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It happened during the first year after COVID-19 that the USCCB temporarily permitted these readings and liturgical texts be projected on screens under specific conditions. However, it has come to my attention that those permissions were long ago rescinded.

The current policy of the Committee on Divine Worship is that permission is not granted to project readings and liturgical texts on screens during the liturgy, making it a copyright violation to project them on our screens at the Church of Saint Mary's. And so, effective this weekend, the Sunday readings which are read each day at Mass will no longer be also projected on the screens in our church.

To some, the screens have been an assistance; particularly the hearing impaired. To others, they have been a distraction, and this change is

welcomed. Either way, it is a change which is being made both to honor the law and the rights of the copyright owner.

What does that mean for the congregation? The Word of God will continue to be proclaimed (and with new speakers!), much in the way it has been for centuries. You could say we are going back to 'the way it has always been.' Even still, this change may prove difficult for those who have come to rely on the screens for the readings.

Although we provide missalettes for during the weekday Mass, we currently do not have nearly enough for an entire weekend congregation. At a cost of over \$14 a missalette, with no in-pew place to currently store them, I am reluctant to buy the 700+ copies we would need. And so, until a more informed decision can be made, the congregation at the Church of Saint Mary's will encounter the Word of God during liturgies in the ordinary way: proclaimed from the pulpit. Please know that the use of personal missalettes, such as 'Give Us This Day' and 'Magnificat', continues to be welcome.

This change pertains only to the readings and not to the songs and other Mass settings, for which we have license and permission to use. We will continue to use the screen for these and those other purposes which are permitted. An exception is permitted to present the readings for bilingual services, though we have only a few each year.

This week's message kind of feels like my confession. Like so many of you, as a Catholic and American, I want to honor every good law and command I am given, even if it is not my preference. And yet a community is held together, in part, by compromise. It is incumbent upon every Catholic to honor every good law to which they are bound according to an informed conscience.

Using the copyrighted material of another, in a way they do not permit, is theft. We didn't know for certain that this permission was rescinded until recently. Now we do, and so we must change. I am not asking you to like the result, but I hope you at least understand the reason.

Lent is an opportunity for the purifying of our hearts and the strengthening of our relationship with our Lord, Jesus, Who was Himself no stranger to sacrifices both small and great. By God's grace may we be strengthened to do all that He asks of us.

May God bless you, and may our Blessed Mother Mary, Mother of the Church, pray for us.

In Christ,

Father Mitchell Bechtold

FATHER MITCHELL'S PASTORAL BULLETIN

Sunday, February 22, 2026

To the parishioners of Saint Andrew's, Greenwald,
Saint John the Baptist's, Meire Grove, Saint Mary's, Melrose &
Saint Michael's, Spring Hill, of the One In Faith Area Catholic Community

Greetings!

It happened at a recent meeting that I said, "Sometimes it feels like we (churches, businesses, people) are being regulated right out of operation. It can feel like that, like it is one hoop after another to jump through. Some law to keep, some rule to follow, some fee to pay.

And yet, when we imagine a life without rules, or when we think of those times and places with good laws which are not followed, it certainly doesn't seem like the better option. Ideally, an established law is there to define and defend the rights, responsibilities and dignity of the people of a community, bringing order instead of disorder, allowing for human flourishing.

That's kind of my understanding, anyways. Even still, rule after rule, law after law, it can all just feel kind of heavy after a while, especially when the rule prevents you from having something you want.