

TOGETHER

a monthly bulletin insert from the archdiocese



ARCHDIOCESE
of DUBUQUE

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MESSAGES FROM ARCHBISHOP JACKELS



24 June 2022

SUPREME COURT OVERTURNS CLAIM TO CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO ABORTION

Thanks be to God!

The US Supreme Court ruled today that “the Constitution does not confer a right to abortion. Roe and Casey are overruled, and the authority to regulate abortion is returned to the people and their elected representatives.”

It’s unclear what that means in practice, but it’s a huge step in the right direction. There’s clearly still work to be done to assure the most basic of human rights, the right to life, which is also the foundation of a just society.

Not everyone will receive this news as positive. So, while we may disagree with them about a right to abortion, we can be sensitive to their anger, and assure them that we most certainly uphold the rights and dignity of women.

And we can do that by offering women and children help during pregnancy and after childbirth, as well as by working for a just society where they can live in dignity, and by protecting the earth, so they have a place to live.

This is an answer to untold numbers of prayers and sacrifices offered for the protection of children in the womb, as well as the fruit of years of advocacy by a multitude of people; these pray-ers and workers are to be commended.

Finally, we entrust to God’s loving care all the innocent children killed by abortion, as well as the people who suffer the wounds from

having had or performed an abortion.

O God, send your Archangel Raphael to bring us Your healing.

Michael O. Jackels
Archbishop of Dubuque



July 2022

SYNOD REPORT: INSTALLMENT 1 OF 5

Thank you for your input from the synodal survey and in-person meetings. It has been summarized into a report, and sent to the USA Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The very same report has been posted on the archdiocesan website for your reading pleasure, and will be included in this monthly Together bulletin in 5 installments.

The next step is to develop an instrument to measure parish vitality, so parishioners and parishes can learn where they need to improve for the sake of parish viability.

We also need to apply the *Goldilocks Rule* to our limited number of priests: don’t assign too much to them, or too little, but just the right number of parishes and parishioners.

Pray for the success of the important work that lies ahead, and for an increase of vocations to priesthood, and for the spiritual and financial success of ArchdioceseOne.

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Introduction

In May 2021, we received the news of the Pope’s plans to carry out a multi-year, global

process for a 2023 Synod on synodality.

Jeff Henderson, Director of Pastoral Planning and Leadership Development, was chosen to lead the process locally, aided by clergy, Chancery staff, and parish ministers.

With the short notice, the still-active COVID restrictions, and needing to proceed though not sure how, we decided to do an on-line consultation, mostly by means of a survey.

The Vatican sent questions for consultation, but also allowed us to come up with our own topic. We decided on parish vitality and viability.

The purpose was to identify markers of parish vitality, raise awareness to them, and in their regard, to challenge parishioners to up their game to make their parish viable.

In January 2022, the survey was put online, and mailed to all 75K households, clergy, and religious in the archdiocese, asking for responses by the end of February 2022.

We also hosted focused, in-person meetings with 11 groups, such as youth and young adults, retirees, people from closed parishes, and immigrants.

There were 16K surveys returned, with 46K responses to open-ended questions, which were all read and summarized by volunteers, for a notable 21% participation rate!

The focus on parish vitality and viability led to discussion about the future of parishes, and the role of clergy and laity in Church leadership.

The Synod process highlighted the importance and the challenge of open, honest, and consistent communication through an accessible medium.

In that regard, most participants in the process reported that the parish bulletin is the most effective communication tool to Church members.

The entire Synod Report is available on the archdiocesan website at www.dbqarch.org/synod-report.



19 June 2022

ARCHBISHOP REFLECTS ON EUCCHARISTIC REVIVAL IN NEW DOCUMENT

This is the first section of a document by Archbishop Jackels on Eucharistic Revival.

Introduction

Our synodal exercise here identified the Sunday assembly for Holy Mass – every Sunday in every parish – as the most important marker for a vital parish community.

For that to take place every Sunday in every parish will require prayer, personal invitations and a joyful witness from our priests to inspire an increase of vocations to priesthood.

The survey respondents also identified what will enhance that worship experience: a sense of belonging, or hospitality; appropriate hymns; and a good (and short) homily.

There was concern expressed about whether worshippers ever received an explanation of why we do what we do at Mass, and of the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

All of that is nothing peculiar to our time and place. It illustrates the need for on-going formation in our holy Catholic Faith, especially on how to pray and to worship at Mass.

One of the archdiocesan ministry priorities is to enhance the experience of the Sunday assembly for Holy Mass.

Towards that end, special emphasis is placed on what are called the 4 H's – hospitality, hymns, homily, and how to (worship at Mass).

On the archdiocesan website, there is an icon entitled The Fourth H, which attempts to explain why we do what we do at Mass.

The reflections that follow are offered for the benefit of a Eucharistic revival or renewal, needed in every time and place, but maybe more so now after the COVID pandemic.

Our Holy Father Francis (May the Lord

preserve him) often organizes his comments around “tres palabras,” or 3 points.

That schema serves well for comments on the Eucharist, as there can be said to be 3 Eucharistic moments: Worship at Holy Mass, the Consecration, and Holy Communion.

Worship at Holy Mass

The Third Commandment tells us to keep one day a week holy. The Jews do that on Saturday. Catholics do it on Sunday, to honor the day Jesus rose from the dead.

We keep Sunday holy by not working (unless we really have to), by doing good deeds, and by worship at Mass, either after 4 pm on Saturday, or any time on Sunday.

The heart of our worship at Mass involves gift-giving between God and ourselves; in fact, “the holy exchange of gifts” is a traditional way of referring to the Mass.

In the first part of Mass called the Liturgy of the Word, in the readings and the homily, we listen to a proclamation and an explanation of God’s unconditional, unbounded love for us.

In exchange, in the second part of Mass called the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we give the gift of like minded love to God. And after that, a series of changes take place:

We reach into the collection basket to change our gift of love to God into an offering of money, time in prayer, or service to the poor; put your money where your mouth is.

Those offerings are then changed into, and collectively symbolized by the bread and wine that are brought to the altar.

And at the altar, God works through a priest to change the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus, making mystically present his sacrifice on the cross for our benefit.

The Eucharist is given as spiritual food at Holy Communion to change us to be like Jesus, imitating his mind and heart, his humility and charity, his forgiveness and service.

And if we live that way after Mass, outside of church, on weekdays, towards any and all people, even an enemy, especially an enemy, with God’s help we will change the world.

All of the above makes up the worship we offer God at Holy Mass. It is right and just, our duty and our salvation to give God thanks and praise at Mass.

The Consecration

Impress your family and friends by using the word transubstantiation in conversation. But just in case someone knows what it means, you should try to understand it too.

The word transubstantiation is rooted in Latin. The “tion” ending indicates an action, “trans” or change is the action, and “substantia” (a thing’s essential nature) is what is changed.

So, the word means the act of changing the essential nature of a thing into a different nature. This is the word used to describe what happens to bread and wine at Holy Mass.

During Mass, at the Consecration, a priest invokes the Holy Spirit and repeats Jesus’ words at the Last Supper, and the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus.

The essential nature is changed, but it still looks and tastes like bread and wine; those are called accidentals, in the sense that they aren’t essential to the nature of a thing.

This is a miracle, something the laws of nature can’t explain. It’s also a mystery, not like a who-done-it story, but a truth about God that we believe even if we can’t fully understand.

But with our intellect, we are able to make conclusions about what is unseen from what is seen; faith will tell us Christ is present, even when our human senses fail.

That’s why, at the Consecration, we kneel in silence broken only by the ringing of a bell, which calls our attention to worship and adore the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Sometimes, at that same moment, people in the pews call out, “my Lord and my God.” It’s okay to do that, when it’s inspired by faith in and devotion to the Real Presence.

That’s also why candles and flowers are placed around the altar, the altar ministers bow and genuflect, and incense is burned (Trinity, Powder Blend, hypo-allergenic... the blue stuff).

Finally, with the change at Consecration, it’s no longer correct to refer to the Eucharist as bread and wine, because it’s really, truly and most completely the Body and Blood of Jesus.

More of the Eucharistic Revival document will be in the next issue of Together. The archbishop’s entire reflection on this topic can be found on the archdiocesan website.