

Father's Notes

November 10, 2024

Given that these Father's Notes are distributed to two different parishes, I've wondered about how to address matters that pertain more (or only) to one parish. As I thought about it, because our parishes are grouped as a family, there's value in parishioners from either parish being better apprised of what goes on at the other.

At St. Philomena, we are in the process of finding a successor for our organist (for Masses in English). An ad has been posted by the Seattle Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. In the meantime, I'm working on interim solutions. While on occasion it may be necessary (and in some ways, nice!) for all of us to sing unaccompanied, I suspect most of us prefer not to do that indefinitely! Thanks for your patience, and please pray for the right person to find their way to us. More to come.

On a different note, Father Ben and I meet regularly, and one of the things we've discussed is that he will have oversight of liturgical ministries at St. Philomena. This will help to ensure we have recruiting and occasional (re)trainings for these ministries. One of the things I cited at the Sunday morning Masses at St. Philomena is the need for more readers.

It would be better to have two readers scheduled for every Sunday Mass (Spanish and English). It's a powerful privilege to be able to proclaim the Word of God in the setting of the Mass, to help prepare the people of God to receive the Eucharist. God gave you a voice to speak His Word—please share that gift with us. Another reason it can be helpful to have two readers for a Mass is that in the exceptional circumstance that one is sick, the other can do both readings.

At our English Masses, our plan is to have a greeting and any weekly announcements to occur before Mass (at the time Mass is scheduled to begin, prior to the Entrance Hymn). This will be scripted, not extemporaneous, and would be done by the person who proclaims the first reading. I realize that having readings at the beginning will be an adjustment. The reason for doing it this way is because I believe it more meaningful to limit announcements at the end of Mass, when we have just received the Eucharist, to focus more on the Eucharist and our call to go into the world as Eucharistic people.

To be a reader at Mass, you need to have received First Holy Communion (young folks, please hear that!), and to be open to learning how to project your voice (we'll teach you!). Please pray about it and let me know if it would be helpful to discuss. Thanks for considering it.



Father Todd O. Strange (*Pastor*)

+ St. Philomena Parish & School (*Des Moines, WA*)

+ St. Thomas Parish (*Tukwila, WA*)