

## May 13, 2018: Many Voices Becoming One Voice

Dear Parishioners,

This weekend is Mother's Day; such a debt of gratitude we owe to our mothers who have put so much of themselves into us and have influenced us to be the people we are. Our earthly mothers help us understand the love and care our heavenly mother Mary has for us. I would like to wish all Mothers a happy Mother's Day.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus exhorts his disciples, saying that the one "who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

At Vatican II, the Council Fathers sought to make the Mass accessible to us all because the "Eucharistic sacrifice is the source and summit of Christian Life." They brought out the new and the old. In *Sacrosanctum Concilium* they wrote, "In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, ...full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit (SC #14)." It may come as a surprise that the Council intended for Gregorian chant to be preserved (SC #54). "...other things being equal, [chant] should be given pride of place in liturgical services." (SC #116).

The Council Fathers saw value of what is old and what is new. They knew that chant, which dates to the earliest centuries of the Church, is particularly suited to Liturgy because of its simplicity and purity. A simple melody accompanies the sacred words and scripture of the Liturgy. Once the simple melodies are learned, everyone can sing along. Chant is not about one voice leading, but all voices becoming one voice. This is a particular expression of the unity that exists in the Liturgy and body of Christ. Chant also fulfills the Church's desire for "full and active participation" since everyone is encouraged to sing along. Liturgical music should always focus on participation and away from being entertained.

We have begun to introduce a chant setting for the Mass responses at the 5pm and 7:30am Sunday Masses. Jeffrey Morse, a Cambridge educated expert in chant, has been guiding this effort. It is a change from the cantor-led Mass we are used to, but I encourage you to give it a chance because I think two things will happen. First, it will foster full and active participation and second, the simplicity and purity of the chant will lead us deeper into the sublimity of Eucharistic liturgy which is the source and summit of Christian Life. The music at the 9am and 11am Masses will continue as it is.

To learn more, join Jeffrey Morse for a two-day workshop May 29th and 30th at 7pm. Come and learn about this ancient music of the Church and how to sing this living link to Christ and his apostles. You'll discover why this music still has the power to top the charts, to bring calm and peace, and how it can help usher you into the presence of God.

In Christ,

Father Vincent