

Parishioners' Corner

Live-streaming Mass



As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020, many parishes, including ours, began offering live-streaming Masses. Below is how it happened here...

Though the church was closed to the public during the early COVID-19 days, Masses continued to be offered. Then pastor, Father Mike Grisolano, thought it would be a good idea to provide parishioners the opportunity to view Mass live from their homes – or to view the stream later when convenient. He furnished his phone and computer and livestreamed his Masses in the empty church. Little did we know when

the first livestreams were launched that there were technical challenges that awaited and that would need to be overcome.

Since the church did not have an internet connection, a wireless connection had been used from the network located in the school building. However, this distant signal was weak, unstable and thus could not provide the reliable connection required to sustain a video.

Another issue was the camera. The built-in laptop camera was initially used. Though excellent for a Zoom call, it is limited in quality and functionality. The laptop's built-in microphone delivered a low-quality audio experience because those speaking were often some distance away from the laptop.

The stage was now set. Several parishioners were recruited and eagerly stepped up, bringing with them their knowledge and expertise and addressed the various challenges.

To supply the church internet connectivity, a network cable was routed into the church from the school's network equipment room through underground tunnels, and finally guided to a closet in the church's sanctuary. The result was solid, high-speed network connectivity for the church. (This was later extended to the rectory and gym buildings.)

An audio cable was direct-connected from the church's master audio system to the streaming laptop. In addition, Father Mike was able to get his personal laptop returned as a dedicated computer was purchased. What's more, a dedicated camera and tripod were donated. And then a permanent location for the laptop and camera was selected. The outcome, after several weeks, was a huge improvement in quality and stability.

Over the next several months, everything would be fine-tuned. A professional sound mixing board was implemented to significantly increase the quality of the audio feed. Lastly, the various cables (power/network/audio) were all re-routed to protect them from foot traffic.

The church re-opened at the end of June 2020, initially with two weekend Masses and many restrictions, including a mandatory sign-up, masking, and six feet of "social distancing." Attendance was limited to 110 people at each of the two Masses. Though the church was "opened up," the livestreaming continued, and still does to this day.

While Jerry Nelson and I have tended to this ministry, we would welcome anyone who would be interested in assisting to ensure all the weekends are streamed. No experience needed! Some of the past streams have had just a handful of viewers, while others have been into the 100's!

Thanks to those who assisted in making our streaming possible: Tom Handrigan, Audrey Salerno, Mark Wozniczka, Steve Stemper, Tim Stemper, Gordon Hawkes, Delia O'Connor, and Bob and Joe at Academic Technical Services.

Current and past livestreams are available through the parish's You Tube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@st.elizabethofthetrinitypa2652/featured> or you can search www.youtube.com by entering "St. Elizabeth of the Trinity Parish"

If you absolutely, positively cannot attend Mass in person, our livestream IS the next best thing to being there!

George VanDurme