

From the Pastor's Desk

Our Parish “Cohort”: By the beginning of February we will receive from the Diocese their recommendation of which other parishes will be our “cohort.” Basically, a cohort is a group of about three parishes or so who will do more things together. We submitted our own suggestions as to which parishes would work well with us, and we’ll be able to give feedback to the Diocese regarding their recommendation. Thanks to all who turned in a parish survey; these will be very helpful to our core team as we continue the work of evaluating our parish.



Cantor Workshop February 6th: The New Roman Missal has made a number of changes to the role of music in the liturgy, and so we’ll have a workshop for cantors and choir members on Monday February 6th at 7 pm in church. Here are some of the topics we’ll address: *Who, according to the Church, is the primary minister of music at Mass? What is the singing of the “Alleluia” supposed to accompany? What is the most important song at every weekend liturgy? How will our new parish lectern affect the singing of the “Alleluia?” Why do we have to use the assigned psalm on the weekend? What has happened to post-Communion meditation songs? Which parts of the Mass, if they are not sung, are to be omitted? What unique adjustments are needed when the music ministers are located behind the people?* The Bishop has asked that parishes use the arrival of the new Roman Missal as an incentive for parishes to improve the way we pray the Mass, and this workshop will enable us to look not only at new music directives, but at current parish procedures as well.



Time And Talent Survey: Here’s some food for thought: lectors tell me that we need more lectors. Ushers tell me that we need more ushers. Our Music Director has said that we need more cantors. And we’re still running short of Eucharistic Ministers on the weekend. A Time & Talent Survey is designed for people in the parish to reflect on how they might give of their time

and their talent. A parish of this size has sufficient people to fill every ministry needed for weekend Masses, sacramental and religious education programs, and all other parish ministries. But it often happens in parishes that many people assume that others will always step forward. Thus a great number of parishioners end up not offering themselves to help in these roles. Our Time & Talent Survey is part of our life of stewardship, and is an excellent way to give back some of our time to God.



An Open Letter to Fallen-Away Catholics: Last weekend at Mass I read a letter to Catholics who do not come to Mass regularly, or who do not come at all. On the other side of this page is the full text of that letter, along with a website address called Catholics Come Home. Please share it with anyone you wish.

My dear friends,

I can only guess at your reasons for not coming to church regularly, or not coming to church at all. My first thought is that you were hurt by the Church: by the institution itself, or by one of its priests or other representatives. That you had an experience that was deeply hurtful and totally uncalled for. Then again, you may have slowly drifted away from the Church because of how going to Mass made you feel. Perhaps you left Mass feeling worse about yourself than when you arrived. That you were always being told how sinful you were. Or you may have found what you were looking for elsewhere, outside the Church that you attended when you were little. There are many reasons why Catholics don't go to Mass; I can only guess at yours.

But your reason for not coming is not the point of this letter. I'm not writing to argue against your reason for not coming to Mass. I'm also not writing to explain the reasons why I think it's important to come to Mass. This letter is simply an invitation: Come and see. Try us again.

Maybe this time you will find in the Church what you were looking for all along, and find yourself happily drinking in some of its graces. Maybe this time you will find it in you to forgive the Church for its flaws, and perhaps even see that some of its flaws are flaws you share. Maybe this time you will see in the Church what the Lord saw in it: an imperfect body made up of people like you and me, sometimes full of sin and full of ourselves, but also full of grace and full of Christ, big-hearted and generous. A group of men, women, and children worth belonging to and walking with. Because in the end, we follow a sandal-wearing, bearded carpenter who dies no more, and whose invitation given on the shores of Galilee still remains wide open after all these years:

“Come and see.”

Fa. Patch

