.

As for the question regarding Liturgical Music at the earliest Mass of the morning, the prevailing preference was for a minimal use of liturgical music going forward. Over the course of the next three months, I will discern this matter with the help of the Pastoral Council and the members of our music ministry. We will work together to devise an approach that introduces a minimum of Liturgical Music while carrying forward our custom of noble simplicity at the earliest Mass of Sunday Morning. As we get closer to the implementation of the new schedule, I'll be sure to share more details in this regard, as they solidify.

Regarding the possibility of the Mass currently celebrated entirely in Spanish becoming more typically a bilingual celebration, I was honestly surprised to learn that 71% of the total number of those surveyed expressed that they would be open to attending a bilingual liturgy (to be clear, I'm talking about everyone—that's 71% of all of the surveys from the whole weekend)—that breaks down as follows; 13% said that they would attend regularly/weekly, 11% said that they would attend often, and 47% said they would attend occasionally. Only 29% of the total number of persons surveyed expressed that they would never attend a partly English, partly Spanish bilingual Mass. This is really helpful information and definitely something that will be discussed further in the coming days.

The outcome of the last question of the survey is rather interesting—of the 782 persons surveyed, 679 said that they are currently registered parishioners of Saint Isidore Parish, 89 said that they are not currently registered, and 14 chose not to answer the question. That tells me a few things. I'm certain that we have a number of friends from our neighboring parishes, or possibly from further afield, who for a variety of reasons regularly choose to worship with us at Saint Isidore. That's awesome! They are always most welcome and, as a parish family, we are happy to benefit from their company at the altar! That said, I am also rather certain that, among those not currently registered, and those choosing not to answer the question, there are a good number of folks who *could* and probably *should* be registered. For what it's worth, I'm always happy to help. I delight in personally registering all of our new parishioners. I sometimes wonder whether everyone knows that. I'm happy to welcome new (or newly registering) parishioners on any day, in the sacristy, after any scheduled parish Mass. I have chosen to do that myself because it gives me the precious opportunity to have a few minutes to get to know folks, to hear their story, to help them with sacramental formation, to invite them to get involved in the parish, and countless other exciting things that might come up.

So, if you happen to be one of the 89 people not registered in the parish, or are one of the 14 who chose not to answer, and would like to register in the parish, or have questions, or whatever . . . it's all good, I'm happy to help in any way I can. I really mean that. And, to be clear, that goes for everyone else as well!

I suppose that's all I have to share for now. I know it's rather a lot. If you have any questions—as always, please feel free to reach out to me. I'm sure that the results of our survey will be received by many with mixed feelings. Maybe one or another of the results was surprising for you, or maybe you're feeling disappointed that one or another item didn't go the way you would have hoped or expected. It's okay to be honest with yourself in that way. I want to reassure you that we are going to be okay. More than that, we are going to be stronger because of having journeyed along this path together. We are a family. And just like every family, we will celebrate all of our blessings and confront all of our challenges *together*.

As always, know of my prayers for all of you and your intentions! Please pray for me too!

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Ken

Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Pray for us!

St. Joseph, pray for us!

SS. Peter and Paul, pray for us!

St. John Neumann, pray for us!

St. Katharine Drexel, pray for us!

St. Isidore, pray for us!
