

# Pentecost

May 23, 2021

St. James the Greater

نحن كل واحد كنيسة

**WIR SIND ALLE EINE KIRCHE**

SOMOS TODOS UNA IGLESIA

NOUS SOMMES CHACUNE DES UNE ÉGLISE

**SIAMO TUTTA LA CHIESA**

Wij zijn alle één kerk

**Vi er all en kirke**

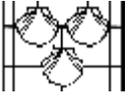
МЫ БУДЕМ ПОЛНОСТЬЮ ОДНОЙ ЦЕРКОВЬЮ

**VI ÄR ALL EN KYRKAN**

НИЕ СМЕ ВСИЧКИ ЕДНА ЦЪРКВА

כל כנסייה אחת

**WE ARE ALL ONE CHURCH**



## Message from Fr. Tom

Happy Pentecost! Pentecost is truly a glorious feast and probably the most under-celebrated in our Church. Partly it is under-celebrated because of when it falls—sometimes on Memorial Day Weekend, or the end of school or as summer vacations are just beginning. Church choirs tend to be still recovering from the strenuous effort of Holy Week. Overall, I think our minds just drift more to summer things like gardening, bicycling and so it's harder to focus on the Easter Season and Pentecost than it is to focus on Lent and Holy Week when the weather offers little distractions. In any event, let's do our best to observe the importance of **this day when a People who were lost and afraid, rather directionless, were empowered to live bold and loving lives for the glory of God.** “Clarity” and “Energy” are words that I associate with the Pentecost experience—knowing what to do and being given the inspiration to do it.

We have **another Parish Bike Ride this Sunday at 12:00** for any takers. Usually we will have two a month or so, but since I can't again until June 13, I thought back-to-back weeks was a good idea. Plus, **Pam Stumm** requested strenuous ride soon to whip her back into bicycling shape for the summer.

The **Parish Finance Council** met this week. We prayed over the Tower of Babel story from Genesis 11, which we never hear on Sundays, so that was interesting. Then, as always, we marched through financial statements. One concern was a dip in April for parish offerings, but it's too early to worry about it being a trend. Minimally we will have some parts of the church roof replaced, near the front, and we are also bracing for the possibility of needing the entire church roof replaced, in addition to repairs to the Gathering space roof where the membrane is pulling away from the corners. Happily, we had a modest capital campaign in anticipation of these needs a few years ago, so we are prepared when the time comes. Christine and Anne are preparing for a CPL (Commitment to Parish Life) renewal for early June. It's been a while since we've asked people to re-evaluate and re-commit to a regular pattern of financial giving as well as giving of time and talent to St. James.

The Finance Council also heard a **Summer Fest** update that it will be happening, raffle tickets for it will be going out with a parish newsletter before Memorial Day, and Summer Fest co-chair Randi McVinnie was able to find a company to donate our use of two big tents, which was quite an expense last year (which a parishioner covered, thankfully). Last, a budget was present to the whole council by the subcommittee, which was tweaked a bit and approved.

I have been in contact with some of **my friends in the Holy Land** during these **days of fear and violence** over there. **Majdi**, who supplied the ceramics we sold last Fall, says that he just stays inside his Bethlehem home because there is so much tear gas outside from the Israeli army trying to disperse protesting residents. A month ago, he was in the hospital for ten days with COVID. The vaccine is just not getting to the Palestinians, which is really an injustice. Our friends at the **Bethlehem L'Arche Community** contacted me to ask for some help by selling some of their new products that they make with the help of their **intellectually disabled members**. They have some Holy Land souvenir kits with soil, water and oil in small bottles, which I'm not sure would have great appeal here, but they are also marketing something that I consumed a lot of when I was over there: **OLIVE OIL!!** I never had olive oil as **tasty as the olive oil from around Bethlehem**. These bottles come **sheathed in wool from Bethlehem sheep** that is pressed and decorated by the members with disabilities. To keep costs down, they will send us oil in plastic bottles, since shipping is charged by the kilogram. Anyway, I agreed to buy 100 bottles, so sooner or later you'll have a chance to buy some! Please pray for peace.

Congratulations to all our graduates, at whatever level. We will be celebrating our **high school graduates this weekend** at a “**Baccalaureate Mass**” at the end of which I'll call up those graduates who are present to tell us a bit about their plans and so we can bless them all. What better day to bless graduates than Pentecost?

It's so great to see our membership slowly but surely coming back to in-person mass. It will be interesting to see if we can rebuild our strength in numbers to what it was. Like a patient in need of physical therapy, we will have to work at rebuilding our shrunken muscles in the months ahead. On behalf of all the rest of you, **THANK YOU so much for hanging in there with our parish community during these stressful times.** We would be less without you, and I can't wait to be back at “full strength.” Peace.

## 16 May 2021, Ascension of the Lord, Fr. Tom's homily

*Acts 1:1-11; Mark 16:15-20*

First I'd like to just share a few words addressing the sharp words at the beginning of today's Gospel passage as regards salvation of those who don't believe in the Good News of Jesus that the Apostles preached. It says that those who believe and are baptized will be saved and that those who do not believe will be condemned. That should make all of us who want good things for others squirm a bit. It's a question just about all of us grapple with at some point in our young adulthood. Do you have to be Christian to get to heaven? I could tell you my own considered opinion which might or might not be similar to yours. Instead of that I'll say some things that the Catholic Church teaches about that. Can a non-Christian get to heaven? Yes. How? Same as us—Jesus saves that person. Our Church teaches that Jesus is the unique savior of humankind, the mediator between heaven and earth. The Church also teaches that there are good and noble elements in the world's great religions that can lead a person to God. But still, Jesus is the savior and the fullness of Truth lies in him.

One thing I remember liking very much to learn when I was a young adult was a concept described by a German theologian, Karl Rahner. He coined the term "Anonymous Christian" to refer to a person who does not profess belief in Jesus but who nonetheless leads a life based on Jesus' command that we heard last week: Love one another. An anonymous Christian would be like the characters in that great parable of the Last Judgement in Matthew's Gospel account. There were those who professed belief in Jesus but who did not feed the hungry, visit the sick and the prison and clothe the naked, and they were not allowed into the Kingdom of Heaven, but there were also those who had no idea they were serving Jesus when they did those very things who entered the Kingdom of Heaven. Anonymous Christians. It might sound a little arrogant to walk up to a Jewish person or a Buddhist person and say, "Hey, you're an anonymous Christian!" Reportedly, Karl Rahner himself said that to a Buddhist person who quickly replied, "Well, I think you're an anonymous Buddhist!" Rahner was impressed and said, "That's exactly what you have to say!"

As with most all of our Church teaching, it's a synthesis of the Bible as a whole and reflection and not just a matter of quoting a verse. One thing's for sure: it's God who decides, not us. So, I hope that's interesting; I thought it was worth mentioning.

More important, I think, is what Mark describes as actions of signs that accompany a believer, actions that in fact confirm that you're a true believer. It's a surprising list, probably, to most of us. True believers will **1. Drive out Demons, 2. Speak new languages, 3. Pick of deadly serpents, 4. Survive the drinking of poison, and 5. Lay hands on the sick and heal them.** Interesting, yes? There are indeed some brands of Christian churches that feature snake handling as part of their prayer services, in imitation of today's passage.

**I'm going to suggest that we would do well to take the substance of those five accompanying signs but update them to our age.**

**Maybe driving out demons means for us today that we should confront evil when they see it.** Always being careful to note that we're not all virtuous ourselves, when we see human dignity being threatened in the ways we treat one another, in families and in our world, we are called to promote compassion and fairness. It's not so easy to speak up especially to a friend who is saying nasty things, for example.

**Maybe speaking new languages means for us to reach out to people in ways that are hard for us.** I remember trying to learn French in high school. I was handicapped by a great fear that I would sound stupid, so while I developed a decent ability to read and write it, I never learned to speak it very well. Do we dare reach out beyond our comfort zones to help others or just to grow ourselves?

**Maybe picking up snakes is mostly about simply being courageous.** It's one kind of courage to pick up a snake, and another to sincerely apologize and seek forgiveness when we've hurt someone else. In what situation this week do you need more courage to do something that would be very pleasing to God?

Continued on next page....

Fr. Tom's homily, continued....

Maybe drinking poison and surviving is mostly about developing a deep awareness of your deepest self where God dwells and where you are protected from all harm. This is the part of us that Jesus speaks of when he says "I am the Resurrection and the Life, whoever believes in me will never die." Of course, our bodies will die, but if you inhale a breath of life and light can you feel it touching something in you that will never die? Become aware and feed that part of you with love and prayer.

Last, maybe laying hands on people and curing them means for us simple acts of compassion. Do we know who around us is hurting? Do we know how healing our loving attention can be for people?

So, these things are not as exciting as handling snakes and drinking poison, but on this Feast of the Ascension, we recognize that Jesus needs us still on earth to let our faith change us and urge us forward to say no to bad things, to be bold trying new things, to find courage in doing God's will, nurture the eternal life he gives us, and, of course, to love one another with tender compassion.

### Blood Drive

St. James, Monday, June 13 from Noon -6:00 PM.  
Please call 1-800-733-2767 or visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) or call Anne at the Parish Office to schedule an appointment. Special offer from our partners at Amazon to thank you coming to give June 14-30; we'll send you a \$5 Amazon gift card by email. Restriction, terms and conditions apply.

### Music Ministry



Each week we listen to the readings which help lead us to **HARMONY**. As you listen to the WORDS of the Readings and the Music, think how that can bring **HARMONY** to your world for the week. Even though the choirs are still limited in singing together, we are thankful that our voices can bring some **JOY, PEACE**

and **HARMONY** to your week. May the Spirit and love of God Dwell within all of you!

**THANK YOU** from ALL of us with SHARED VOICES and INSTRUMENTS of PRAISE!!! Submitted by Mary Kolstad, Music Coordinator.

### Dates for Mass on the Grass:

May 22, June 12, July 3, July 24 (eve of Feast of St. James), Aug. 14 (Summer Fest)

### Mass Intentions & Schedule

Weekday masses are at 9:00 AM Tuesday-Friday.

Rosary and Adoration are available after the Tuesday Mass until 10:30 AM. The school Mass this week is Wednesday as usual, with limited seating. Friday is open to the public.

Masks & social distancing are required.

Sat.	May 22	4:30 PM Tom Bye
		6:30 PM (outside) World Peace
Sun.	May 23	8:00 AM Seminarians of the diocese
		10:00 AM People of St. James
Tue.	May 25	Enid Cota
Wed.	May 26	Shirley Brindle (School Mass)
Thu.	May 27	Mark Brantner
Fri.	May 28	Peter Castner
Sat.	May 29	4:30 PM Jack Flynn
Sun.	May 30	8:00 AM Deceased of Albert and Mary Bauer family
		10:00 AM People of St. James

### Sermon on the Amount

May 9, 2021

Sunday Adult Envelopes (155)	\$14,257.00
2020 same week (147)	\$16,241.00
Students	\$0.00
Plate	<u>\$81.00</u>
Total	\$14,338.00

Year to date Adult Env./CPL Income through April 30, 2021:

Actual (July 1-Apr. 30)	\$549,616.64
Budgeted (July 1-Apr. 30)	\$512,700.00

Long term maintenance & facilities improvement fund and Past\*Present\*Future Campaign income for May 9 was \$1,470.00 for a total since July 1, 2020 of \$60,744.28.

### Parish Staff

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**Bulletin deadlines:** end of day Mondays.



*Congratulations on your confirmation!!*



*Congratulations Alyssa and Patrick McCaughin on your sacramental wedding!  
Thanks for sharing it with us!*

### Habitat for Humanity

The director of Habitat for Humanity is coming to talk (via zoom) to the Social Concerns Committee about how St. James can get involved. All are welcome!

Are you interested in Habitat? Come to the meeting! Thursday May 27 at 5:30 PM.

### Growing Through Grief –

God doesn't give us what we can handle, God helps us handle what we are given. "All Are Welcome" as we create an environment of hope, support, respect, coping skills, care plans and mutual trust for anyone experiencing the loss of a loved one. This is a place to share positive discussions on a topic that is emotional, physical, sensitive and private.

What is said in this group, stays in the group. For more information or to join a group contact Pat Hanson at 715-835-9811, or St. James Parish office 715-835-5887.

### Miss Cindy Send-Off Parade

Thursday, June 3 | 9 to 11 AM

St. James Elementary School

Miss Cindy Sarazen, our preschool teacher at St. James Elementary School, is retiring.

We invite all families who know Miss Cindy from through the years to participate in a drive-by send-off parade in front of the school.

Families will have a chance to say goodbye and wish Miss Cindy well in her retirement

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