

Mass Times Survey – Cover Letter

At its regular meeting March 19, 2018, the Parish Pastoral Council reviewed the material sent by the Diocese concerning the 2017 Mass Count for the Waterloo Deanery. This included the cover letter from Msgr. Murray Kroetsch and the tabulation for each parish of the deanery, including a recommendation for each parish. For St. Joseph Church, as well as for several other parishes, the recommendation was: “Suggest reducing Sunday morning to one Mass.”

We read and discussed carefully the notes and explanations contained in the cover letter that were “based purely on the numbers”.

We would now like to give the parishioners an opportunity to give their opinions about the reasons the Diocese suggests for reducing Mass times. Below, you will find the six reasons given (in **bold**), and a summary of the PPC response (in *italics*). The next page gives you an opportunity to share your feelings.

1. “When a Church is not full, or does not appear full, parishioners are often discouraged.”

➤ *Most PPC members seemed to disagree with this statement, noting that it depends more on the welcoming atmosphere, the singing: also noted was that the congregation tends to sing better with smaller groups. Some people like a less-crowded/ busy church. A small crowd makes it easier to get to know the people. It is our responsibility to approach parishioners and to bring people back to the Church.*

2. “Small congregations in large churches make it difficult to encourage actual participation in the liturgy.”

➤ *It seems to some that fewer people means more involvement, also in the singing and responding.*

3. “The multiplication of Masses means the multiplication of ministers which can prove challenging in some of our parishes and can necessitate unnecessary financial obligations on the part of the parish (e.g., musicians).”

➤ *(A clarification was made: we are not talking about ordained ministry.) This does not seem to be a problem for us, except for young altar servers. We have sufficient Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers for all 3 Masses. Most members agree that music ministry would be a concern, especially the financial obligations, though it was mentioned that not all musicians need to be paid for all services. Currently we have a salaried organist and a director for the main 11 am Mass. Having different musicians for other Masses may also be a concern from the stand point of unity, especially if we are not learning and singing the same songs or using the same hymnals.*

4. “Masses at the same times in neighbouring parishes provide little or no options for people who are often juggling schedules in include Sunday Mass.”

➤ *Many say there are enough options in the K-W area....: besides 5 pm Saturday evening, also some at 7 pm, some other than 9 and 11 am Sunday morning, some 8:30 am Sunday morning, and some Sunday evening. With the current options, one can find a suitable Mass time to fit all schedules, if there is dedication and good will.*

5. “Multiple Masses scheduled at the same time as neighbouring parishes make it challenging for another priest to assist when a priest is sick or away.”

➤ *Most agree but it is also noted that signs, with times and information about neighbouring parishes, can be put on Church doors when there is an emergency, and parishes can develop a plan that would include a well-prepared Liturgy of the Word led by a team or a deacon.*

6. “In sum, fewer Masses celebrated with full churches will result in better liturgical celebrations.”

➤ *Most agree that it depends not so much on numbers but other factors like, music, preaching, welcoming atmosphere, etc.*

Mass Times Survey – Questionnaire #1

This survey is intended for those who regularly pray at St Joseph's, and are either confirmed or over 18 years old. Please indicate your name and usual Mass time. Anonymous responses will **not** be counted. Please fill in **one** circle for each question to indicate how you feel, on a scale from "Not at all" to "Extremely". **Responses are due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, June 3, 2018.** Please return completed surveys in the collection baskets, to the Parish Office, or by email to sjk@golden.net. A copy of this survey can also be downloaded from the Parish website at www.stjosephkitchener.org/news.html or filled out electronically at <http://bit.ly/sjkmassq1>

Name: _____ Usual Mass Time: _____

1. Do you find it discouraging if the church is not full?

Not At All ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely

2. Do you find it difficult to participate in the liturgy when the congregation is small?

Not At All ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely

3. A) Do you think St. Joseph's has difficulty in finding ministers for all Masses?

Not At All ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely

3. B) Do you think there is an unnecessary financial burden because of multiple Masses and ministries?

Not At All ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely

4. If you cannot attend Mass at St. Joseph's, do you find it difficult to find a Mass at another Parish at a time that is suitable?

Not At All ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely

5. If no priest was available for a Mass at St. Joseph's, would you be willing to attend a Liturgy of the Word led by a lay minister?

Not At All ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely

6. Do you feel the Mass would be better if the church was full?

Not At All ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Extremely

Please feel free to add any additional comments on the other side of this page.

KEY DATES:

Survey #1	Out: Saturday, May 19th and Sunday, May 20 th Due: Sunday June 3 rd at 11:59 pm
Survey #2	Out: Saturday, June 10th and Sunday, June 11th Due: Sunday, June 24 th at 11:59 pm
Town Hall Meetings	Thursday, July 5 th at 7 pm Tuesday, August 7 th at 7 pm
PPC recommendation of decision	Thursday, August 9 th
Final Decision announced	At all Masses on the weekend of August 18 th and 19 th