



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

DEAR PARISH FAMILY

Happy Anniversary! It has been just over one year since I came to St. Elizabeth. I am very happy, because with the recent parish re-alignments, many young priests were living out of boxes due to the frequency of moves. It's nice to be able to put down roots and settle down for a change.

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY

Happy Fourth of July! Welcome to any visitors and family members who are in the area for the holiday.

Please remember to pray for our civic leaders, first responders, and military personnel. Our continued freedom is paid for by the service and sacrifice of many people.

In that sense, we are dependent not only on those who serve but on God's abundant graces. The English poet John Donne said, "No man is an island." Let us reflect on that in our prayers this week.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Construction and destruction has begun. We're finally making visible progress. This week we will be widening the sidewalks and putting new parking in front of the church.

We can still use your help in making our financial goal. Cost overruns are common in these projects, and it would be helpful if we could exceed in fund raising, too!

Thank you to everyone who has helped us with our construction project.

Those who have contributed financially, Finance Council members, as well as those whose hard work hauled off trees, brush, and rocks.

MONTH OF THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

The month of July is dedicated to the Precious Blood of Jesus. The feast day of July 1 was instituted in 1849 by Pius IX, but the devotion is as old as Christianity itself.

The early Fathers say that the Church was born from the pierced side of Christ, and that the sacraments were brought forth through His Blood.

To understand the meaning of the Precious Blood we must get some comprehension of the gravity of sin, of the awfulness of offending God; because it required the Blood of the Son of God to forgive those sins. Sadly, we find ourselves in an era where sin has become too commonplace.

PRAYERS AND REMEMBRANCE

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Ed Smith. His memorial Mass was in June. We offer our prayers and condolences to his family.

SUMMER MASS SCHEDULE

Throughout July, our Mass schedule will include a 7:00 am early Sunday Mass for workers, farmers and travelers. This is in addition to our usual Saturday 5:00 pm and Sunday 10:00 am Masses.

During the week, we will have Mass on Thursday at 8:30 am. In August we will resume Mass on both

Wednesday and Thursday. And in September, we will return to our usual three weekday Masses on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

If you're looking for something to do when the kids get bored at home, weekday Mass is an opportunity to live your faith with your children in addition to the Sunday weekend Mass obligation.

DEBT RETIREMENT

Thank you to those who have been making contributions to our Debt Retirement fund. With people away during the summer, our Sunday collections may not meet our budgeted needs. Please help us pay our past-due bills and our employee's compensation and benefits!

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTRY

The diocese is sponsoring opportunities for formation for those involved as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. The bishop desires that everyone involved – whether on weekend or weekday liturgies, or if you bring Communion to the sick – attend one of these sessions.

If you haven't received the schedule of formation sessions in the mail, please call the parish office.

PLEASE PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Don't take a vacation from God. Prayer and Mass are year-round opportunities to grow in your faith! Please pray for each other, and me!

Fr. David



SINGING AT MASS AND SINGING THE MASS

Saint Augustine recounts in his autobiography, *Confessions*, an experience he had during the singing of the Mass: *“How I wept, deeply moved by your hymns, songs, and the voices that echoed through your Church! What emotion I experienced in them! Those sounds flowed into my ears, distilling the truth in my heart. A feeling of devotion surged within me, and tears streamed down my face – tears that did me good”*.

AT MASS, CHRIST SINGS TO THE FATHER

The Catechism of the Catholic Church paragraph 1157 makes a direct reference to Saint Augustine’s experience when it teaches that the music and songs of the liturgy *“participate in the purpose of the liturgical words and actions: the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful.”*

The Mass itself is a song; it is meant to be sung. Recall that the Gospels only tell us of one time when Jesus sings: when He institutes the Holy Eucharist. We should not be surprised, then, that Christ sings when He institutes the the Mass, and that for the vast majority of the past 2,000 years, the various parts of the Mass have been sung by priests and lay faithful. The Second Vatican Council strongly encouraged a rediscovery of the ancient concept of singing the Mass as *“a necessary [and] integral part of solemn liturgy”*. The Mass is most itself when it is sung.

This recent re-discovery of singing the Mass did not begin with Vatican II. Following the liturgical movement that stretches back to before Pope Saint Pius X in 1903, Pope Pius XII wrote in 1955, *“The dignity and lofty purpose of sacred music consists in the fact that its lovely melodies and splendor beautify and embellish the voices of the priest who offers Mass and of the Christian people who praise the Sovereign God”*.

In other words, sung liturgical prayer more effectively reveals the mystery of the Liturgy as well as more easily accomplishes its heavenly purposes. In this way, sung liturgy is a revelation of Christ as well as a vehicle our for profound participation in Christ’s saving work.

WHAT WE SING AT MASS

The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* describes the importance of singing in the sacred liturgy and offers practical considerations so that *“in the choosing of the parts [of the Mass] actually to be sung, preference is to be given to those that are of greater importance and especially to those which are to be sung by the Priest or the Deacon or a reader, with the people replying, or by the Priest and people together.”*

Other instructions divide the parts to be sung in the Mass into three degrees so to direct *“the faithful toward an ever greater participation in the singing”*.

- The first degree is the Order of the Mass. That is, the chants sung in dialogue between the priest and the people.
- The second degree consists essentially of the Ordinary of the Mass: Lord have mercy, Glory to God, Creed, Holy Holy, and Lamb of God..
- The third degree consists essentially of the chants sung at the Entrance, Offertory, and Communion processions, and the Responsorial Psalm and Alleluia (or Gospel Acclamation) with its verse before the Gospel.

OUR VOICES RAISED WITH CHRIST

At Mass our souls should be drawn to the beauty of Christ, who invites us into His unending song of love to God the Father.