

LOOKING THROUGH STAINED GLASS



A Column by Fr. Tom

Mass = The Highest Form of Prayer in the Church

As we head into the Easter Season and see the Apostles beginning to take an active role in ministry, it makes sense for us to return to our Ministry Spotlights in this column. Prior to Lent, we explored our Social Outreach, Education and Prayer Ministries. At this point, let us turn to our Liturgical Ministries.

As with so many of our ministries, many of our Liturgical Ministries have had to scale back due to the Coronavirus pandemic. We have slowly been adding to our Liturgical Ministries as we can safely do so, while still following government and diocesan guidelines and restrictions.

Before we move on to discuss the various Liturgical Ministries, I want to give a personal note of gratitude to our Deacons, Deacon Frank Bandy and Deacon Greg Quinn. During the last year, they both took on larger roles in the Liturgy, in order to keep our parishioners safe. They, and the priests who assist here, have done a great job of accepting and working within the guidelines and restrictions, so that everyone will not only be safe but also feel safe as they join us for Mass.

Also, many thanks go to the staff of St. Paul of the Cross who helped to figure out how we could keep everyone safe here, and then put those practices into place. I am so blessed to minister with such great people, who care so much about our Parish and especially about our parishioners.

As we have moved through the various stages of "opening back up again," I am grateful that so many

of you have returned to the practice of your faith by attending Mass. As we are able to become more comfortable with attending Mass together again, it has been a pleasure to see so many people returning to St. Paul of the Cross. Even through masked faces, we can tell that so many of you are smiling at returning to our community, and especially at the fact that you are able to receive the Eucharist again – something which is impossible in the "virtual world."

We have been both praying for and working toward allowing more participation in the Mass from all of our faithful parishioners, especially in the Liturgical Ministries. What are some of these ministries? You may remember that we first introduced our Liturgical Ministries this way, "our Liturgical Ministries include our Altar Servers, Altar Society, Children's Liturgy, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Lectors, Music Ministries, Sacristans, Ushers, and Welcome Ministry. Each of these ministries has a special role to play in our daily and weekend Masses." [*Looking Through Stained Glass*, "There Is Something for Everyone", Sept. 6, 2020]

Over the next few weeks, we will explore these ministries, the role they play, and how you can be a part of them, both now and in the future.

