

Fr. Don's Bulletin Note

After Mass on June 11, parishioners are invited to join me in the church hall to reflect upon the topic, "Saint James: Today and Tomorrow." At that time, I will report to parishioners some of the feedback I have received from fellow parishioners about our faith community and share some ideas to direct our activities, especially in Sunday worship, in the months and year ahead.

Though my title at Saint James is pastor, it is not a typical pastorate because of commitments I have at other parishes, schools, and apostolates, and because of the wonderful blessing we have in Father Garry Richmeier who presides at most liturgies here. As a lay-led, diverse cultured, social justice parish, we are blessed by many tremendous servant-leaders and the day-to-day guidance of Ben Babaran. My task, then, is to lead mostly from behind and, with you, to seek a structure and processes that can help the community progress onward and upward. The focus on June 11 will be primarily on the Sunday experience because members emphasize that our faith-community makes its biggest impact during the time we spend together on The Lord's Day. Here are some of the suggestions I have heard and would like to discuss with you further on that day:

- Re-establish a Children's Liturgy of the Word program during our Mass time, even with only a few kids (with hopeful intention that it grows)
- Recruit Youth and Young Adults to an honored place during Mass and offer them a role in the Mass (in hopes that this effort will also grow)
- Present the Universal Prayers (Petitions) in various languages of the community every Sunday—start with French, English, Spanish, Tagalog, as well as native languages of Nigeria, Micronesia, and other places represented by community members; incorporate 2-5 languages each Sunday
- Insert a two to three-minute presentation after communion (or before the call to worship) each Sunday on a program, process, or opportunity that invites us to transform our faith into action, e.g., Journey To New Life, KC Common Good, Neighborhood Justice Center, Reconciliation Services, Conflict Resolution, Violence Reduction, Restorative Justice, etc.
- Add a Second-Sunday Q&A on topics of importance to the community, issues that deserve follow-up, new ideas for growth and sustainability, living synodality, etc.
- Rotate more people and a variety of styles into the weekly call to worship to reflect our diverse community, include shells, horns, drums, chimes, etc. of various traditions
- Transfer the national flags of first-generation Americans to a more visible spot during worship and allow someone from a particular country-of-origin to speak, on an ethnic occasion, about their homeland's prayer custom and why it is significant
- Provide a "this week around St. James" mission list on Sundays with opportunities for parishioners and friends to participate in hands-on ministry at Troost-39 Thrift Store, 1 City Café, and other area ministries so that we can continue our Sunday experience through the week and invite others to join us at the heart of our city and faith