

Notes from the Music & Liturgy Guy

Liturgical Reminders

As we enter the Christmas season, please remember the following:

- 1) **Altar Servers** ó ***We have a serious problem right now with fidgeting!*** Servers are nervous and want something to keep their hands occupied, so they are doing all kinds of horribly distracting thingsô and the congregation is being horribly distracted. Remember the training sessionsô if you draw attention to yourself, then the focus is no longer on Christ and the Mass. If you fold your hands in front of you, you will set a good example of reverence for the congregation (remember, that's our #1 goal) and you will give your hands something to do. I don't want to remove people from the rotation, but if I continue to receive complaints, then I may have to consider this.
- 2) **Readers** ó ***Be absolutely certain that the Lectionary is present, open to the right page, and that you are prepared.*** Some Masses have various options for the Readings, and I am not always informed in advance regarding which priests are using which Readings. If you are ever unsure, ask before Mass, that way you aren't forcing the priest to re-tool his homily on the fly. That usually doesn't go over well!
- 3) **Hospitality Ministers** ó ***(a) As we have many visitors over the Christmas season, please put your best foot forward and be the helpful bunch that you are, even when it's difficult.*** Yes, we are there to keep order and direct people smoothly, but you are also a large portion of our pastoral outreach to the assembly. Welcome everyone as you would welcome Christ and try to be understanding with those who need extra care or have difficult circumstances. ***(b) Don't forget to turn off the Cry Room amp after the last Mass.*** I'm finding this amp on quite a bit when no Mass is happening, so be careful.
- 4) **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion** –***Please remember that during the Christmas season (and all the time, really), we may have visitors who are not Catholic or not familiar with our procedures.*** You may need to keep a sharp eye so that someone doesn't catch you off-guard and cause a spill, try to ôself-communicateö via intinction, receive Communion when they haven't received First Communion, etc. At all times, however, please be as charitable as possible, as you represent both OLL and our Catholic faith. Anything unusual should be reported to the priest immediately after Mass so that they may address the issue as required.

Personal Notes

Jen and I are didn't get a chance to go home for Thanksgiving this year as we normally would, but we had a good day and a pleasant meal with her Mom. While I missed my parents, I didn't miss the traffic. I'm trying to get some extra time away after Christmas day, so if the Sign-In Sheets look a little out of sync on the last weekend of December, my apologiesô I may have printed them in advance!

On a side note, please pray for my wife extended family. A close relative was just diagnosed with Stage 4 leukemia and he is gravely ill. By the time you read this, he may have passed, in which case Jen and her Mom will be traveling to Indiana for the funeral. This has been yet another in a long string of losses for Jen's family recently, and it's additionally disheartening right before Christmas, so extra prayers would be appreciated.

As we close out the year, I want to thank everyone for the hard work and the time investment over the past months. Have we had weird things pop up that caused problems? Sure. Did we handle the weirdness the best we could? Most of the time. ;-) If we stay focused on Christ, even the small hiccups that arise can be opportunities for ministry. We just have to look for them.

May all of you have a safe, blessed, and joyous Christmas and a Christ-centered new year!