

During my time at the parish this year, I am called by the seminary to work on an internship project that would add to the life of the parish community here at St. Joe's. After some prayer, reflection, and consultation with the music ministry, Fr. Anthony, and Fr. Joe, I am going to help introduce the singing of the Proper Antiphons into the weekday Mass. Currently, there really isn't any music that we have for our weekday Mass and singing is one of the essential ways we give thanks and praise to the God who created us and saved us.

Coming to the parish I noticed that Fr. Suso already recites the Introit (Opening) and Communion Antiphons at his weekday Mass and Fr. Joe sings the Eucharistic Acclamations. So we will have the best of both worlds as we can sing in praise to God and root our song in the Church's musical tradition.

The "Propers" - composed of different antiphons, are sung scriptural texts that have been part of the Mass since the earliest of church traditions, especially during the entrance and communion processions. They were partly inherited from our Jewish ancestors and developed in churches and monasteries over the centuries. These chants

are based in Sacred Scripture and really are the Mass itself - not just special decoration. They put into beautiful words what happens during our prayer. Chant is truly our inheritance and is something the popes and many Church documents have called to preserve in our parishes. When we sing them, we don't just sing AT Mass, we sing THE Mass.

Understanding that many parishes do not have chant apart of their liturgies - due to some misinterpreted changes of Vatican II - a reintroduction of the Antiphons has to be as accessible as possible. This year, I hope to introduce the Introit (Entrance) and Communion Antiphons into the weekday Mass. They will be simple chants that will already be recognizable to many of you. I think it will be a great way of singing for our morning Mass, will not be complicated, and won't add hardly any time onto the liturgy.

Every week there will be sheets as you come in with the week's Antiphons for your use. That way the texts will be easily accessible and readable. Please leave them in the chapel, as this will allow us to use them throughout the week and minimize our printing and paper use. There will also be the possibility of including sound files onto the parish website so that you can hear them ahead of time.

I want to thank you for working with me this year on this project and I pray that it will bear much fruit. If there are any questions feel free to ask myself, Fr. Joe, Fr. Anthony, or Luke Massery, who are all helping me a great deal with this project. Thank you for your time.

Yours in Christ,
David Stavarz