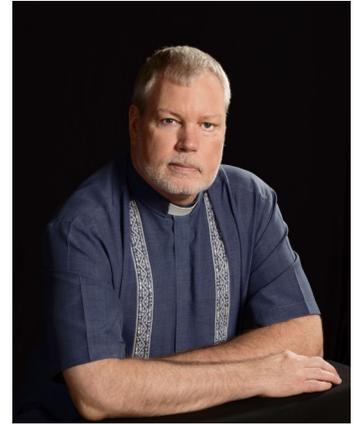




Pastor's Page



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It has come to my attention that some of our parishioners have voiced concerns about aspects of the way Mass is being celebrated at OLG, especially since these aspects seem new to OLG and differ from the way Mass was celebrated until relatively recently. I am NOT referring here to the changes due to the COVID pandemic—e. g., mask wearing, social distancing and withholding the Communion cup from the laity. These changes are solely in an effort to prevent and minimize risks of transmitting the coronavirus at our liturgies and are simply in keeping with instructions that come from archdiocesan and/or civil authorities.

The changes in the Mass to which I am referring here pertain to such practices as 1) kneeling for the Eucharistic Prayer—that is from the end of the *Holy, Holy, Holy (Sanctus)* through the completion of the *Great Amen* that ends the Eucharistic Prayer—and 2) the practice of kneeling after the *Fraction Rite/Lamb of God* until the distribution of Holy Communion. In both these cases, the practice that was customary at OLG prior to the start of this past Advent season (December 2020) was for people to stand. Kneeling for these parts of the Mass is novel experience for most of our parishioners, I suspect.

These changes stem from two factors. The first is the use of the Third Edition of the *Roman Missal*, the book containing all the prayers and instructions for how the Mass is to be celebrated. This Third Edition of the *Roman Missal* first began to be used amongst English-speaking Catholics—e. g., Catholics in Ireland, England, Australia and the USA—on the First Sunday of Advent 2011. The instruction in this “new” Roman Missal specifically called for people to kneel during these two parts of the Mass, the Eucharistic Prayer and the period following the Lamb of God until the giving of Holy Communion. However, it also instructed that the Diocesan Bishop should have final authority over what posture should be adopted—kneeling or standing—for the period following the Lamb of God.

I was a bit surprised when I came to OLG in July 2019 and saw that folks were standing during the Eucharistic Prayer, as the practice of kneeling had by then been a uniform practice in our archdiocese for nearly eight years. I was told that this change had not yet been introduced at OLG. Then, soon after our current Archbishop, the Most Reverend Paul Etienne, came to Seattle, he published a pastoral letter on the Mass and declared a special Year of the Eucharist. In his pastoral letter, Archbishop Etienne called all pastors to follow the instructions in the Roman Missal, including that of having people kneel during the Eucharistic Prayer and following the Fraction Rite/Lamb of God. This seemed a fitting opportunity to bring the practices at OLG into uniformity with the Archdiocesan-wide practices pertaining to these aspects of the Mass. This is why, starting in Advent 2020, these practices became the “new” norm for us at OLG.

Easter blessings to all,

Fr. Kevin