

## **Important Information about Churches merging**

**Mass Schedule:** I have yet to determine the mass schedule after December 1<sup>st</sup>. I will communicate that information shortly.

**Mass Intentions:** All currently scheduled Mass intentions will be honored. They will be transferred to the new location and time that the mass will be offered at on the already scheduled date. The Diocese of Erie gives us permission to offer two mass intentions on a given day in these circumstances, and that is what we will do, until we can get back to having one mass a day.

The St. Agnes Mass book is generally pretty open only a month or two out at this time. Daily Masses are available a month out.

The St. Mary's Mass Account will be merged into the St. Agnes Mass account on December 1.

### **Sacramental Celebrations in the Frenchville, Grassflat, and Hawk Run churches**

Holy Mass will be offered at the Frenchville, Grassflat, and Hawk Run churches on the feast day of the Saint to whom the church is dedicated. Also, funerals, weddings, and baptisms may take place in the church whenever they are necessary, and as they ever have been in the past.

The churches will maintain their current unlocking schedules, and individuals and groups are welcome to use the space for prayer.

The Blessed Sacrament will only be reposed in these churches for the 14 days before and the 14 days after a Mass has been offered in that church building. Otherwise, canon law dictates that the Blessed Sacrament cannot be reserved in the church.

**Parish (i.e. Pastoral) Council and Finance Council:** Since there will be only one parish entity (St. Agnes) responsible for the territory currently served by two parishes (St. Agnes and St. Mary, Frenchville), there will only be one Pastoral Council and one Finance Council. Non-parishioners cannot belong to a parish's Pastoral Council or Finance Council. So, in order to belong to the councils that will come into being after December 1, members will need to be registered at either St. Agnes or St. Severin Church.

All current Parish Pastoral Council members are invited by me to retain their membership on the council after the merger. I will contact current Finance Council members at St. Mary's Parish to ask some of them to join the St. Agnes/St. Severin Finance Council. I intend 6 members for that Finance Council.

**Selling property:** If you have heard anything to the effect that we are going to sell any property or buildings of St. Mary, Hawk Run, or Grassflat, that is not true. It is a completely premature discussion to have. Let's see how our communities come together over the next few months, and let's see how the financial realities shape up. Time will tell if or when that would be a good idea or not.

Current employees and volunteers have agreed with me to continue to take care of their property as they have been doing. I thank them. It is important that the property not fall into disrepair or uncleanness.

It is worth noting that any selling of property would require consultation with the finance council and parish council, and written consent of the bishop.

In the case of selling a church building, this cannot even be considered until there is a removal of the dedication of the building for use of divine worship. This is a process that requires consent of the finance and parish council, a petition by the pastor, consent of the Presbyteral Council, and a decree by the Bishop.

All current rentals on Frenchville properties will be honored, and we are still taking facilities usage requests for those properties. Contact Amy Rowles to reserve the grounds.

**Moving money:** When a church merges into another parish, their corporate identity ceases. This is why bank accounts must be merged. This is why parish societies such as Rosary Societies cannot continue as currently incorporated.

I have decided that we will institute at St. Agnes a separate account for each of the three merged churches (Frenchville, Grassflat, Hawk Run). Each of those accounts will be available to be deposited into for two purposes: for the conducting of business formerly conducted by the former rosary society of that church, and for the maintaining of parish property. All bills regarding the utilities and maintenance of that church property will be paid from that account, if that account has the monies to cover those bills. If those accounts do not have the funds to cover such bills, then St. Agnes accounts will cover those bills.

Such an account would be used for the conducting of the Frenchville Picnic.

An envelope will be included in the St. Agnes and St. Severin's envelopes for the Frenchville, Grassflat, and Hawk Run churches as a building fund.

Also, an envelope for cemetery care and concern for Frenchville, Grassflat, and Hawk Run churches will be instituted in the St. Agnes envelopes.

**\*\*\* ALL CHECKS MUST BE MADE OUT TO ST. AGNES CHURCH – PLACE IN THE MEMO LINE OF YOUR CHECK THAT YOU WISH FOR THE MONEY TO BE DEPOSITED IN YOUR CHURCH'S BUILDING FUND ACCOUNT\*\*\*\*\***

If necessary, I will reimburse St. Agnes checking account from these building fund accounts for expenses incurred in the maintenance and utilities of any one of the three secondary church locations (Frenchville, Grassflat, Hawk Run).

**Frenchville Picnic:** The continuance of the Frenchville Picnic will be up to the volunteers who run the picnic. I think that it can be a successful event, even though the community will not have the Saturday Mass as its focal point anymore. Obviously, the community in Frenchville remains, and it will need something to be centered around other than weekly mass. Again, if the volunteers feel that they don't want to do it, I respect that. Possibly, we need to recruit more volunteers to shore up the vitality of this event, and not have things fall so completely on a small group of people.

I will give Amy Rowles access to the St. Agnes accounts to continue to be the Financial office manager for the Frenchville and Cooper picnics. You may relate to her for the financial business of those events as you have in the past.

**Cemeteries:** The cemetery business of St. Mary, Frenchville, Ss. Peter and Paul, Grassflat, and St. Severin, Drifting, will continue as it is presently conducted. The cemetery office will remain in Frenchville, with Amy Rowles as the cemetery office manager. All records pertaining to these cemeteries will remain at St. Mary's. All investments and checking accounts will remain as currently comprised. Cemeteries always survive their churches. No money is ever to be transferred from a cemetery account into another account, unless the cemetery were to go bankrupt.

All current lot easements remain in force.

Current Cemetery personnel have agreed to continue to carry out their responsibilities in maintaining their respective cemeteries.

Also, an envelope for cemetery care and concern for Frenchville, Grassflat, and Hawk Run churches will be instituted in the St. Agnes envelopes.

**Merging the Office:** Effective December 1, the Parish business part of the Frenchville office will merge into the Morrisdale office. Again, cemetery business will remain at St. Mary's for Frenchville, Grassflat, and Drifting cemeteries.

What this means is that the bulletin will be run out of Morrisdale office. The Morrisdale office will retain all sacramental records for Frenchville, Drifting, and Grassflat churches. All bills for Frenchville, Hawk Run, Grassflat, Drifting, and Morrisdale will be paid, all monies deposited, and all accounted for out of Morrisdale office. Hall rentals and other facilities usage requests need to be communicated to the Morrisdale office by Frenchville and Drifting so that the parish office knows when facilities are being used. This would also be true for the churches and the groves.

Mass Intentions will be scheduled from the Morrisdale office.

Old records will be purged and then existing parish records will be transferred to St. Agnes Parish office. This will not happen immediately.

**Concerns particular to St. Severin:** Until December 1, St. Severin will be a secondary mission church of St. Mary. After December 1, it will be a secondary mission church of St. Agnes. So, it will continue its current operations in an unchanged manor in all respects. After December 1, St. Agnes will fulfill the operational roles currently being rendered to St. Severin by St. Mary's.