



## *Catholic Neighbors In Faith Renewal Update*

# Why?

It is a painful question on the minds of so many currently. Why are we making so many changes, especially concerning mass times and days?

- † Do you remember when each parish had their own parish priest, perhaps an associate or two? There were 10-14 priests in the area, covering some 30-40 masses, assisted by retired clergy as well.
- † Do you remember all the fun you had as a member of one of the two Catholic Schools, or a CYO program? You laughed, danced, and played sports together.
- † Do you remember watching 40-50 children, all dressed up, processioning into the church to make their First Communion?
- † Do you remember the parish festivals and evening parties that lasted all night long?
- † Do you remember how, during a life's crisis, the parishioners were there for you, and you were there for them?

Those were some amazing times, but we must be careful of what I call... "The Nostalgia Effect." We remember how it was, or how we wish it to be, but not how it is today.

Many of you have expressed your concerns about the coming changes, and I applaud you for taking your faith seriously. Like many of you, I sometimes wonder what the world would look like if more people took their faith seriously.

But today, there are less than 100 active clergy covering the 160 parishes across WNY.

In our own area, there are only 3 clergy, covering all 8 worship sites spread from Panama to Randolph. There are no retired priests to be found along the Southern Tier... None

The population has decreased. In the past, we needed multiple masses to accommodate all our parishioners, but now, most churches can fit everyone into one service, with room to spare. The number of young families and children has declined throughout the area. Many of our loved ones and friends have gone to the Lord. Once vibrant ministries are skeletons of what they used to be.

This is happening everywhere in the Diocese of Buffalo, and other Dioceses as well.

I know that the new mass schedule and changes involving Religious Education and the Central Office are difficult. Yet, we must take this opportunity to create a structure which will nourish us now and provide for the needs of our loved ones in the future.

I ask that you continue to take your faith seriously. Continue to celebrate the Eucharist with your fellow parishioners, the ones who have stood by you in times of difficulty. If you find yourself occasionally celebrating the Eucharist at another worship site within our Family of Parishes, know that your envelope will be returned to your home parish.

Every crisis is an opportunity to draw closer to God. None of us know exactly how the future will unfold. In the past we have faced many trials by sticking together and trusting in our Lord. The Lord is faithful and asks us to remain faithful to Him.

*Fr Darrell*

### **Mass Schedule:**

The new weekend mass schedule starts on the weekend of **September 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>**.

Saturday:

4pm	St James
4pm	Our Lady of Snows
5:30pm	St Patrick

Sunday:

8am	St James
9am	St John
9am	Sacred Heart
10am	Our Lady Loreto
11am	SS Peter and Paul
11am	St Patrick