

It's Pentecost, the great celebration of the descent of the Holy Spirit, also commemorated as the birth of the Church. In the telling of John's Gospel, at a time when the disciples of Jesus were trying to figure out what's next, a time when they were afraid that they might be the next to be tortured or crucified to death, Jesus sends the Holy Spirit upon them for strength and compassion, "whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, whose sins you retain are retained." In the telling of Luke's Gospel, the Spirit comes upon a whole bunch of Jesus' disciples at once and even language barriers are broken, "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim." Thus, the birth of the Church, intended to speak all languages to all people!

Pentecost makes it an especially joyful time to announce that the coronavirus has subsided enough among us to again open our churches for Mass and the sacraments. Bishop Calvo has painstakingly worked with staff and priests to develop a plan and put it into action so that all parishes can be prepared to open for the celebration of Trinity Sunday, next weekend, June 6-7. Trinity Sunday celebrates our belief in the God who is community itself, three persons, but one in being. It is a perfect time to again gather as community ourselves, albeit with some sorrow and frustration that we cannot all gather. At this point a limitation remains that each Mass can only have up to 50 people, limiting who will be able to come. Once the church is full, we painfully will have to turn people away for the next Mass or the next day. The Center for Disease Control places those over 65 in an "at risk" category. Hence, we are encouraging people who are over 65 or who have health issues that also put them at special risk should they contract the virus, to consider staying home. (We will continue to live stream Mass at 9:30 AM in English and at 6:00 PM in Spanish for the benefit of all who are at risk or who are fearful of contracting the virus). There also will be restrictions for those coming to Mass, including 6-foot distancing and the wearing of a mask to cover nose and mouth.

Despite these many restrictions, it is still a day for rejoicing that progress has been made in fighting down this disease, thanks to the sacrifice of all of us. It is also a time for us all to re-commit to doing all we can to protect one another by keeping distant, staying safe and staying clean. Bishop Calvo continues to emphasize that this is our basic, moral, Christian duty and is an act of Christian charity. I have stated the restrictions and expectations in the past but please see the following pages to learn in detail what we have prepared at the church and what is expected of all who come, in mutual cooperation.

I have been extremely edified in seeing the cooperation of parishioners as well as "visitors" to our live stream Masses, who have sent in contributions to the parish or registered for online giving. You have been a saving grace thus far through this pandemic closure. While our special collections and Easter offertory have suffered quite a bit, our general offertory is slightly *ahead* of our budget! Thanks to all those steadily contributing and to those who have given extra, I can say that we're still on solid, financial ground. On behalf of the Cathedral parish, my gratitude extends to you all!

Pentecost has a personal, special spot in my heart because it is on this solemnity that I celebrated my first Mass at the Cathedral in 1994. I have a picture of a much younger me, with no gray hair, lifting up the Body and Blood of Christ at the same altar. Such a joyful day! I am grateful to be serving in this Cathedral community, which helped form such a strong foundation for my faith.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY, CHURCH!**