This Week in Our Parish  ❖  Esta Semana en Nuestra Parroquia

**ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

If you have been watching our Masses via Facebook, you will have noticed that Father says a special prayer, the Act of Spiritual Communion, before distributing Holy Communion. Here is that Prayer, so you may pray it with Father when you are at home.

*My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually in my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.*

**UN ACTO DE COMUNIÓN ESPIRITUAL**

Si ha estado viendo nuestras Misas a través de Facebook, habrá notado que el Padre dice una oración especial, el Acto de Comunión Espiritual, antes de distribuir la Sagrada Comunión. Aquí está esa oración, para que puedas rezarla con el padre cuando estés en casa.

*Mi amado Jesús, creo que Tú estás presente en el Santísimo Sacramento. Te amo sobre todas las cosas, y deseo recibirte en mi alma. Ya que no puedo, en esta momento, recibirte sacramentalmente, ven, al menos, espiritualmente a mi corazón. Te abrazo como si Tú estuvieras ya ahí y me uno a mí mismo completamente a Ti. Nunca me permitas estar esparcido de Ti. Amen.*

**SAINTS OF THE WEEK:**

- 24th: Vincent of Lerins
- 25th: Urban I
- 26th: Philip Neri
- 27th: Bruno
- 28th: Accidia
- 29th: Ursula Ledochowska
- 30th: Joan of Arc

**UPDATES ABOUT THE SACRAMENTS**

**ACTUALIZACIONES SOBRE LOS SACRAMENTOS**

Masses for the RCIC & RCIA catechumens as well as those receiving Confirmation and First Communion will be celebrated at 7:00 pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays. The regular daily Masses on those dates will be cancelled.

Each candidate for the sacrament(s) will be allowed 4 attendees (usually parents & godparents). There will be only 4 candidates per Mass. Each family MUST sign-up to reserve their seats. These restrictions may change if the number of attendees per Mass is raised (currently at 25 people total.)

Las Misas para los catecúmenos RCIC y RCIA, así como para los que reciben la Confirmación y la Primera Comunión, se celebrarán a las 7:00 pm los Martes, Miércoles y Jueves. Las Missas diarias regulares en esas fechas serán canceladas.

A cada candidato para el / los sacramento(s) se le permitirán 4 asistentes (generalmente padres y padrinos). Solo habrá 4 candidatos por misa. Cada familia DEBE inscribirse para reservar sus asientos. Estas restricciones pueden cambiar si se aumenta el número de asistentes por misa (actualmente en un total de 25 personas).

- May 26, 27, 28: RCIA & RCIC Catechumens
- June dates: Confirmation candidates
- July & August dates: First Communion students

**WorldWide MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER:**

*“And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” Find ways to let the Lord deeper into your marriage by going on a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend on June 12-13, in Powell Butte, OR. To apply for YOUR WWME Weekend or search other dates go to rediscoverthespark.org. For information about WWME call 503-853-2758 or by email at reservations@rediscoverthespark.org.*

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

- For the repose of the soul of Bill Forman, Ruth’s husband
- For the health of all our fellow parishioners during this pandemic
- For those who are out of work, that they will be able to return to work soon
- For our graduating seniors, that they will be able to celebrate their accomplishments

*Prayer requests can be submitted through the parish website (www.stpatrickindependence.org) or by calling Chris Block at 503-623-2864.*
Today’s solemnity is that of the Ascension of our Lord into heaven. This celebration, previously known as Ascension Thursday, has great antiquity and occurred forty days after Easter. Known by different names in the Eastern rite, one has special significance, epizōzomene or “the salvation”. In the early Church, this feast marked the completion of the Divine plan because Christ returned to the Father to reign in Glory. Historically, the Paschal Candle would be extinguished at the conclusion of the Gospel, marking the disappearance of the Lamb as He ascended by His own power to the Father. Today, that custom has been moved to the Feast of Pentecost, marking the replacement of the Lamb by the Holy Spirit until Jesus returns in Glory. Formerly, a holyday of obligation, many dioceses have moved the obligation to Sunday insuring that all the faithful have the opportunity to celebrate and reflect upon this great Christological event.

In the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, the selection is addressed to Theophilus. This unusual beginning may, indeed, refer to an actual person; however, the name literally means, “God lover” and is thought by some to be inclusive of all Christians. In essence, this passage is addressed to all who love God. As lovers of God, the Apostles and all Christians must bear witness by word and action to the completion of God’s promise. This witnessing is only possible after the Holy Spirit comes and all are transformed into new “Christs”, empowered by God as they await the return of Jesus in the final days. Thus, Jesus in today’s reading requires his apostles to return to Jerusalem and wait for the Spirit. Their confusion is still evident as they ask the Lord if he is now going to restore the kingdom of Israel. Thinking like man, they still need the comprehension of God’s Will that will come with the Spirit. It is this final Divine act that will transform their very being into the likeness of Christ. For now, they are children awaiting the knowledge, strength and passion that the Spirit will bring.

It is this same empowerment that is the topic of the second reading from Paul to the Ephesians. In this reading, Paul expounds upon the authority and power granted to Christ by the Father that surpasses all greatness. Paul explains to the Ephesians that this same empowerment is given to them through the Spirit of Wisdom. Paul prays that Wisdom, a pervasive and all-powerful Spirit at work in creation, infuse itself in the Christian to accomplish the task given them by Christ. Likewise, he calls on Revelation to be granted to them in order that they may see the Divine in everything God has created and allows. This only can occur because Christ is the head of the Church, making them members of His body. This unique “marriage” of the Divine with the mortal is the fruition of the union that Christ has enabled through His life, death, and Resurrection. Through Baptism and Confirmation, Christians are elevated in status and live an unique life with Jesus, their Head.

The liturgy of the Word concludes with the Gospel of Matthew that affirms and reveals the origin of empowerment for Christians. In this Ascension account, Jesus is encountered on a mountain, a symbol of transcendence, Divine source and authority. Upon seeing Jesus, the disciples fall down and worship him. This prostration clearly reveals that they superficially understand the Divinity of Jesus. Yet, the Gospel clearly states that they “doubt”. This human level of comprehension is clearly expected as they have not yet received the Spirit. Nonetheless, the transformation has begun and Jesus proceeds to give his final instructions to them. Christ commissions them to continue His mission of conversion and of bringing God’s offer of a special relationship to all of humanity. Affirming His own authority, Christ instructs His followers to go and transform the world by baptism in the Trinity. Still suffering from a sense of insecurity and inadequacy, His followers are assured that He will always remain with them until the end of the ages. He has left them the tools they will need in His Sacraments and the final ingredient will come with the Spirit. Armed with these, they will go forward to transform a world.

It is this continual empowerment that Christ, through the Church, continues to bestow upon mankind. Christ’s words were not meant just for those of His era; rather, they are spoken to us and to our descendants, as well. Through the Baptism and Confirmation, sacraments of Initiation, we have been commissioned to continue the work of Jesus through word and example. Through the other Sacraments, we are granted tools by which we can strengthen ourselves as we live exemplary lives for others to see. Being members of the Mystical Body, our task is clearly defined. Just as the Christians of Paul’s time had to convert their world, so, too, must we transform ours. It is our responsibility, as children of God and brothers and sisters of Christ, to take our Father’s message to those who need to hear. Through humility and strength, we are called to exemplify the Good News and present the world with a new standard. It is a standard of service and love through which we sacrifice our own desires for others and for Him who sent us.

Deacon Rob

He is Risen. Alleluia! He is Risen indeed!