

- The average weekly Mass attendance reported by parishes during 2022/2023:

American Martyrs	629	St. Anastasia	443
Holy Family	1000	St. Gregory the Great	559
OL of the Blessed Sacrament	526	St. Josaphat	372
OL of the Snows	1063	St. Kevin	473
Sacred Heart	430	St. Robert Bellarmine	748
Average attendance in Deanery			624

In addition to the information that was shared, some concerns raised by the priests include:

- The response to the bishop's letter provided in parish bulletins was mixed: some priests received no feedback, and others had several responses from parishioners.
- With regard to strategies for changing Mass schedules:
 - Some parishes established a summer schedule that simply remained in effect in the fall.
 - Instead of eliminating a Mass from the schedule, some parishes have changed the entire schedule.
 - Two parishes spoke of eliminating the Sunday evening Mass without any negative feedback from parishioners.
- Two parishes have begun an initial conversation about a possible partnership.

I share the notes of the meeting with you so that you are aware of some of the more immediate concerns that your pastors are facing. In the months ahead, they will continue to work together and provide opportunities for parishioners to be a part of the discussion so that Bishop Brennan can make decisions that will first and foremost help us to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ most effectively, while at the same time minimize the administrative burdens that can detract from the important work of the Church in your part of Queens. As we face changes in parish structures and administration, I believe that it also highlights the importance of stewardship among the faithful in our communities. The generous gifts of time, talent, and treasure are needed now more than ever, and they are always ways for parishioners to build the community and respond to the needs of their brothers and sisters. The Church is truly blessed by all of us working together as the Body of Christ.

As this New Year begins, may we entrust ourselves to Mary, the Mother of God, whose intercession accompanies us as we strive to be faithful disciples. May God bless our bishop and our diocese.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Very Rev. John J. Costello, VE
Regional Episcopal Vicar of Queens East

cc: Most Reverend Robert J. Brennan, Bishop of Brooklyn
Reverend Monsignor Joseph Grimaldi, Vicar General