

WORDS FROM THE PASTOR

Solemnity of Pentecost

May 23rd, 2021

Calendar:

- **05/22/21 Saturday:** 10AM St. Mark's Cemetery – Burial for Alden Burris and Carol Burris-Mergner
- **05/22/21 Saturday:** 1PM St. Catherine's Cemetery, Lomice – Burial for Richard Balek
- **05/22/21 Saturday:** 6:15 PM Sts. Peter & Paul – Kaleb Hodny Graduation Ice Cream Social
- **05/23-26/21 Sunday Evening thru Wednesday:** Fr. Lefor absent from parishes to attend Ordinations and First Masses of Logan Obrigewitch and Paul Gardner in Bismarck, Beulah, and New England
- **05/24-26/21 Monday thru Wednesday:** NO DAILY MASS
- **05/27-29/21 Thursday thru Saturday:** 8AM Daily Mass for Octave of Holy Spirit
- **05/28/21 Friday:** Friday Men's Prayer Breakfast St. John's. 5:30 Breakfast; 6AM Discussion and Prayer; 7AM Eucharistic Adoration; 8AM Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

Pastor's Notes:

Pentecost and the Vigil of Pentecost: Before His ascension, Jesus Christ instructed His Apostles to stay in Jerusalem and to wait for the “promise of His Father,” which was to be fulfilled in a few days (Acts 1:4-5). After the Ascension, they returned from Mt. Olivet to the Upper Room where they spent their time in “continuous prayer” (Acts 1:14) and worship “in the temple” (Lk 24:53). This was the first retreat of prayer and meditation made by the Apostles, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the close followers of Christ.

According to Jewish tradition, Moses awakened his people in the middle of the night in order to proclaim the Law of God to them. For this reason, in preparation for the Feast of Pentecost, the Jews would keep an all-night vigil during which they read the harvest and covenant themes from the Scriptures. The readings were interspersed by the singing of psalms and spiritual hymns. Some prophecies were also read, including the Prophecy of Joel, saying:

“I will pour out my spirit on all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. Even on my servants will I pour out my spirit in those days.” (Joel 3:1-2)

We can imagine the Apostles at that all-night vigil. They listened to these prophetic words with avid expectation. Down deep in their hearts they must have sensed their imminent fulfillment, and this did happen on the very next morning. When they returned from the temple and gathered together in the Upper Room for morning prayers, suddenly the Holy Spirit descended upon them, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-4.

The descent of the Holy Spirit took place on the Jewish Pentecost (Acts 2:1), which coincided with the fiftieth day after the glorious resurrection of Christ. Therefore, the Apostles also referred to this memorable event as Pentecost. (I Co. 16:8) Pentecost is a constant reminder of our own “baptism by the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:5), which we received at the time of our Confirmation. As the Bishop anointing our foreheads with the sacred chrism the heavens opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon us, fully possessing our souls. We became a living “Temple of the Holy Spirit.” (I Cor. 6:19)

The divine life is the life of grace, making us “partakers of the divine nature” (II Peter 1:4) and true children of God: “The spirit you receive is not the spirit of slaves-but the spirit of children, and it makes us cry out, ‘Abba, Father!’ The Spirit Himself gives testimony to our own spirit that we are children of God!” (Rom. 8:15-16) Confirmation, then, is our own “Pentecost” when Jesus Christ pours upon us the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, enabling us to “live a life worthy of our Christian calling” (Eph. 4: 10) as the children of God.

Since we were created to God’s “image and likeness” (Gen. 1:26), and received the fullness of the Holy Spirit at the time of our Confirmation, by living our life in Him we enjoy a union with his nature called divinization. And this we achieve only by our cooperation with the Holy Spirit Who sustains us and makes us grow in the divine life. Therefore, with piety and devotion, let us constantly implore Him, “Comforter, the Spirit of truth, You are everywhere present and fill all things, Treasury of blessings and Giver of life, come and dwell within us, cleanse us of all stain, and save our souls. Thank you Gracious Lord!”

- We will celebrate Corpus Christi on Sunday, June 6th with a Corpus Christi Procession following the 10:30AM Mass at St. John’s. There will be a potluck lunch to follow. Parishioners of all three parishes are encouraged to attend for Christ’s Eucharistic Blessing upon our lives and our livelihoods.

In May of 2021 the Diocese of Fargo granted St. John Nepomucene an emergency loan for \$82,100 for the repair of its roof. \$79,100 plus 3% interest remains on this loan. \$3,000 has been received toward this loan. Thank you for this immediate and generous response!

St. John Nepomucene, St. Joseph, and Sts. Peter & Paul, Pray for Us!