

MAY 23, 2021

FEAST OF PENTECOST

The Church of

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Office staffed T, W and Th, as we are able.

We continue to offer three masses each week to enable people to attend while maintaining appropriate social distancing. The Sunday 9:30 am mass continues to be live streamed on our Facebook page. We are also offering a Saturday 5:00 pm mass and a Sunday 12:00 pm (noon) mass.

Although state capacity restrictions have been lifted, we must still maintain six feet of physical distancing between groups, which means that our attendance is still limited. The 9:30 mass is the most popular. When your schedule allows, please consider attending one of the other two services.

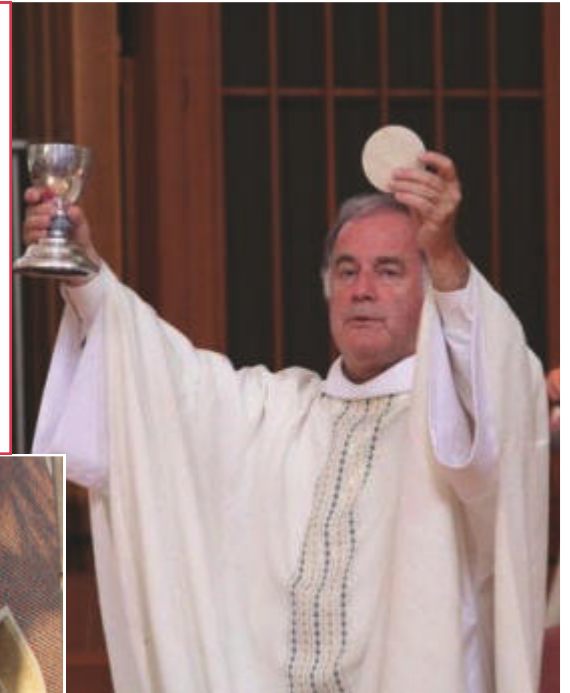
Attendance at mass is still NOT required. Please make choices that keep you and the community safe.

Fr. Joe and the staff hold you all in our prayers, and ask that you pray for us and for all the essential workers who are striving to keep things running.

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Say YES to
love and peace.
Amen! Alleluia!



www.saintalbertthegreat.org

This week at St. Albert's

(masses and intentions are in **BOLD** type)

*During the pandemic, we are offering **three** masses per weekend to help attendees maintain social distancing. Fr. Joe is still celebrating private daily masses for the intentions below.*

Saturday, May 22 –

4:00 to 6:15 pm Drive-By Donuts

5:00 pm mass **Genevieve McCarr †**

Sunday, May 23 –

9:00 am until sold out – Drive-By Donuts

9:30 am mass – **Lee Bauers †**

12:00 pm mass – **Genevieve McCarr †**

Monday, May 24 – Betty White Gettler †**Tuesday, May 25 – Sr. Jean Brennan, O.P. †****Thursday, May 27 – Joanie Klopp †**

12:00 to 3:00 pm Crafters in the Social Hall

Friday, May 28 – John Roban †

12:00 pm Funeral for Rose Holland

Saturday, May 29 –

5:00 pm mass **Genevieve McCarr †**

Sunday, May 30 –

9:30 am mass – **For the Parish**

12:00 pm mass – **Mary Brown †**

In our prayers

We remember those who need healing, including Michael Callaghan, Joan Ellison, Curt Huovie, John Fink, Ben Wilkie, Marianne Green, Dave Buck, Copper Schadow, Janeen Gault, Steve Bach and Rosella Messenbrink.

Please add a prayer for those who have died, including Joanie Klopp.

Due to HIPAA privacy standards, hospitals and care centers cannot notify us of your need for our prayers or visits unless you direct them to call.

If you or someone you know would like to be included in our prayers, or have the Sacrament of the Sick, or communion brought to you, please let the office know at 612-724-3643. Messages are checked regularly.

A new request for mass-goers:

Because the 9:30 am Sunday mass is getting so popular, we ask that those who arrive first fill in the MID-DLE designated spots in a pew. This will help keep all available spots accessible. Please cooperate with ushers who may ask this of you. Thanks!

To request that the Eucharist be brought to you at your home, please contact Fr. Joe at 612-245-3345, or Jim Curran at 612-483-1546. Volunteers will mask and safely deliver communion to you.

As you consider returning to in-person mass:

- * **We are continuing to offer three Masses** each weekend for those who wish to attend in person at 5 PM Saturday and at 9:30 and noon on Sunday. We encourage those who are age 65 or older or who have underlying health conditions to stay home and view the 9:30 AM livestream. Anyone with symptoms or recent exposure to COVID-19 must remain at home.
- * **ONLY Front center church doors are open, along with the elevator entrance. (One household at a time in elevator.)**
- * Although we have previously asked that people separate themselves alphabetically by last name, you may attend the service that is convenient for you. The 9:30 AM Mass is the most popular, and we have recently come close to capacity limits. If you have the flexibility to attend at 5 PM Saturday or noon on Sunday, we invite you to do that. We have not yet had to turn anyone away due to overcrowding, but we will regretfully do this if we run out of space at any liturgy.
- * **Thank you for wearing your masks!** This important health measure is still *required* in the city of Minneapolis until we reach vaccination targets. Please remember that your mask must cover both your nose and mouth and that you should keep it on for the entire time you are in church except when receiving communion. If you need a mask, we have disposable ones available.
- * As appealing as our music is at masses with cantors, we ask you **NOT to sing, even while masked**. This is a precaution the Archdiocese recommends, as even when we keep six feet apart, viruses can still travel further through the air when propelled by speech or singing.
- * **Please sit in marked spaces with members of your group only.** A group can consist of people from the same household or from two households that are part of a pre-existing "pod." It can also include any number of individuals who attend together and have been fully vaccinated, which means that it has been at least two weeks since the final vaccine dose. We have marked three spaces in each open pew which are spaced out to ensure that people remain six feet apart. Please sit at one of these spaces. Larger groups may need to occupy two spots. *Do not sit in an available spot if you cannot maintain six feet of separation from people who are already seated in that pew.*
- * We have been blessed recently with some delightful weather, but we expect to see a variety of temperatures in the coming months. **Please dress appropriately** for a church that will have its front door and all of its windows open even when we would normally be running the heat or the air conditioning. Also, please do not close or adjust the windows.
- * **We have resumed the distribution of communion during its proper place in the liturgy.** You may return to your seats after receiving communion. If you are not comfortable with this, you may also leave immediately after reception.
- * Please exit the church immediately after the dismissal and move away from the front doors to ensure a path for other people to exit. The only people remaining in church will be staff and volunteers who are cleaning the church in preparation for the next service. You are welcome to have conversations outside with appropriate physical distancing.

“If the Spirit descended like a dove, why did Jesus send a parakeet?”

As background to the Feast of Pentecost, the parish priest had just finished telling the school children that Jesus had to ascend to heaven before the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, would descend like a dove upon the Church. If Jesus failed to go to heaven, then the Paraclete would never come to them. One of the young children raised his hand, and the priest acknowledged the question. The child asked: “If the Holy Spirit descended like a dove, why did Jesus send a parakeet?”

In searching for the right metaphor to capture the descent of the Holy Spirit (the Paraclete), the image of a dove seems theologically appropriate. While the confusion of the word parakeet with Paraclete became the basis for humor, one might conclude that a theology without humor is strictly for the birds! While the need to occasionally ground our theology in humor does provide a saving grace from the dullness of theological and ontological argumentation, we can never lose sight of the seriousness of what Jesus’ life, death and resurrection has done for us. Jesus, making good on his word, sends the Holy Spirit among us as a lifeline of hope and joy.

In one of my all-time favorite films, *Tender Mercies*, Robert Duvall plays a struggling country singer trying to regain his dignity while battling the demons of alcoholism. Searching for hope in the tender mercies of his wife, Duvall captures the death and resurrection of a sinner in need of redemption. In one poignant scene, Duvall sings: “When troubles surround us, and when evils come, the body grows weak, the spirit grows numb. When these things beset us, God does not forget us, He sends down His love on the wings of a snow-white dove. On the wings of a snow-white dove, God sends His pure sweet love, a sign from above.”

The invitation to conversion is at the heart of the Feast of Pentecost, and the sending down of the Holy Spirit on the “wings of a snow-white dove” would provide a reasonable alternative to the wings of a parakeet. So often in scripture, the Holy Spirit is depicted in the form of a dove. In all the baptismal accounts of Jesus found in the Synoptic gospels (Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-22; Mark 1:9-11) we find almost identical wording: “*And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him; and a voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved Son with whom I am well pleased.*”

However, the Holy Spirit takes on a new image in the Acts of the Apostles (2:1-11) and appears as a “tongue of fire”: “*And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like rushing wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit.*”

St. Paul, in his first letter to the Corinthians (12:3-13), picks up on this extraordinary sense of personal conversion and recognized that “*each person is given the manifestation of the Holy Spirit for the common good.*” Paul’s emphasis was on the unity of gifts manifesting the common good of the community: “*To one is given the utterance of wisdom, another knowledge, another faith, another healing, another prophecy, another the discernment of spirits, another the working of miracles and to others speaking in tongues and to others the interpretation of tongues. All these were activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually as the Spirit chooses.*”

The Feast of Pentecost is celebrated fifty days after Easter and marks the official beginning of the Church. This “birthday” signifies an ecclesiology of acceptance and brings together both Jews and Gentiles. The accounts found in the Acts of the Apostles (2:1-11) and in the Gospel of John (20:19-23) depict the disciples as fearful individuals who had locked them-

selves in rooms for fear of persecution. In the gospel account, Jesus would offer the disciples the assurance of his peace and breathed on them saying: “*Receive the Holy Spirit.*” In the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit (the Paraclete) gave the disciples newly found courage as well as the ability to speak in different languages. In medieval iconography, the Tower of Babel is often pictured alongside the Pentecostal event. In the account of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:19), the people were trying to build a tower to reach heaven and God punished them for their arrogance by making it impossible for them to understand one another. In the Pentecost account, the disciples spoke in many languages and were understood by everyone.

In the early Western Church, Pentecost was known as “Whitsunday” and was an occasion for the baptism of new converts. Wearing white robes, these converts to the faith were dunked in the baptismal pools of local cathedrals. Following the high drama of Pentecost, the Monday following Pentecost initiates “Ordinary Time” and signals the spring season, a time of new beginnings, new plantings. The official liturgical color for vestments is green, a reflection of spring. During the early history of the Church, Pentecost was viewed as second only to Easter as an important liturgical event.

Understanding the rebirth of the Church on its annual “birthday” offers hope in a world that continues to value war over peace, personal greed over the collective sharing of wealth, institutional power over corporate responsibility, grudge bearing over mercy and forgiveness. In search of a contemporary angel of hope, the Church has been blessed with Pope Francis whose daring preaching of the Good News reaches beyond encyclicals and the “talking heads” of the Vatican. Never afraid to search for the truth, Pope Francis has confronted world governments regarding their personal greed and unwillingness to negotiate peace. The Pope’s tenacious pursuit of mercy as remedial source of insuring peace must transcend the petty self-interests of egocentric and narcissistic individuals and nations. Indeed, the current chaos exploding in the Mideast between Israelis and Palestinians is simply one more example of the failure to recognize the need for individual autonomy.

In the Book of Genesis, Noah (who was only 600 years old when the great flood occurred) toughed out forty days and nights with his immediate family in an ark full of noisy creatures. Eventually, Noah sent out a white dove (not a parakeet) who returned to the ark bearing an olive branch in its beak. The symbolism of the dove with the olive branch remains an international symbol of safety, peace and salvation. Visualizing the Holy Spirit coming upon us at Pentecost might prompt all of us to become angels of peace; however, the image of the Holy Spirit as a dove seems far more appealing than a tongue of fire. The danger of mixing metaphors (images) of a dove and a fiery tongue might leave us with a barbecued dove.

The lyrics of “On the Wings of a Snow-White Dove” conclude: “When Noah had drifted on the flood for many days, he searched for land in various ways. Troubles he had some but wasn’t forgotten by God who sent him His love on the wings of a snow-white dove.”

Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of the earth! Happy Birthday to our Mother Church and to all who find the courage to stay within it.

*Peace,
Fr. Joe Gillespie, O.P.*



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