

July 3rd, 2020

First let me commend to you the survey from the parish re-gathering committee. Thank you to the members of the committee for so thoughtfully drafting that survey, and to the many of you who have already filled it out! If you have not yet made your response, please do so -- the more surveys we receive, the more accurately we can direct our planning. The survey will remain open until July 10.

Second, thank you to everyone for your patience while we learn this "new" (to St. Mark's!) setting of the ordinary texts, the Missa de Angelis -- I know it's difficult, especially for those who haven't heard it before; but it's also beautiful, and a good entry point to a much wider set of music than most of us realize exists. What we're hoping is that we can alternate a few lesser-known, "new" settings of these texts amongst the more familiar ones, on a periodic basis, so that we can expand the repertoire of worship we're able to offer. Truthfully, we already do this, both with congregational settings and with our monthly choral mass Sundays; but the Missa de Angelis is admittedly a little more obvious as a departure from the usual!

While the "ordinary" texts themselves are fixed, there is enormous variety in the languages and musical idioms they inhabit -- so the "ordinary" is a perfect place to be adventurous while also remaining rooted in what's distinctive about our worship tradition. One of my favorite descriptions of the Kingdom of God is Jesus' short line that it "is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old." This particular new/old setting won't be forever -- George's and my hope is we can give each setting 6-8 weeks, and then from Advent-Eastertide change them seasonally. But while it's here, please be encouraged! We're learning something new together, and enjoying (I hope!) this particular treasure out of the storehouse.

Third, thank you to the YADAs who continue to offer help with errands or other necessities for those who are reluctant or otherwise prevented from leaving their homes. If you'd like this kind of help, please reach out to me, or directly to Margo Strakosch (m.e.strakosch@gmail.com) or Devon Thrumston (dthrumston@gmail.com). They are also more than happy to help connect you to the livestream, or Zoom, or help answer other questions you might have about technology!

Finally, let me remind everyone that the Wednesday and Friday public office hours continue by Zoom, at 12pm (during the normal time of the weekday Eucharist in the chapel) -- Wednesdays is with me, and Fridays with Fr. Hiller (see the calendar of events below for the Zoom links). Come to talk about whatever is on your mind, be that spiritual, theological, everyday, or otherwise. If you'd rather speak privately about anything on your mind, please do feel free to do that also -- as always, I remain available at any time, by email, phone, or text message: my cell is 630-336-2137 (also in the directory), and my email is priest@stmarksberkeley.org.

Yours faithfully,

Fr. Blake+