

11 June 2021

Transition Update: Queen of Angels/St. Joseph/St. Anne Parishes

I met recently with Fr. Guarino to present his welcome binder with information about the parishes. We talked about the status of things regarding priest coverage and Mass schedules come July. There are some unforeseen challenges that will impact our transition, so I'd like to share with you where things are at this point:

- Fr. Francis (the Indian pastor of the Aberdeen cluster and pastor of St. Anne Parish, Forks and the entire West End) returned to India earlier than expected. He left the U.S. at end of May. In addition to his leaving, one of the other Indian HGN priests from that same cluster had travelled to India for vacation prior to the massive Covid outbreak in that country, and when the borders were closed he got stuck over there; he is still there. The Archdiocese obviously had to scramble to find coverage not only for Aberdeen, but Forks and vicinity as well.
- Recall too that Fr. Gali, our new parochial vicar, is stuck in India as well, waiting to come to the U.S. once the borders open. At this point there is no ETA on his arrival.
- I believe the Archdiocese has assigned Fr. Charles Banduku to Forks and vicinity for the remaining weeks that the parish/mission/prisons fall under the Aberdeen cluster (till the end of June). I believe, but am not 100% certain, that Fr. Banduku is the priest that will then cover for Fr. Gali until his arrival. Once Fr. Gali arrives, Fr. Banduku will be assigned elsewhere in the AD.
- St. Thomas Mission remains open. As the Archbishop's letter from April mentioned, there may be a need for changes in ministry at the mission, but nothing has been decided at this point. Fr. Guarino will be working with the Archdiocese, as well as Fr. Banduku/Fr. Gali to further assess the situation, hear from the parishioners who live in Clallam Bay, etc. They will have some meetings during the summer I'm sure. So all of that is up in the air at this time.
- What this boils down to is that come July 1st we will have 3 parishes and a mission church that have weekend Masses (in addition to everything else!). Fr. Guarino's plan at this point, and for the foreseeable future, is to have one priest cover Forks/Clallam Bay/prisons and the other cover Sequim and Port Angeles.
- The current Mass schedule for Queen of Angels and St. Joseph Parishes will remain in effect until further notice. The current Mass schedule for St. Anne Parish and St. Thomas mission will also remain in effect until further notice.

Mass attendance at QA/SJ has increased, which is great. It's good to see the churches filling up for Mass!

Homebound ministry resumes very soon. I will be meeting with the HBM coordinators for QA and SJ parishes next week. We will assess what requirements will be in place; restructure a few things; re-recruit HB ministers; re-establish the actual list of Communicants; and then implement. I'm confident that before the end of June we will resume taking Communion to the homebound.

The QA/SJ transition team will be meeting with the St. Anne Parish transition team in a Zoom meeting next week. We're excited to meet everyone and get some balls rolling!

There is a farewell reception for Fr. Leonardo scheduled for Thursday, June 24th from 3:00pm – 6:00pm at the Port Angeles Yacht Club. It is open to the parishioners from both parishes. Covid restrictions for attendance are in effect, so reservations are being taken in 30 minute increments. Please contact Helen

Schaaf to pre-register at 360-460-3627. Masks and social distancing are required. Attendance is at your own risk. Deadline June 23, 6 p.m. Thanks to the parishioners who are organizing the event.

Please continue to hold the transition up in prayer: for the priests as they continue to have a foot in each camp, so to speak; and for all of us as we go through the challenges and confusion of change.

Christ's peace in all things, 