

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – OCTOBER 8, 2017

Dear Parishioners and Families,

Today's reading from Isaiah and the Gospel reading are at least 800 years apart in composition. But the theme is almost the same, a vineyard that requires work but must achieve results. The vineyard represents the people of Israel and in our time ourselves. Each one of us asks ourselves about the spiritual results of our life so far.

St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians frames that answer most positively. He suggests we do not focus and nurse our mistakes, our hurts, our failures. He says so clearly to the Philippians that we should focus on good things: those things that are honorable, just, pure, lovely, gracious, and worthy of praise. When you consider what spiritual fruits you have produced in your life with yourselves and others, follow Paul's advice. If you focus on injuries, enmities, and other such things, you become an unattractive and moody person. Paul ends with the same positive advice: keep on doing what has worked well and the God of Peace will be with you.

Counting Parishioners at Mass

Last week I informed you that we are required to note the number of people and children attending Mass each weekend during October. At the same time we are keeping count of the number of envelopes and online givers each week. We are not so concerned with the amount of money in the envelopes or online giving, as with the number. We would like to see our number of envelopes and online givers go significantly above 200. This is also important for those who have children attending our school because the envelopes and online giving are the only ways we can determine if one is an active parishioner. This material goes to the Diocese but also helps us here on our positive growth.

Seeking to Allow Parishioners to Have Direct Intinction into a Cup

For almost a decade I have been concerned for people receiving from the same cup especially during seasons of flu and for older people whose immune system is compromised or weakened. Accordingly, I have sent to Bishop Murry a proposal packet that asks him to take this matter up with the Bishop's Conference. I know the church moves slowly but unless someone starts, it moves even more slowly. There have been multiple changes in the way we receive Communion over the years and this is not in any sense revolutionary. I have also sent a copy of the precis to Cardinal DiNardo, the head of the Bishops Conference. The precis follows.

To: Bishop George V. Murry, S.J.

From: Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.

RE: Receiving the Eucharist

Precis

*Multiple people drinking out of the same Cup at the Eucharist poses a documented health concern, inhibits more people from receiving Communion under both species, and is contrary to the US custom of how people eat and drink. These difficulties are addressed by permitting the Faithful to dip their hosts in a shallow cup (intinction). This Papacy suggests that the Bishops Conference take issues up and make requests to the Vatican. This request is consonant with Pope Francis's **Moto Proprio** giving more latitude to Bishop's Conferences to modify liturgical language.*

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.
October 8, 2017