



FROM THE DESK OF FR. MIKE

The Sacred Triduum are the three holy days – Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday are now just days away. The Triduum is the bridge that unites our Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving with the joy shared and celebrated throughout the fifty days of the Easter season. You may have heard the phrase, “40 – 3 – 50”. The phrase is the brief way of reminding ourselves of forty days of preparing, three days of remembering and fifty days of living Paschal joy.

Every Holy Thursday we celebrate the Mass of the Lord’s Supper, the institution of the Eucharist. The following reflection was written by one of our parishioners, Ernie Hildebrand. He wrote this reflection back in 2013 when he was serving the parishioners of Prince of Peace Parish in Lake Villa as their Music Minister. Ernie died on March 2 of this year. This reflection was also part of the worship aid for his funeral that was celebrated at St. Mary’s last month.

“We members of the Parish Staff are asked to share our thoughts about the meaning of the Mass, in this, The Year of the Mass. The natural result of being at Mass is that not only do we participate in celebrating the Eucharist, but as a result, we experience a strong sense of spiritual unity with God and togetherness with each other.

This is what the Mass evokes in me. Essentially it is the same community worship that dates back centuries to Jesus and his disciples., As we reply, “And with your Spirit,” we launch an evolving mountain of scriptural readings and psalms interwoven by prayers. Many of these prayers of adoration and petition are of such soaring, poetical beauty that they seem to have no earthly origin. I believe that is because they are inspirations of the Holy Spirit.

As the Spirit speaks to us we know and savor the presence of each other. Add some music, and we can be lifted somewhat sublimely above the mundane into an envelope of spiritual love for which there really is no match in our – or anyone else’s – other life experiences.

The coming together of all of these components is called Liturgy and it is centered on the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. It is what gives unique meaning and richness to Catholic worship.

Century by century, the words of the Mass have been nurtured by the beauty of languages and diverse musical styles. Those of us with innermost thoughts and prayers that our hearts might be aching to express might find Gregorian chant or multi-part music or African marching songs the best way to say what we mean. That’s the beauty of the Mass liturgical experience.

The Mass is a communal happening that has maintained its Eucharistic essence. It began in simple dwellings with a few people united and comforted by each other’s presence and love for Jesus. Over the years it became more formalized and moved to grand churches where its prayers were said for us in Latin by the priest. We were in the pews following along with our heads in our personal missals that translated the words.

The Mass is no longer Latin-bound but flourishes in Swahili, English, and all other expressions of human communication. Now, we and the presider speak and sing our worship in our own languages.

Catholic Liturgy with its diverse, yet understandable, expressions of words and thoughts is the essence of the very universe that is the Church. It is, in the very best sense of a word of today: awesome!

I have liturgical music responsibilities within the parish. But on a personal level, just to be part of the words and music of the Mass is a gift which I gratefully consider a treasure. It refreshes my soul.”

[Written by Ernie Hildebrand - January 22, 2013]

May Ernie now share in the heavenly banquet accented by the choirs of angels for all eternity.

We will be welcoming family members, friends, and parishioners to celebrate Jesus’ resurrection on Easter Sunday. Please note the schedule of Masses for Easter this year. Thanks to all those who are able to support the parish financially this Easter.

May God bless you with a spiritual, prayerful, and reflective Holy Week,

Fr. Mike Naciri