

This weekend will begin to use the new sacred vessels which will be blessed at the Saturday Vigil Mass. These vessels have been specially designed and made for use at our church. They therefore are a unique set. I have heard some parishioners question the need for new vessels. This has previously been explained in Compact. However, I take the opportunity to further explain.

The starting point, of course, is what Jesus did at the Last Supper and what Christians have continued to do in his memory. As St Paul so simply yet profoundly reminds us: "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." Our main attention, then, is on what the sacred vessels hold, not the vessels themselves. Nevertheless, the vessels are important because they do hold something of immeasurable value, as such, they must be "capable of bearing the weight of mystery, awe, reverence, and wonder which the liturgical action expresses" (article 20, *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship*.)

At a wedding reception or at some special celebration in our own homes, we naturally put out the best dinner plates and cutlery. How much more important, then, that we provide the best that we can at our sacred meal of the Eucharist. Our God is a God who squanders his love lavishly upon us. Surely, our response should be a magnanimous show of gratitude by the way in which we honour God's gifts – especially the gift of himself in the Eucharist.

The new vessels will replace the mismatch of metal, wood and clay that we have presently been using. The new vessels are designed to harmonize with the church architecture. But more importantly, they will help us to continue to offer communion under by both kinds in a way that is celebratory and dignified.

Peace and blessings,

Gerard

