

FULL PARTICIPATION

We are in “full gear” preparing to welcome our new Diocesan Bishop. The naming of Bishop-Elect Mark L. Bartchak was not simply someone taking a name off a predetermined list. (Believe me, I know.) While the process involves human beings, they are mere instruments of the Lord. In the end, it is Christ that chooses his Bishops.

Given that our spiritual leader is sent to us for our salvation (to lead us into the Lord’s Reign and Kingdom), welcoming and accepting him is no insignificant matter. Our faith journey becomes intertwined with his. Therefore, our full participation in the life of our Diocesan Church under his governance is important. That, of course, plays out largely within our parish faith communities, under the leadership of our Pastors and Administrators, who are associated in ministry with the Diocesan Bishop.

While we welcome our new Diocesan Bishop this year, we will also be welcoming a new Roman Missal, - that is, an updated translation to correspond more authentically with that in the Latin. What we pray should reflect what we believe. Worship is very much a part of parish life.

Popes, from Pius IX on, have encouraged active and full participation in the Liturgy. The Second Vatican Council called it the goal to be considered above all others, when speaking about worship. When we hear that, we immediately think of it as knowing what is taking place at Mass and being able to participate in word and action. It is definitely that. However, those words and actions need to reflect the life that we live the rest of the week.

We believe that celebrating the Eucharist (Mass) is a sharing in Christ’s sacrifice on the cross and his victory over sin and death. It should also be an active participation on our part. This means that, as members of Christ’s Mystical Body, we are called to embrace the trials and tribulations that appear to have been allotted to us. But, always with the hope of new life.

Therefore, we do not leave our everyday lives at the door of the church. Rather, we offer them as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, proclaiming ourselves to be the Church, - that is, an Assembly of Believers who lives what they believe.

May we of this portion of the Household of God respond to the leadership of our new Diocesan Bishop in such a way as to participate actively and fully in the mystery of Christ’s life. In that way, we will be seen as authentic Christians.