

Solemnity of Pentecost Sunday June 9, 2019

From the Desk of Rev. Fr. Anthony C. Ekanem, MSP:

WONDERS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

This weekend, the Church celebrates Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost has various understandings throughout history. Its roots are in the Old Testament, being the 50th day after Passover. It was called the Feast of Weeks or Shavuot, an agricultural festival celebrating the “first fruits” and giving thanks for the spring harvest (Lev. 23; Ex. 23, Ex. 34). Originally, this feast was celebrated to commemorate the giving of the Torah and the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai, and to mark 50 days after Exodus. Now, Pentecost marks the birth of our new community the church, celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the early Church 50 days after Easter, when it inspired the Apostles to spread the Good News. Pentecost also marks the end of the Easter Season. On Monday, the Paschal Candle or Easter Candle will be moved back to the Baptismal Font.

In the Gospel of John today, we notice that the disciples of Jesus were in hiding in an Upper room. They were hiding in fear behind closed and locked doors. They were shutting out the rest of the world, which was hostile, persecuting, and terrifying to them. They felt better being isolated wondering what to do next and where to go. St. John the Evangelist recounts how Jesus told His followers to get out of their isolation and fear, and go and announce the good news. You are the bearers of the Gospel, the announcers of salvation and forgiveness. Therefore, you must go and proclaim the good news to all the nations.

But they were scared and unsure, just like St. Paul, when he said his farewells at Miletus “But now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem. What will happen to me there I do not know.” (Acts of the Apostles 20:22) So Jesus promises them the Holy Spirit, because the Spirit will enable them to do what they were unable to do themselves. Note: in the action of the Spirit, there is an integral connection between the gifts of peace and forgiveness. The same Holy Spirit hovered over the waters when God created the world, the same Holy Spirit spoke through the Old Testament prophets, and Holy Spirit would descend upon the Apostles in tongues of fire and empower them in all that they do.

Most of our surprises or wonders are rooted in the Spirit. In our lives, the Holy Spirit works in different ways, especially those who believe, like our advocate, our teacher, our reminder, our consoler especially when we are scared, discouraged, felt abandoned or losing confidence in God. That is why the psalmist (Psalm 16) puts it beautifully when he says, “Keep us safe, O God; you are my hope,” Psalm 16. The responsorial Psalm of the today, “Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth” (Psalm 104) That is why today at the end of the Season as we go out to spread God’s message of love, we are called upon to renew our trust in God’s providence and cooperate in His divine assistance. This Divine help from God is to empower us because it is not the Spirit of timidity rather, “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self - control” (Galatians 5:23).

St Teresa’s life story is one example of how the Holy Spirit can guide us. She originally belonged to a Community called the Sisters of Loreto, which is a cloistered teaching Order. She was sent to the Community School in India. In 1947 during the civil war, before the independence of India, St. Teresa felt the urge to leave the confines of the cloisters, to find food for the thousands who were wounded. She felt a burning desire to offer assistance to the needy. With that experience, mixed with fear like the Apostles, made her into a changed person. St. Teresa felt the Holy Spirit calling her to do something about what she had seen during her visit to the community. St. Teresa did something unheard of: she asked to leave the cloister and to live among the people. She came out of her cloistered teaching order and ventured out and rendered help to the thousands of abandoned people. In her biography, St. Teresa speaks of surprises and wonders. She was like the Apostles that we heard about today, in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, in hiding behind the closed doors of her cloister. She said Christ surprised her. He came through the locked doors and breathed His Spirit on her. He called her to a second vocation.

There are others like St. Francis of Assisi who popped out of the moral mess of the 12th century for a second vocation. St. Maximillian Kolbe who stepped forward from the Nazi madness and died a martyr for his beliefs. Even Rosa Parks who said no to racial prejudice and refused to move to the back of the Bus and Nelson Mandela who rejected apartheid and went to prison for 20 years and remained a voice of the injustice in South Africa. Or the humanitarian services back in Africa who boldly speak up for the voiceless, ‘Chibok girls’ in northern Nigeria, who have been kidnapped.

As we celebrate the birth of the Holy Mother Church today, it is wise to take some time and ask ourselves are we attentive to the prompting of the Spirit or that burning desire deep within us? How can we fan into flame that spirit of witnessing in our world today?

You may also see in our Church a picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus displayed by the side of the Sanctuary; it is to remind us that this month is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Stewardship

Tithing - God’s Plan for Giving Sunday For 06/2/19 our Offering was \$3,861.00.

Our Second collection this week for the Father’s Day Mass Remembrance.

2019 Cardinal’s Annual Stewardship Appeal Update

Goal: \$39,500

Total Amount Paid: \$26,050.00

Total Amount Pledged: \$31,021.00

Number of Families: 91

Thank you to all of the families who have already contributed to this year’s Cardinal’s Appeal.

We have also received \$4,586.71 rebate as of 10/10/18

Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

If you haven’t had the chance to make your contribution, there is there still time. You can use the pledge letters that have already arrived at your home. And if you have not received one or have never made a pledge before, it is very easy to do so online. Just go to cardinalsappeal.org, click on Donate, select an amount, and direct your gift to our Church:

Immaculate Conception, Yonkers

Sundays Readings:

First Reading: Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11 p. 42 On Pentecost the Holy Spirit was sent to the disciples in the form of fiery tongues. They began to speak in different tongues “as the Spirit enable them to proclaim.”

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 104:24, 29-30, 31, 34, p.43

“Lord send out your Spirit , and renew the face of the earth”.

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13, p. 43 The apostle Paul wrote that there are many gifts but the same Spirit, different ministries but the same Lord.”

Gospel: John 20: 19-23 p. 45 Jesus appeared and told the disciples, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you...Receive the Holy Spirit”.

Registration 2019-2020

~~Starts on Saturday~~

June 15, 2019 - July 31, 2019

(Wednesday & Thursday 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 pm)

Classes will begin September 7, 2019

- Registration for Religious Education Program 2019 – 2020
- Joanne Kunny’s Memorial Mass will be celebrated on Saturday, June 15, 2019 at 10:00 am here at St. Mary’s where she faithfully served. The family members are inviting everyone to come and join us as we pray for the repose of her soul. Thank you.
- Church Family Directory: As we are brainstorming on how to go about getting the exact count of how many people are registered with us, we are looking into having a Parish Family Directory. If you are not registered, this is the time to contact the parish office, or use our registration form at the back of our parish bulletin. Thanks.

Mass Schedule for the week of June 8 to June 15, 2019

Special Intentions for this week

Saturday, June 8, 2019:

12:05 pm – Available/Disponibile

5:00pm - Anthony & Margaret Mary Felicissimo

*Tony Felicissimo

Sunday, June 9, 2019:

7:30 am – For Parishioners

9:00 am – Joaquin Neto *Julia Fernadez

11:00 am – Geraldina Ricchiuti + Vincent & Family

Monday, June 10, 2019:

8:15am - Carolina & Elfego Herrera Vidalis

12:05pm Barney Matthew * From Family

Tuesday June 11, 2019:

8:15am - Available/Disponibile

12:05pm – Baby Rory Rodden * Winifred John O’Flaherty

Wednesday, June 12, 2019:

8:15am - +Eder Millan

12:05 pm – Available/Disponibile

Thursday, June 13 2019:

8:15am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm – Francisco & Claudia Duggan

7:00 pm - Jesus Sacramentado * Lila Perez

Friday, June 14, 2019:

8:15am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm – Available/Disponibile

Saturday, June 15, 2019:

10:00 am – Joanne Kunny +

12:05pm—Ramon Navarro * Josefa Navarro

5:00pm - Father’s Day Novena

7:30pm - Father’s Day Novena

+ Indicates deceased

.. Indicates the person (s) who requested the Mass.

FATHER’S DAY

A 9 DAY Novena of Masses for all our fathers, living and deceased.

The Novena of Masses will begin on Sunday, June 16 - Monday, June 24. This is a great opportunity to remember those great men who have that role in our life. We encourage you to use the envelope in your package or one from the pew. We will place all those envelopes on the Altar at every Novena Mass as we offer intentions for beloved fathers. Thanks!

~Request a Mass Intention~

Those wishing to honor a loved one during the celebration of Mass may pick up Mass cards in the parish office. Mass cards are available for the living and deceased and provided opportunities for prayerful remembrance of anniversaries, birthdays, and other special intentions. Masses are usually booked at least several months in advance so if you want the Mass, it is very important that you call the parish office well ahead of time.

Have you offered Mass for your Mother yet?