

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 17, 2020

Dear Parishioners:

One day in the Garden of Eden, Eve stared into Adam's eyes and asked him: "Do you **love** me?" Adam replied: "Of course I **love** you. You are my one and only **love**!" Adam was smart enough to give Eve the right answer.



Today's Gospel passage continues Jesus' farewell discourse to His Apostles at the Last Supper (John chapters 14-17). Jesus' disciples are worried how they are going to continue after He has left them. In His discourse Jesus reassures them that He will **not** abandon them or us. Jesus then explains how He will always be with them and us. First, Jesus promises all His disciples that He will remain and assist them through another Advocate, the Holy Spirit. Another word for Advocate is "Paraclete". Secondly, Jesus promises His disciples that He will not leave them as orphans as He will come back to them. He returned to His Apostles at Easter. Today Jesus returns to us in His Risen Presence in the Eucharist. Finally, Jesus promises that the Father and He will reveal Themselves and come to all disciples if they follow God's commandments.

There are five Advocate/Paraclete sayings in Jesus' farewell discourse (14:15-17, 14:25-26, 15:26-27, 16:7-11, 16:12, 15). Today's passage contains the first of Jesus sayings. In this first saying Jesus uses the word **love** five times. In today's pop-culture (literature, songs, television shows, movies) the word love conjures up images of romantic feelings. However when Jesus speaks of love He has a totally different meaning and concept. In Greek there are three different words for love. There is a word for romantic love (eros) and a word for friendship love (philia) and a third word which is used in Scriptures (agape) which means esteem, affection, a giving and caring interest for others. In today's Gospel passage Jesus is not speaking of romantic love but rather He is speaking about agape love. Agape love is **not** characterized by the feelings it gives us. Rather it is love in action. The real test and testimony of our love for another lies in our devotion to what our loved one holds dear and in our obedience to our loved one's wishes. That principle applies to our relationship with God. We cannot measure our love for God simply on a

feeling level. So how do we know if we truly love God?

In today's passage Jesus gives us **the way** of knowing whether or not we love Him: "If you love me you will keep my commandments." This is not an ultimatum but rather a simple statement of fact. Anyone who truly loves Jesus will obey the Eternal Law because of the indispensable way that it enables us to actualize our love for God. Our love for God is not measured by feelings but by how we keep our Lord's commandments. That is the proof of our love for Him. In keeping God's commandments God will reveal Himself to us. Our reward for keeping God's commandments is that we will see Jesus; we will recognize Him since He will be with us and in us. We will never become orphans with no one to care for us. Instead God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit will always be with us, assisting and comforting us all the days of our lives.

In today's Gospel we have three of Jesus' promises that are fundamental to our Catholic spirituality and to the life of the Church: first, the promise of the Holy Spirit to energize and sustain our fidelity to Jesus., second, the promise of Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist., and third, the promise of sharing God's life more powerfully now and forever as we cleanse and clarify our lives by following God's commandments and following the Gospel. Have a blessed week.

Love & prayers,
Fr. John

Weekend Masses

Sat May 16	5:00 p.m	Rhonda Staley
Sun May 17	8:30 a.m.	Fr. Cleo Schmenk
Sat May 23	5:00 p.m	For our parishioners
Sun May 24	8:30 a.m.	Rosemary Meyer

SUNDAY COLLECTION



*Thank you for your generosity!
Thank you also to those who give
electronically!!*

Readings for May 24, 2020

The Ascension of the Lord

1st Reading: Acts 1:1 – 11

2nd Reading: Ephesians 1:17 – 23

Gospel Reading: Matthew 28:16 – 20

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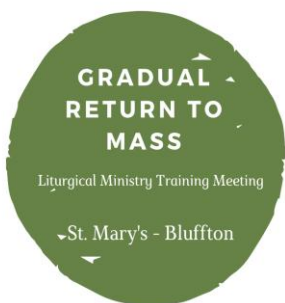
Congratulations to Eli Hoffer and Haley Parkinson who were married at our church this weekend. May God bless you and your marriage, and may you have a happy life together!

The Catholic Bishops have approved the opening of the Celebration of Mass on Pentecost Weekend (*May 30 and 31*). I will celebrate Mass at **4PM on Saturday May 30 and at 8am and 10 am on Sunday May 31st**. I have temporarily added an extra Mass at **8am** on Sunday Mornings so that we do not exceed **50% of fire code regulations per the "Stay Safe Ohio" order**. The **"Stay Safe Ohio" order** requires that we put a **limit** on the number of persons attending Mass so that we can create a healthy environment for the safety of all present.

IMPORTANT: The faithful of the Diocese of Toledo **continue to be dispensed from their Sunday obligation until further notice**. Please use your best judgment when considering the gradual return to Mass.

To read about the new guidelines that will be implemented at St. Mary's with the gradual return to Mass, please follow this link: <https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/2319/documents/2020/5/RECONNECT.pdf>

If you currently serve as an Usher, Greeter, Lector, Eucharistic Minister, or Altar Server, and are planning on attending Mass during this gradual return, please come to a meeting on Thursday, May 28th at 6 p.m. to discuss how roles within the Mass will look different during our gradual return.



To participate in Mass via TV, Live Stream, or Radio Broadcast, please follow this link to see the various options around the Diocese: <https://toledodiocese.org/Live-Stream-Masses-Diocese-of-Toledo.pdf>

St. Gerard's in Lima live streams Mass throughout the week at 8:30 a.m. Monday – Friday, on Saturday at 5 p.m., and on Sunday at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. To view this live stream, go to their website: <http://www.stgerardchurch.org/> and click on the icon on the right side of the page that says "Live Webcast Watch Here"

Since we have to refrain temporarily from attending Holy Mass and the reception of the Most Holy Eucharist, this is a simple prayer that you can pray on a daily basis. The prayer is from St. Alphonsus Liguori's (founder of the Redemptorists) book entitled Visits to The Most Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary:

Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe you are really present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you more than anything in the world, and I desire to receive You into my soul. But since I cannot receive Holy Communion at this moment, feed my soul at least spiritually. I unite myself to you now as I do when I actually receive you. Never let me drift away from you. Amen.

New Parish Hours:

In response to the Coronavirus/COVID-19, the church will be open for a limited amount of hours for individual private prayer on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Fr. John will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday from 3 – 4 p.m. or by appointment during the week. Please use your best judgment and refrain from coming if you, or anyone you have been in contact with, have symptoms.

We know that this time may be a time of financial uncertainty for many, but if you are able, please continue to remember our parish. You can send your envelopes in the mail, or give online by following this link: https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=wWsk24ZJSTZKsGd1RMK1g0BDvsSG3VIWQCPJNNxD8upkiY7JIDavDsozUE7KG0nFx2NSo8LdUKGuGuF396vbbTpChmfNbhZHX8xPU2s5sRX7sm9wYZo2onRxYng5iCQvEEUgbepsAG1d1O5A7L11HEasYeBPLeVLqkBUb4MjnA=&ver=3 *Thank you for your continued support and generosity!*