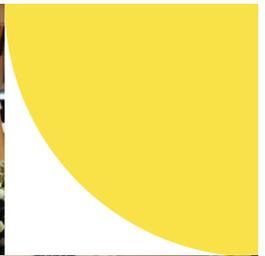


This is the sixth bulletin insert in a series as we focus on aspects of our church and the Mass as part of our *Celebrate the Sacraments... A New Beginning for the Family* campaign.

CELEBRATE
the Sacraments...
A NEW
Beginning
FOR THE FAMILY
A Campaign for St. Mary Catholic Parish



AMBO

This week we continue our series with a look at the ambo, or the pulpit from which we proclaim the Word of God in the readings, responsorial Psalm and Gospel.

Before the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins, the Liturgy of the Word celebrated at every Mass makes the Lord present to us through the proclamation of the Scriptures. The divinely inspired first reading, responsorial Psalm, second reading and Gospel show the Trinity working in human history.

As we listen to stories, exhortations, and songs of praise from Sacred Scripture, we understand our own place in salvation history and see God's love and providential mercy for all His people.

The Liturgy of the Word flows naturally into the Liturgy of the Eucharist, during which we do what our Lord commanded in the Gospels—we take bread and wine, bless it, offer it to God, and distribute the Body and Blood of Christ to the congregation to strengthen us for the next stage of our Christian journey. In the Liturgy of the Word we listen for God; in the Liturgy of the Eucharist we encounter Him under the appearance of bread and wine.

Because of this close connection between the two Liturgies, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council have instructed the faithful that “Great pains must therefore be taken, in keeping with the design of each church, over the harmonious and close relationship of the ambo with the altar” (GILM, no. 32). This includes placing the ambo and altar on the same axis, so the relationship between the two is clear spatially. This also includes constructing them of similar materials—for instance, the same metal, wood, or stone—so that the relationship between Word and Eucharist is seen visually.

Because of what occurs on the ambo—the proclamation of God's own words—we reserve it for that purpose alone, including the interpretation of the Scriptures in the homily. Oftentimes a container or shelf on the front of the ambo, facing the congregation, allows a public display of the book of the Gospels.

It is also important that the space around the ambo is clear so that the ministers and altar servers may process toward it during the Gospel reading. In some

Eastern Catholic traditions, the deacon will cry out, “Wisdom! Wisdom! Let us attend!” In many parishes, it is also customary for altar servers to carry candles and stand or kneel on either side of the ambo during the reading of the Gospel to further draw our attention to its importance.

As we look to the renovation of our church, we are considering replacing the ambo. Our current ambo, made of a reddish rock and wood, is in accordance with other decorations around the sanctuary like the altar and presider's chair. However, in our quest to emphasize liturgical elements and the importance of the word of God we may change the ambo, together with the altar and presider's chair, for the following reasons:

- We will change the back of the sanctuary-apse. We don't need a matching set of ambo, altar and chair.
- Worshipers recognize the nobility expressed by the using a material such as marble.
- It provides a break, if ever small, from the monochrome dominance of browns and bring variety.