

Dear Parishioners,

It is with great joy that I would like to announce that in the near future, Mass in Spanish will be celebrated at St. Catherine of Genoa Parish for the Hispanic community in the Genoa, Kingston, Kirkland area. We do not yet have a definite date for the first Spanish Mass in our parish. Fr. José Romero, the Vicar for Hispanic Ministry in the DeKalb Deanery, will preside at the Spanish Mass on Saturday evenings. The time for this Mass is yet to be determined. This new Mass will not interfere in any way with our current schedule. Mass will still be in English at 5:00 pm on Saturdays, and 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. on Sundays.

One of the main reasons for this additional Mass is to help with the overcrowding at St. Mary Parish in Sycamore. Many of the worshipers at the Hispanic Mass there are from Genoa, Kingston and Kirkland and, as Sycamore's Hispanic population continues to grow, St. Mary Parish is not big enough to adequately, and safely hold everyone. We have a very large space here and can easily accommodate the Hispanic population from this area in one weekend Eucharistic Liturgy.

Another reason for this change goes back to the definition of the word Catholic, which means "*universal*." The mission of the Church is to go out to all the world in an effort to evangelize, heal, forgive, and to call all people to worship the Lord. While we are blessed to have a beautiful church building that has met our needs so well these past 39 years, we are being asked to welcome all people who seek to worship the Lord with open arms and open hearts.

Language and cultural differences are all that separate us from the Hispanic peoples who have settled in this area. One of the biggest cultural differences I have seen with the Hispanic people is that they take their Catholic faith very seriously and are truly devout in their call to worship God in the Eucharistic celebration.

I am very excited about welcoming the Hispanic community in the celebration of the Mass each week here at St. Catherine of Genoa Parish. I believe a lot of good will result from this additional Mass.

In joyful hope,
Fr. Tim Seigel