

Since Fr. Vinner and I were assigned to Our Lady Queen of Heaven, we've made a few liturgical changes in the way that the liturgy unfolds. Initially, we moved the altar from the side to the middle. If you remember, I asked the congregation about it and we received broad-based support for the move. It seems to have worked quite well as the design of the church itself and the sanctuary seems to fit having the altar central in the sanctuary.

Recently we made a few changes based on some input from those who sit on the north side of the sanctuary. It seems that views from that section of the church were frequently blocked in their sightlines from the altar servers and the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Initially we moved the Eucharistic Ministers behind the altar that resolved the sightline issues.

After a few weeks of experience, it became obvious to us (Fr. Vinner, Joan Mikulski, Jay Flores- our altar server coordinator- and myself) that the time it took for the servers to cross the sanctuary to present the missal to Fr. Vinner was taking far too long. So we decided to move the altar servers behind the presider/diaconal chairs). This made it far easier to present the missal and raised the importance of the servers in their role in the liturgy minimizing the amount of movement in the sanctuary.

We also decided to upgrade the importance of the procession of the Book of the Gospels, using the candles with a brief procession to the ambo. That decision eliminated the previous practice of the single candle that was located next to the ambo. It seemed, from my perspective to be, in a sense, a substitute for the paschal candle that would be inappropriate. The paschal candle has significant baptismal and Easter significance and other candles should not detract from it.

These changes while minor are important. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch" (CCC 1324).

It is my hope that we continue to celebrate the liturgy reverently every time we gather as a community. Hearing and welcoming God's Word in the Sacred Scriptures, receiving his Body and Blood in communion, experiencing Christ in one another and in the action of our priest is a priority.

I appreciate your involvement in our community. We can always use more altar servers more readers, more ushers, more extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, and more greeters. Please contact the parish office if you are interested. We need you!

In God's great love, hope, and mercy,

Deacon Jim