



St. Mary's, St. Rose and St. Isaac Jogues Churches

15 Maplewood Ave.
East Hartford, CT 06108
860.289.7916
namct.org

December 4, 2018

Dear Parishioner:

I am taking the time before the hustle and bustle of the holiday season kicks in to share with you exciting news and changes that are happening within our parish. First of all, I want to tell you all how happy I am to be back here in my home parish. Some of you may not be aware, but St. Isaac Jogues is my home parish, and where I was honored to be able to say my first Mass after my ordination in 2012. It is great to be back, and after the changes in leadership this parish went through this past year, I look forward to serving your pastoral needs for years to come.

One of the biggest events happening in our parish is the creation of what is being referred to as a "Quasi Parish", which means that our Ghanaian community is going to separate from the North American Martyrs Parish and form their own "quasi parish". This is something the Ghanaian community has strived towards, creating a community that retains their culture and that they could call their own. They will be creating their new parish in St. Isaac Jogues Church, have their own Pastor, and will report directly to the Archdiocese of Hartford, in exactly the same way that every other parish in the Archdiocese of Hartford does. Archbishop Blair has given his blessing for these changes.

I am sure you are asking how this affects us in the North American Martyrs Parish. There is a legal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), between the Ghanaian ministry and the Archdiocese of Hartford, as well as a Use Agreement between the Ghanaian ministry and N.A.M Parish. We retain ownership of the building, and the Ghanaian ministry will take over the financial responsibility for the regular operation and maintenance of St. Isaac Jogues Church. The N.A.M Parish will be the "landlord", and will be responsible for major repairs and capital improvements.

The former Parish of St. Isaac Jogues, prior to our merger, had been operating with a deficit of approximately \$80,000 per year, as the annual reports have shown. That operating deficit continues, and the N.A.M. Parish cannot sustain those losses. The Ghanaian community feels strongly that they can continue to grow their ministry, especially now that they have a parish and place of their own, so much so that they will be able to maintain the expenses. This is a win win situation. The N.A.M. Parish eliminates \$80,000 in expenses annually, and the Ghanaian community gets their own "quasi parish" to grow with their own cultural observances.

The Ghanaian Ministry will be creating their own corporate identity and their own new Parish name. One thing that cannot change is the name of the building, so the identity of St. Isaac Jogues Church will remain a part of Mayberry Village.

This also means that we are moving our Parish operations out of St. Isaac Jogues.

Effective January 6, 2019, I will be moving the 7:30 AM Mass from St. Isaac Jogues to St. Rose. I did consult with the parish council about this, and received many differing preferences about switching around Mass times and locations, and I felt this was the least disruptive to our schedule, especially since St. Rose is only 1.5 miles away. St. Rose is also the smallest of our buildings, making it less expensive for utilities, which is something I need to take into account.

There is a possibility that the new Pastor of the Ghanaian parish may establish a Mass in English for the community. I would like to be clear that if that is the case, and you prefer to attend Mass in the St. Isaac Jogues church building, you will be attending in a different parish and you will need to register with the Ghanaian parish. Your yellow N.A.M. offertory envelopes will not come to the N.A.M. parish if you attend in St. Isaac Jogues Church.

St. Isaac Jogues bingo will move to St. Mary's and will remain on Thursday evenings. The food pantry will stay in place in St. Isaac Jogues, as well as the Foodshare truck, and will be run by the Ghanaian community. I am sure any volunteers currently helping there will be welcome to continue. This is a need in the community and needs to continue to be served.

One of the things I am most happy about is that a Catholic presence will remain in the neighborhood. St. Isaac Jogues will remain a Catholic church, will remain my home church, and the building and property still belongs to us. We are giving an opportunity to our Ghanaian brothers and sisters to bring to reality a vision that Bishop Joseph Osei-Bonsu of the Konogo-Mampong Diocese in Ghana had 20 years ago, to have a vibrant Ghanaian Catholic ministry that could thrive in East Hartford, Connecticut.

Again, I am so happy to be back in the North American Martyrs Parish, with so many familiar faces in the pews. This is a big change for us, and I want the transition to run as smooth as possible for both parishes. My door is always open. Please don't hesitate to stop in, and I will be happy to answer your questions.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy E. Ryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Reverend Timothy E. Ryan
Administrator