

The Catholic Community of Stratford

St. James...Holy Name of Jesus...Our Lady of Peace...Our Lady of Grace...St. Mark

November 1, 2022

Dear Friends,

For several months, we, the pastors of the five parishes of Stratford, have been meeting to discuss discern and explore ways in which we can better serve the diverse needs of Catholics in our parishes, our town and the wider community.

The Catholic Church has played an important role in the Catholic Community in Stratford for many years. Following the establishment of St. James in 1886, the Church grew with the town as four more Parishes were established: Holy Name of Jesus (1923), Our Lady of Peace (1948), Our Lady of Grace (1954), and St Mark (1960)/

Each of our five Parishes is rich in history, unique in traditions, yet universal in belief and practice. All Parishes share the mission of preaching and living the Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord as we attempt to respond to and meet the diverse needs of the Community we serve. Given the numerous challenges we all face, we, your Pastors have entered into this exploratory dialogue and discernment with trust in the Holy Spirit's guidance and the belief that there is much to learn and celebrate about the past as we creatively search for ways to grow and move forward in the Name of our Lord!

In consultation with Bishop Caggiano and learning from the best practices of our Diocese and local parishes, we are restructuring and reimagining how to work together by collaborating, sharing strengths and combining resources.

These discussions have been very fruitful! We began by looking at our liturgical schedules. We have made some alterations and created a town-wide liturgical schedule. In addition to a variety of Saturday Vigil Mass times, there will be a Mass nearly every half hour somewhere in town on Sunday morning, two Sunday afternoon Masses and weekday Mass at diverse times throughout town. The flyer included with this letter contains the schedule of Masses and prayer that will go into effect Saturday, November 5th.

These discussions have led us to re-envision our ministry to the Catholic Community of Stratford in five locations. Working and praying together, we believe, will strengthen and breathe new life into each individual community while simultaneously ministering in a more inclusive, expansive and financially responsible way to all through collaboration, shared ministry and combined resources.

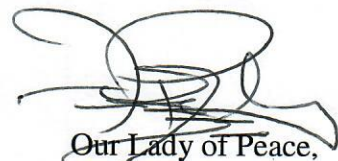
Together we are more viable and more accessible. *Together* we can grow in our faith in new and exciting ways. *Together*, as the Catholic Community of Stratford, we can serve the needs of our members and the wider community better and more efficiently.

We will continue to communicate the fruits of our discussions and discernment and soon involve the leadership of each Parish in appropriate aspects of ministry development. For now please pray for the Catholic Community of Stratford consisting of

Blessings and Peace,


St James the Apostle,


Holy Name of Jesus,


Our Lady of Peace,


Our Lady of Grace


St Mark the Evangelist.


Bishop of Bridgeport