



Hendra Hamilton Northgate Clayfield Mass Times & Mission

Dear Parishioners,

Since the beginning of 2022 we've undertaken significant consultation and discernment about the future of the four communities at Hendra, Hamilton, Northgate and Clayfield. Whilst there are various practical issues to consider, the primary consideration is the mission of the Church into the future. Informing our decision processes is the question; how can we most effectively engage people with the faith, hope and love found in an encounter with Jesus?

The four communities have been invited to engage in two consultations and two surveys to inform the decision making of the Parish Pastoral Council at Mother of Mercy, the Community and Mission Council at St Agatha's and ultimately the Parish Priest, Fr Nev Yun.

At this stage in the process, our most pressing issue is that of Mass times and the need to rationalise to four weekend Masses so that we are no longer dependent on supply priests. The most recent survey addressed the question of Mass times. A decision has now been made by Fr Nev in light of survey feedback and consultation with the two Councils. There were a number of issues that informed this decision which are as follows...

1. Provision for as many people as possible: The four best attended Masses previously were the Clayfield Vigil, The Clayfield Sunday morning Mass, the Hendra Sunday morning Mass, and the Clayfield Sunday evening Mass. Working with these four times would naturally result in the smallest number of people having to change Mass times. The Mass times survey confirmed that this was the case.

2. Mission: The process and survey feedback has made the leadership team aware of the need to focus some Masses on specific demographics. This would mean a family Masses for young families with primary school students, a youth Mass for high school aged students and young adults, as well as other Masses that are less targeted on specific age groups. It is clear that families are most likely to come to Mass on Sunday mornings, that youth are most likely to attend Mass on Sunday evenings, but also that there are differences in properties to consider. Whilst Clayfield is a beautiful and iconic heritage Church, the Church at Hendra is more accessible for those who struggle with stairs.

3. Equity: Finally, with the issues of provision and mission in mind, it was important to consider equity across the two parishes. In this light, it made sense to think of two Masses in each parish at times and places that could attract and accommodate the largest number of people.

New Mass Times: With this rationale, the following weekend Mass schedule will begin on 26 November 2022.

Saturday 5:00pm Vigil: Our Lady Help of Christians
Sunday 8:00am Mass: St Agatha's Parish (Families Mass)
Sunday 9:30am Mass: Our Lady Help of Christians (Families Mass)
Sunday. 5:30pm Mass: St Agatha's (Youth Mass)

Fr James O'Donoghue has been asked to say the 4:30 Vigil Mass at Hamilton and the Sunday 7:30am Mass at Northgate for the time being.



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Transitioning Mass Times and Places

These new Masses have implications particularly for the Clayfield Vigil Mass attendees who are invited to change Mass location to Hendra. It is the desire of Fr Nev, Deacon Peter and the two Parish Councils that we intentionally welcome those who are losing their normal Mass location into one of the remaining Mass communities. To this end, a thanksgiving Mass will be held on November 19 at the Clayfield Vigil Mass, and a welcome Mass will take place on the weekend of 26 November at the new 5pm vigil Mass at Hendra.

Finally, Fr Nev, Deacon Peter and the Pastoral Councils wish to thank everyone for their engagement in this process. Change is always difficult, and Mass times and places are held closely by us all. The sacrifice made by many to reintegrate into a new community for the sake of the mission of the Church into the future is deeply appreciated.

Next Steps

With the property sale at Hamilton nearing completion (the land is being sold to BCE, but St Cecilia's Church will remain in the ownership of MoM Parish), we will look to begin the process of recruiting a ministry team to move ahead with the vision presented in the consultations of a Catholic parish that engages all generations with the joy of an encounter with Christ that is relevant, meaningful and nourishing.

In the coming months we will be reviewing Mass attendance and listening closely to feedback from parishioners. Your continued feedback and active participation are welcome and needed as we seek to find the best opportunities for these communities of faith to engage with one another and with Christ. If you have immediate questions or concerns, please contact the parish offices.

Our prayer is that as we journey through this process of change, all of us will grow deeper in our relationship with Christ and with each other. May the God who is the author of peace, bestow upon us unity and joy as we journey together in the mission, he has called us to. We leave you with the prayer of St Patrick,

“Christ with me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me, Christ in me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every person who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.”