Changes Offer Opportunity for Renewal

The Catholic Review

A major step forward for our Archdiocese took place last week with the arrival of Paulist Father John Hurley who joins us as the Executive Director of the Department of Evangelization for the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Father Hurley's priestly life has been focused upon the spread of the gospel on behalf of our own Catholics as well as those searching for a fuller experience of the Lord, Jesus.

Ordained to the priesthood in 1977, Father Hurley was the founding director of the Paulist Center for Catholic Evangelization in Portland, Oregon from 1978-1984. He would come to be recognized nationally as an expert in the field of Evangelization, a reputation earned from having served as Executive Director of the National Pastoral Life Center, 2007-09, and Secretariat for Evangelization for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1997-2005.

Father Hurley has spent much of the past year helping us prepare the framework for this newly created department, which is dedicated to sharing the Good News with others, but also helping our own people enrich their faith lives.

Surveys have revealed that among the strongest factors in retaining Catholics in and returning Catholics to the faith is the liturgy, well celebrated. A testament to the power of our Catholic liturgy can also be seen in the reactions of people not of the Catholic tradition who frequently report of being deeply impressed when they attend funerals and weddings in one of our churches.

I am most grateful to Monsignor Rob Jaskot, Director of our Office for Worship, for his efforts to provide liturgical resources and assistance to our parishes. Monsignor Jaskot will be stepping out of this role to begin parish work, but not before preparing us for the most substantial changes to the words and prayers said at Mass since Vatican II.

His six-part series in the Review details the upcoming changes in the liturgy, which will demand some readjustments for all of us. We look to this as an opportunity for a deeper appreciation of the treasure we have in our liturgy, especially the Eucharist, and in joining all our parishioners and parishes in a united effort to grow in our love and appreciation for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.