

CELEBRATE!

A NEWSLETTER FOR VIEWERS AND FRIENDS OF THE SUNDAY TV MASS

FALL 2022

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The Sunday TV Mass airs every Sunday morning on WDCW-50 at 10:30 a.m.

Production Crew

Producer & Director:
John Capobianco

Technical Director:
Diriki Rice

Audio: Demetri Callas

Cameras: Karin Öhlund,
Michael Thomas & Elise Perry

Engineer: Chris Vazquez

Editor: Brian Burgess



The Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of
Washington

PANDEMIC BROUGHT NEW VIEWERS TO TV MASS AND MANY HAVE STAYED CONNECTED



Sunday TV Mass producer, John Capobianco, works in the control room at the Basilica during a taping of the Mass.

By Patricia Zapor

As the COVID-19 pandemic shut down churches in the Spring of 2020, the first TV Sunday Mass from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception still had a congregation and the choir from John Paul II Seminary. It was to be the last time the broadcast had a congregation or a choir for a very long while.

The Mass is recorded ahead of time, two Masses at a session. At the end of March 2020, when churches closed to nearly all worshippers as a health precaution, the next Mass on the Washington-area broadcast had been recorded weeks earlier, before the limits on how many people could be in churches. The Palm Sunday Mass posted on the YouTube channel of the National Shrine drew the most viewers in the history of its presence on the online platform. John Capobianco, producer and director of the broadcast, said viewership exploded from an average of 20,000 views a few weeks before the pandemic to more than 400,000 that April 5. Through much of March, online numbers had inched up as countries such as Australia, Singapore and the Philippines locked down and viewers found the Washington-based Mass, Capobianco said.

Most parishes in the Archdiocese began providing their own livestream of Sunday Mass later in the spring of 2020. Capobianco said that as people could participate in Mass online from their own parishes or churches around the world, demand diminished from that impressive peak. It has, however, remained well ahead of the pre-pandemic viewership. Capobianco said many of the views each week come from around the world and across the United States.

Even with most churches around the country now back to in-person Mass, the weekly broadcast and YouTube posting continue to be popular. "Our YouTube following is averaging around 40,000 a week," double what it was just before the pandemic," Capobianco said. Total viewership in 2020 more than tripled from the previous year, up to 3.5 million from 1 million, he said. "That was YouTube alone." The experience of working through the restrictions of the pandemic necessarily led to changes in how the production crew operated, Capobianco explained. Without missing a Sunday broadcast, Capobianco's team worked with the staff of the Shrine to safely work together with a cantor, organist,

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2 HONORING THEIR LIVES OF SERVICE: DONATE TO THE RETIRED PRIESTS COLLECTION



RETIRED PRIESTS COLLECTION 2022



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SUPPORT OUR RETIRED PRIESTS!

Our priests inspire our lives in many ways: they baptize our children, comfort us in the confessional, witness our marriage vows, and hold our loved ones' hands as the Lord calls them home. They have selflessly served the faithful and the community to continue Christ's mission for decades, and in some cases, for more than a half century.

Catholics of the The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington are invited to express their gratitude to retired priests by donating to the annual Retired Priests Collection so they can live their retirement in dignity.

WAYS TO GIVE

There are multiple ways for viewers of the TV Mass to support the Retired Priests of The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington:

- **Online** via credit card at adw.org/rpc.
- **Text** the word "Priest" to 301-231-1816.
- **Phone:** Please call (301) 637-6129 to make your gift with a credit/debit card or bank information.
- **Mail:** You may have received envelopes mailed directly to your home. If not, you may send a check payable to "Retired Priests Collection" to: Office of Development, The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, P.O. Box 29260, Washington, DC 20017-0260.
- **IRA Transfers:** Please visit adw.org/rpc for instructions or call Joanne Pipkin at (301) 853-4486.

Msgr. Bazan, DC native, one of the beneficiaries of the Retired Priests Collection

Now in his 60th year as a priest, Msgr. Joaquin Bazan remembers a lesson he learned from the pastor at his first parish assignment in 1962. Newly ordained as a priest of The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington, then-Father Bazan was assigned at Holy Cross Parish in Garrett Park, which was led by Msgr. W. Louis Quinn, the founding pastor since the parish was established two years earlier.



"One thing he emphasized and did himself, was visiting all the families," said Msgr. Bazan, who is now 85. He added, "I've done that ever since to know the people. That's what we're all about." Before his retirement two decades ago, Msgr. Bazan served as the pastor of the Shrine of the Sacred Heart in Washington from 1976-84. Then he was pastor at St. John Baptist de la Salle Parish in Chillum, Maryland, for 10 years until leading St. Francis Xavier Parish in Washington from 1994-95.

A native of Washington, he grew up with a focus on faith. "In my family, faith, hope and charity were from God, (they were) virtues God gave to us," he said. Remembering his parents and their example of faith, the priest said, "They were very religious, but they had a sense of humor about the whole thing."

ORDER YOUR 2023 ST. JOSEPH SUNDAY MISSAL 3

WDCW-50 LOCAL STATION GUIDE

The TV Mass airs every Sunday at 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. on WDCW-50.

| TV Provider | Channel |
|--------------------|---------|
| Antenna/no cable | 50 |
| Comcast | |
| DC and Montgomery | 23 |
| PG and Southern MD | 3 |
| Dish or Direct TV | 50 |
| Cox | |
| Northern VA | 3 |
| Fredericksburg | 15 |
| RCN | 15 |
| Verizon | 3 |

CHRISTMAS DAY TV MASS

On Christmas Day, The Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge, Bishop of Arlington, will celebrate a special hour-long Mass that will air at **10:30-11:30 a.m.**



KNOW, LOVE AND LIVE THE MASS

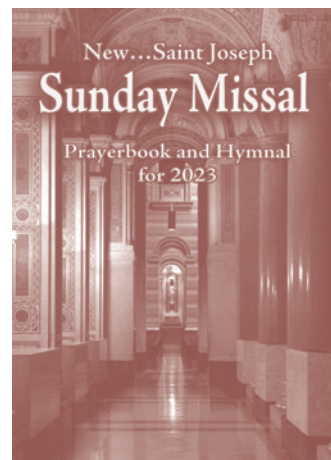
WITH A

2023 ST. JOSEPH SUNDAY MISSAL

The 2023 Saint Joseph Sunday Missal is now available to order for a suggested donation of \$7!

This pocket-sized missal is a wonderful tool to help TV Mass viewers understand the Mass and actively participate in it. It features:

- Clear, Easy-to-Read Type
- Two-color Order of Mass with Complete Prayers and Short Explanatory Texts
- Over 50 Illustrations
- Treasury of Prayers, including Illustrated Rosary and Stations of the Cross
- Pastoral Help: Christ's Presence in Liturgical Celebrations
- Major Practices



Use the coupon below to make a donation to the TV Mass and receive your copy of the new missal. A self-addressed donation envelope is included with this newsletter for ease.

You can also read this newsletter in English and Spanish online at adw.org/parishes-masses/sunday-tv-mass.

CELEBRATE!

is produced by The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington.

Produced by
Patricia Zapor and
Georgina Wilkinson

For information, contact:
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The Roman Catholic
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P.O. Box 29260
Washington, DC 20017

CELEBRATE! Support the Sunday TV Mass

I would like to make a donation to support the Sunday TV Mass ministry \$ _____

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Please send me _____ copies of the **NEW 2023 St. Joseph Sunday Missal**.

Suggested donation \$7 per copy (includes shipping)

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lector, priest and the camera crew. Masks, hand sanitizer and physical distancing were all used. But as of late October 2022 there had been no full choir and no congregation since the pandemic first hit.

“We had to shoot a different way because there was no congregation,” he said. For example, instead of turning the cameras to the congregation at various points in the Mass, the crew began cutting to the shots of the sculptures, mosaics, paintings

and stained glass windows in the Basilica. “We used a great deal of artwork to fill in. Instead of showing the congregation, we would show the saints of the Shrine. It gives you a sense of participating with all the beauty of the Shrine.”

“In many ways we didn’t miss a beat,” he said. “COVID had people saying, ‘we never knew much about the TV Mass before. What a blessing to offer to the homebound.’ Of course, everybody

became homebound.”

That broader exposure means, “the Lord has taken the awful situation of COVID and allowed us to bring the Mass to people in a way that they may not have experienced it before,” Capobianco said. “We’ve been doing the same thing we’ve always done. But COVID put so many people in the same situation our viewers have long been in.”

A HOME FOR THE TV MASS

For most of its existence, the TV Mass was just that, a television broadcast. In the decades after its creation in the 1950s as part of TV stations’ FCC requirement to carry public interest programming, it aired alternately on Washington’s NBC and CBS affiliates, channels 4 and 9, respectively. The liturgies – commonly referred to as Mass for Shut-ins -- were filmed at the television stations, in studios furnished to look like chapels, Capobianco said.

After the FCC dropped major regulation of broadcast media in the mid-1980s, the stations began to pull away from what had been donated use of their facilities, crews and airtime. Capobianco began

working on the Masses in 1988. He said that by 1993, the stations were bringing other production work into their facilities. Since it was no longer required by the FCC, they said they were unable to continue to produce the TV Mass.

“We offered to produce it and give it to them, if they aired it,” and the stations agreed, said Capobianco. Cardinal James Hickey, then archbishop of Washington, wanted the filming done at the Basilica, in the Crypt Church, where it has had



Father Thomas Kalita celebrates the Mass in front of the camera at a recent taping in the Crypt Church.

a home ever since. The Mass’s television channel changed a few more times as local stations’ policies about free airtime for religious services shifted. Since the mid-2000s, the Archdiocese has purchased airtime on Channel 50, WDCW, where it currently airs at 10:30 a.m. on Sundays.

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