

## 5:45 PM Mass



Happy New Year everyone!!! Know of my prayers for all of you that 2016 will be a year of great blessing. As we move into this New Year I thought it might be the ideal time to try something a little different in an effort to boost the amount of people that come to Mass in Jeffersonville. For the first three months of 2016 and on a *trial basis* I would like to make the 5:45 PM Mass on Saturday evening at Sacred Heart a simple Mass, that is a Mass without our music ministry.

### ***Father why do you hate Sacred Heart and Saint Augustine parishes and why are you trying to destroy us?***

Let me say up front that I LOVE Sacred Heart and Saint Augustine parishes and my decisions and actions come from a place of love. I want to do anything and everything I can to make our parishes vibrant, healthy and joyful parishes. With vibrant, healthy and joyful parishes we will then in turn be better able to carry out Jesus' great commissioning in which he instructs us to go out and make disciples of all nations.

### ***Well then you must be doing this because you hate music correct?***

No not at all, I love having music at Mass and think that our Director of Music and Liturgy Matthew Moore, our cantors and our choirs do an incredible job! My preference is to have music at Mass. However, I would rather have Mass with no music and 150-200 people at the 5:45 PM Saturday evening Mass than have music and 60-90 people.

### ***What makes you think this could work?***

Let me begin by stating that I'm not doing this to simply shuffle around the people that are already attending Mass on the weekend in Jeffersonville although I'm sure that might organically happen. I'm also not interested in stealing parishioners from other parishes. What I am interested in doing is getting people who come to Mass once or twice a month to come all the time and people who don't come at all or haven't come in some time to start coming again. I think this might work because I can see how it could appeal to a variety of people. There are people in our parishes, who because of illness and age cannot make it through a weekend Mass that is a hour long, but would have the energy to make it through a Mass approximately half that time in length. There are also families in our parishes, who because of young children find it intimidating to try and get through a weekend Mass that is an hour long, but who find the prospect of a Mass approximately half that time in length more manageable. There are also individuals out there who have been away from Mass for some time and might find it less intimidating to come back to Mass if it was a simple Mass. I also had a simple Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and it was by far the best non-school attended Mass for that Holy Day of Obligation. After that Mass I had several people comment that we should offer a simple Mass on a more regular occasion and that is what got me thinking about trying this all out. Finally, I can point to several parishes throughout the Archdiocese who offer a simple Mass on the weekend and have found success in getting people to come to that Mass.

***Why are you trying this with the 5:45 PM Saturday Mass at Sacred Heart and not one of the other three weekend Masses we offer?***

To put it simply, the 5:45 PM Saturday Mass has the most room for growth and my hope is that this change will indeed bring many more people to Mass.

***What if it doesn't work?***

Well that is why we are only attempting it on a three month trial basis. It is my sincere hope that this will help us to grow our parishes, but if Mass attendance doesn't increase and the 5:45 PM Mass folks would like to have our music ministry return than it will. If the trial is successful we will keep on having the simple Mass. Please let people know that we are trying this, especially people who might not be coming every weekend, to see if this type of Mass option would appeal to them. I should also add that I have no intention of getting rid of the 5:45 Mass!

***Are we doing this to save money?***

No we are not doing this to save money. Playing at the 5:45 PM Mass is a very small part of Matthew Moore's work week and he will still have to prepare music for the other Masses. Matthew is already an absolute bargain for us for what he is asked to do for our parishes and he has no problem jumping right back into the 5:45 PM Mass in April if this trial is not successful.

***Do you care that I hate/love this idea?***

Absolutely I care!!! I want to know if you think this is the greatest idea ever, the worst idea ever and anything in between. My decision making process is greatly aided by the feedback I receive. Please don't ever assume that I know what you are thinking unless you have told me what you are thinking.

***Are you interested in my brilliant idea(s) to grow our parishes?***

Absolutely!!! If what you are proposing is in line with Sacred Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Code of Canon Law and the General Instruction of the Roman Missal I'm ready to try almost anything that is feasible with our resources.

***Can you wrap this up?***

Sure. Thank you for taking the time to read this insert and please let people know about this new Mass option. Please keep our parishes and the conversion of Jeffersonville in your prayers and please know that you are in mine. I look forward to all of the ways we are going to make our parishes more vibrant, healthy and joyful and I look forward to working with you to make disciples of all nations!