

## **Is it wrong to have lengthy conversation (before mass) in the church?**

The General Instruction on the Roman Missal answers this one pretty clearly for us. *“Even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred action in a devout and fitting manner.”* (GIRM 44)

We come together as a community, and it is good thing to want to meet and share with our fellow parishioners. But prior to mass we need to spend some time in quiet to prepare ourselves for the mysteries we are about to celebrate. Some churches are blessed with gathering spaces so that these two activities can take place independently. Since we do not have such a space at Sacred Heart, it can be inconsiderate to have conversations prior to mass because they may interfere with someone else’s desire for quiet meditation. Remember, too, that the sacristy is not a place for pre-mass discussions and meetings. Please be courteous of your fellow parishioners, and also of the priest, deacon, and altar servers. We all need time to shift gears as we transition from our worldly activities to activities which are sacred.

**Deacon Joe**