



SAINT JOHN FISHER PARISH

June 15, 2018

Dear Parishioners:

Celebrating the Eucharist is central to our activities as Catholics. So I would like to comment on a very important activity that takes place at Mass that is often overlooked: silence. There are certain parts of the Mass that call for a reverential silence.

At the beginning of Mass, after people have introduced themselves to someone they don't know, the celebrant asks all present to call to mind their sins. I have at times been to Masses when the celebrant does not allow this moment of silence but immediately proceeds forward to the penitential rite. How can we call to mind our sins and failures if we are not given the opportunity?

After the Gloria has been sung or recited, the celebrant says, "Let us pray." These words call for a moment of silence where all present reflect on whom and what they are praying for. I suggest that you make your intention very specific. The celebrant then says aloud a prayer known as the "Collect."

We now sit down to listen to the Scripture readings. There are usually three: one from the Old Testament, one from the New Testament (usually a letter of St. Paul), and the Gospel. After each reading there should be a moment of silence to enable us to reflect on the reading that was proclaimed. I allow another period of silence immediately after my homily. Then after the Creed and General Intercessions there is another period of silence. The words are: "Let us take a moment of silence to consider how God's Word just proclaimed calls us to put ourselves at the service of Christ's mission."

Finally, after the Communion procession is complete, when the last person has received Communion, the celebrant sits down. All join him for a period of silence. It is a time to give thanks to God for this wonderful gift within us, the very Body and Blood of Christ. Before you are sent forth to live out the Mass, you can reflect on how you will do it with the strength of the Eucharist within you.

Amid all the singing, praying, greeting, and sharing that takes place in the Mass, cherish those moments of silence. Silence can be golden.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Msgr. David A. Sork
Pastor