

JMJ

Dear Parishioners,

This second week of Lent we will again look at why we are praying the Mass the way we are here at Saint Mary’s. Mass celebrated versus populum has the danger of putting the gathered community and the priest himself, instead of the Eucharist, as the center of worship. At its worst, a cult of personality can be built up around whichever priest “presider” is funniest and most effusive. Like a comedian playing to an audience, the laughter of the congregation at his quirks and eccentricities can even build up a certain clerical narcissism within himself. The celebration of Mass versus populum places the priest front and center, with all of his eccentricities on display. Even priests such as myself who make every effort to celebrate Mass versus populum with a staidness and sobriety easily succumb to its inherent deficiencies. In fact, celebrating the Mass versus populum is just as distracting to the congregation as it is to the priest.

While celebrating Mass ad orientem does not immediately cure every moment of distraction, it provides a concrete step in reorienting the focus of the Mass. It allows for a certain amount of anonymity for the priest, restoring the importance of what he does rather than who he is. By returning the focus to the Eucharist, ad orientem worship also restores a sense of the sacred to the Mass.

Recalling Aristotle’s definition of a slave as a “living tool,” Msgr. Ronald Knox encouraged this imagery when thinking of the priest: “[T]hat is what the priest is, a living tool of Jesus Christ. He lends his hands, to be Christ’s hands, his voice, to be Christ’s voice, his thoughts, to be Christ’s thoughts; there is, there should be, nothing of himself in [the Mass] from first to last.” Msgr. Knox was right in asserting that the Mass should never be subject to the vagaries or whims of the individual priest:

*Non-Catholics who come to our churches complain sometimes, don’t they, that the ceremonies of the Mass seem so lifeless, so mechanical. But you see, they ought to be mechanical. What the visitor is watching, so uncomprehendingly, is not a man, it is a living tool; it turns this way and that, bends, straightens itself, kneels, gesticulates, all in obedience to the orders given to it—Christ’s orders, not ours. We do not expect eccentricities from a tool, the tool of Christ.*

In his analysis of the writings of Evelyn Waugh, Fr. Ian Ker notes many similarities between Waugh’s and Knox’s conception of the Catholic priesthood. In Waugh’s masterpiece *Brideshead Revisited*, when the Catholic aristocratic Marchmain family is visited by Father Mackay, their parish priest, Ker explains that in performing the sacraments, Father Mackay “doesn’t use any special kind of religious voice; indeed, he does things rather than utters words; he is businesslike, matter-of-fact, and practical.... [And yet] the simple things he does—with his hands—are supernatural, for he is a divine craftsman: he knows his trade and does what he has to do in accordance with its rules, simply and without fuss.”

At another instance in the novel, a priest celebrating Mass for the family is described as being “bland.” Ker sees two reasons behind this description: “the desire, first, to stress that the job the priest does has nothing to do with his own personal charisma, as the personality of the craftsman is irrelevant to the execution of his craft, and second, to suggest the self-confidence that results from the serenity of knowing that there is an order in the world and knowing what it is.”

That the priest is at once a living tool and a craftsman reminds us that what the priest does and says at Mass is more important than how he does or says it. As he ascends the steps of the altar to offer the Sacrifice of the Mass he is no longer himself. We would never ask a neurosurgeon why he doesn’t smile while performing brain surgery or a chemist why he doesn’t crack a joke while taking measurements. This is because the dignity and gravity of what they are doing or creating demands concentration, precision, and reflection. The same demands are made of the priest when he celebrates Mass.

Unfortunately, the celebration of Mass versus populum is one of the contributing factors to the loss of the sense of the sacred. This loss has created in the minds of many Catholics an expectation of superficial externals at the Mass. The value and true meaning of ad orientem worship is perfectly articulated by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*:

*[A] common turning to the east during the Eucharistic Prayer remains essential. This is not a case of doing something accidental, but of what is essential. Looking at the priest has no importance. What matters is looking together at the Lord. It is not now a question of dialogue but of common worship, of setting off toward the One who is to come. What corresponds with the reality of what is happening is not the closed circle but the common movement forward, expressed in a common direction for prayer.*

It is this common orientation toward the Lord that can help to free us from the distractions and concerns of daily life so that we might afford to God the worship that he rightly deserves.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Father Newcomb

***Liturgical Ministers for March 18/19, 2017***

MASS	LECTOR	MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION	ALTAR SERVERS
4:00PM	J. SMITH	K. BOBISH, W. PONDS, A. WITKOWSKI	E. WITKOWKI, A. WITKOWSKI, S. PHILLIPS
8:30AM	M. LATINI	T. CALVARIO, J. HENDRICK, W. CARMODY	D. TRUJILLO, E. TRUJILLO, A. TRUJILLO
11:30AM	M. ESLING	M. ADAMCIK, B. DENNINGTON, T. MARION	Z. ADAMCIK, M. LAUTURE, K. EPPS

St. Mary's will be participating in the **40 Day for Life** on Saturday, March 25th. Nancy Smith will be taking sign-ups this weekend after all masses and next weekend.

Fr. Newcomb will be having discussions on Symbolon Part II in the Parish Office Building in the Saint Peter and Saint Paul Meeting Room @ 6:30pm the following Mondays:

- 13 March** Session 5: Matrimony & Holy Orders
- 27 March** Session 6: A Catholic Moral Vision ; **3 April** Session 7: A Love that Lasts
- 17 April** Session 8: A Love that Lasts ; **24 April** Session 9: Catholic Social Teaching
- 1 May** Session 10: Catholic Social Teaching

**Little Lambs Pasta and Meatball Dinner Orders 2017**

#of Adult Tickets \_\_\_ x \$8.00 = \$\_\_\_\_\_ Family  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 # of Child Tickets \_\_\_ x \$5.00 = \$\_\_\_\_\_ Contact  
 Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Total = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Saturday, March 18th 4:30-6:30pm**



**Tea Time is Spring Time**  
 Step back in time & join *Court Madonna's Garden* for an afternoon of tea and conversation.  
**Date:** Saturday, April 1st  
**Time:** 12pm to 2:30pm  
**Donation:** \$10 Ladies \$5 young ladies  
 Please RSVP to Barbara 856-2624

**St. Mary's Church  
 5th Annual Fish and Chips Dinner  
 Friday, April 7th**

Dinner available from 4:30p.m. to 6:45p.m.  
 In the Church Hall (Eat-In or Take-Out)

**Fish and Chips Dinner Pricing**  
 \$13.00 per adult - \$6.00 per child\*

Dinner consists of breaded pieces of fish, french fries, coleslaw and refreshments

(\*Child is considered 12 years old and under)

**Join us for Stations of the Cross at 7:00 p.m.**

Please make checks payable to **St. Mary's Church**  
 Return the bottom portion of this form, with payment to the parish office or in the offering basket at Mass

**By April 1st/2nd**

**We must confirm a count with Tastefully British by this date.  
 Dinners are non-refundable.**

**Fish and Chips Dinner Ticket Orders 2017**

#of Adult Tickets \_\_\_ x \$13.00 = \$\_\_\_\_\_

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Child Tickets \_\_\_ x \$6.00 = \$\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Total = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- # of Eat-In Dinners** \_\_\_\_\_
- # of Take-Out Dinners** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pick-up your tickets at the door the night of the dinner.**

**FUN RAISER Wine Tasting**

**Friday, April 28th** from 6pm to 9pm in the church hall. Tickets \$20.  
 Contact Cheryl 856-8793 or  
 Barbara 856-4801. Tickets also available at the parish office.

**ANNOUNCED MASSES**

- Monday, March 13**  
9:00am Michael Kelly, by Gloria and Ellis Mosher
- Tuesday, March 14**  
9:00am Ida Lissner, by Patricia Meloi Furlong  
Tom Earley, by Bob and Dianna Witherow
- Wednesday, March 15**  
9:00am Kevin Cunningham, by Mary Wohlscheid  
Donald DeLeo, by Dan and Theresa Kavanagh
- Thursday, March 16**  
9:00am Stephanie Mueller, by Hannelore Kucher
- Saturday, March 18**  
4:00pm Raymond Gansarski, by the family
- Sunday, March 19**  
8:30am The parishioners of St. Mary's  
Josef Kucher, by the Prager family  
11:30am William Quinn, by Amelia Quinn



*The Sanctuary Lamp will burn brightly this week in memory of Thomas Earley, by Guy and Kathy Barnes.*

**PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:** Joann Wilcox, Nick Moscatiello, Jackie Mundy, Theresa Fuller, Donald Wolff, Walter Szapkowicz, Frances Brennan, Jose Ramos, Aedan Roach, Jim Roach, Robyn Radzikowski, Joseph Brennan, Betty Brennan, Richard Samek, Sandy Osbourne, John McKeon, William Lincoln, Michael Barnes, Jeanine Lincoln, Mary Platania, Angela Grillo, Ruth Lewis, Anthony Medaglia, Maureen Hildebrandt, Robert Cinerar, Andrea Fedoruk, Angela Portella, Pauline Portella, Steve Wilkinson, Grace Maillet, Joseph Cox, William Gaide, Jacqueline Hamilton, Ashley Avella, Christina Greeves, Amelia Quinn, Marianne Ripel, Joseph Livingston, Donna Bancala, Teddy Mead, Pat Arnold, Angela Lillo, Pat Muller, Debi Cotugno, Tom Earley, Conner McHugh, Bobby Fett, Sue Arnold, Dennis Perrin, Josephine Fiorillo, Carol Tufano, Jacqueline Leggett, David M. Phillips, Laney Carnahan, Elizabeth Startup Jones, Lisa Baisley, Scott Smith, Jim Muller, Charles Hildebrandt, Joe Formisano, Theresa Kavanagh, Jim Bisardi, and Jerome Smith.

**Sick List Update**  
 Please maintain/remove/add  
 (Due by March 20th )

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G.E.M.S. will be selling Palm Crosses for \$10 each. Please see the children after all Masses soon or call the parish office.



The collection for March 4/5 was \$5,269.50  
 Thank you for your continued generosity.