**Liturgy Matters Lesson #5 - “Singing Voices of the Assembly”**

**By Bishop Chad Zielinski**

Thank you for joining me as we continue our lessons on “What Happens at Mass.”

As the liturgy begins, the assembly that God has called together rises to its feet and begins to sing. The beauty of song is not insignificant in understanding what is happening. The song represents the beauty of the one faith in the many Christians throughout the world. In the one song, all the voices join together in unity, every voice with its own timbre, own quality, in tune or out of tune, blend into one beautiful sound and one beautiful voice: the voice of the Church. We must also recognize that this song represents not only the assembly joined together in our particular building but also the entire Church, including the countless number of angels raising their voices in song. The human capacity to sing is truly wonderful. The human song is an image of the mystery of the Incarnation. Air in our body, in our throat, pushing the intelligible voice outward in beautiful expression is an image of Spirit in the flesh, of divinity, joined to humanity.

While the song is being sung, a procession of the various ministers of the liturgy moves through the church and into the sanctuary. At the culminating point of this procession is the bishop or priest, rendering visible and concrete for us what our fleshly eyes cannot see, namely, Christ himself as the head of our assembly and the one who leads us in prayer. Christ is coming and standing in the midst of his people, and of course, the people rise to their feet, singing a joyful song with one voice. The other ministers accompany the priest in the procession, all signifying the difference in their roles. Some carry the flame; another carries the smoking incense. When the flame and incense enter, the heavenly choirs of angels enter the sanctuary with them; and they will help us worship. They will pray for us and with us. They will protect us because they love us. In the procession, the deacon carries the book of the Gospels, which shows us that Christ is coming together with his word. In what is about to happen, he will speak words of power and wisdom, a transforming word that will change our lives and form us into his likeness.

May God continue to strengthen us as we grow closer to Him through our understanding and participation in the Holy Mass. Let us keep one another in prayer. May God bless you and your families.

Sincerely in Christ,

Bishop Chad Zielinski