

Reflection on the Gospel

On Pentecost we pray to the Holy Spirit to come and renew the face of the earth. But are we really ready for that? Do we know what that would mean? We use the word “spirit” so often, and we pepper our religious conversation with it. But do we have the same understanding of “spirit” as the folks of the early Christian communities in the first-century AD? The Spirit as portrayed in the New Testament is the agent of empowerment and change. Often we run from the first and fear the second.

The spirit poured out at Pentecost was divine power, but it was not intended to make people complacent or comfortable. It was seen as a fulfillment of the prophet Joel. In the last days God promised to pour out His spirit on all flesh—meaning all humanity—and just to drive the point home, even slaves and women. The spirit would no longer be for a select few singled out by God, but for all. It would be an empowering spirit, for those gifted with it would have dreams and visions. We can call to mind the fervent wish of Moses that all the Israelites were able to prophesy. By enabling the assembled crowd to hear in their own languages, the proclamation of the apostles reverses the confusion of Babel, erasing the boundaries and barriers made by humans and beginning the process of integrating them into one community. This was made graphically clear later in the narrative of Acts, as Peter watches in dumbfounded amazement when the spirit falls on Cornelius and his household—a pagan and one of the hated Roman soldiers! In the new age that was being created by the spirit, there were no longer divisions between Jews and Greeks, slave and free, male and female. Just imagine what our world would look like if that were to be fulfilled: no nationalism, racism, sexism, class bias, or religious bigotry. Unfortunately, human fear and selfishness work overtime to undo the activity of the Spirit.

We often hear people claim to be “spiritual but not religious.” Paul has a wonderful little reality-check to see if the Holy Spirit is truly present and working in a community. Instead of “god-talk”, Paul looks for the evidence: patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Those who are moving in this direction are living in the spirit, while those who are still mired in the flesh exhibit many forms of selfishness, immorality, divisiveness, and violence. Paul emphasizes strongly the unifying activity of the spirit. There is no room for boasting, factionalism, or competition, for the Spirit and its gifts are not the personal property of anyone but are “on loan.” They all come from the same source and are to be used for the good of all. Because of the Spirit, every member of the community is of equal worth; each one has a significant role to play.

John’s presentation of the Spirit is very different. It is a quiet affair given only to a few, and there is no dramatic proclamation in the streets of the city. Jesus grants the Spirit personally by breathing on them. The Hebrew word for “spirit” is identical to that for “breath,” and the same phenomenon applies to the Greek of the New Testament. It is the same divine spirit/breath that moved across the deep in the opening lines of Genesis, and the opening lines of John even echo the opening lines of Genesis. When Jesus breathes the spirit/breath of God into the disciples, it is a re-creation and divine empowerment. Jesus sends His followers to continue the same mission he had—revealing God as God truly is to a hurting and searching world. There is no darkness, violence, or hate in the God whom Jesus reveals—only light and love. When we pray for the Holy Spirit to renew the face of the earth, let us be warned: it is not the spirit of the status quo or business as usual. Nothing will ever be the same again and neither will we. Maybe that is why the Spirit makes us nervous!



Stewardship Report: Revenue



Because of the early transmission of the bulletin due to the Memorial Day Holiday, the Stewardship Report is not available and will be printed in the next bulletin.

- **Building Maintenance:** Our **second** collection **next** weekend is for our regular **Building and Maintenance Fund**. This monthly collection enables us to make ongoing repairs, upkeep, improvements to our parish and school buildings as well as our parish grounds. May we suggest a minimum contribution of \$20 per household. As always we thank you for your continuing generosity.
- **Catholic Relief Services:** Thank you! Because of your generosity, The Catholic Relief Services Collection will be able to support disaster and emergency relief, refugee resettlement, advocacy, development and legal services for people in need all around the world. Together, we will restore hope to *Jesus in disguise*, who reminds us that Christ is present in those who suffer—and in those who respond compassionately to their needs.
- **Summer Stewardship:** Please remember that your parish counts on your weekly sacrifice of treasure, joyfully given to the Lord in gratitude, and that treasure is needed even when you’re away from us on vacation. Please remember to mail your offertory envelope to the rectory before you go away on a well-deserved holiday or drop it in the collection basket the week before you leave. Thank you for being a faithful steward!
- **Support our Patrons:** Each week we are able to produce and publish our parish bulletin through the generosity of the advertisers you see listed on the back cover. Many of these advertisers are fellow parishioners and local businesses in our community. Please patronize them when you are in need of their particular services. Remember to mention that you saw their advertisement in our bulletin. Thank them for making your weekly parish news source a reality!
- **Thank You:** We thank everyone who gave their Mom and other favorite persons a carnation for Mother’s Day. A total of \$325 was donated to the Prince Georges County Right to Life which will help to continue their education on protecting life in all stages. Thank you for your support!
- **A Stewardship Moment:** Today we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit, the birth of the Church and the beginning of its mission in the world. Pentecost Sunday reminds us that our lives are filled with the Holy Spirit and God has accomplished creative things in us through this gift. We have been entrusted with this great gift of the Holy Spirit. Now is a good time to ask: Are we being good stewards of this gift? What creative things have we done to glorify God’s accomplishments in us?

Easter Duty: This is to remind you of your Easter Duty which is more properly called the Paschal Precept. This states that all the faithful, after they have been initiated into the Eucharist, are obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled between the First Sunday of Lent (March 1st) and Trinity Sunday (June 7th). Those in serious sin are also bound to go to confession at least once a year, again, preferably in this time. (Canons 920 and 989).

Position Open: We are in need of a school nurse for the 2009-10 school year. Please contact Mrs. Wilson at 301-577-9412.

Faith Formation

Faith Formation: Classes have ended for the 2008-2009 academic year. Please check your mail next month for registration forms for 2009-2010 academic year. The fees remain the same, however, late fees still apply. You will find details in the letter to be sent home. *Let's plan ahead...classes for the fall semester will begin on Monday, September 14, 2009.* Parents, I encourage you to continue forming your children at home during the summer. You can maximize your children's participation in the liturgy by asking them to remember a simple phrase or word from the priest's homily. They will be attentive if they know that you will *quiz* them thereafter. Please call Dorothy Mensah-Aggrey in the Office at 301-459-4814 x 205 if you have any questions regarding faith formation.

Baptism: There will be no Baptism preparatory seminar this week since no family has called to register. The next scheduled seminar will be held in September if any families call ahead of time. Remember, these classes are not held automatically. They are held only when inquiries are made and parishioner requirements have been duly met.

Young Adult Ministry: The last session for this semester will be held tomorrow at 7:00 pm in the Faculty Lounge. You are welcome to join us to find out the plans we have for summer.

Test Your Catholic Knowledge: What was the significance of Mary's presence in the Upper Room when the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost? Not sure? Read Luke 1 and Acts 1 & 2.

Other Items of Note

Food Drive: Due to the kindness and generosity of Saint Matthias parishioners and school families, we have replenished our pantry shelves which will go a long way in helping the needy of our area. The Ladies of Charity would like to express their heartfelt thanks to all who helped by bringing in bags of groceries! Ms. Coyle's fourth-graders and Ms. Hughes fifth-graders collected the donations and delivered them to the Food Pantry. Well done, students!

Xtreme Teens Safe Summer: The Department of Parks and Recreation is launching a county-wide initiative called Safe Summer for young people ages 12-24 providing a safe haven after dark. The theme of the Safe Summer program is **Change Starts With Me**. Let your family, friends and neighbors know about Safe Summer and tell them to visit www.PGSafeSummer.com.

Always Our Children: The Cathedral of Saint Matthew the Apostle's Gay and Lesbian Ministry will hold its final confidential support group meeting for the year on Sunday, June 14, 2009 from 3:30-5:15pm in the West Conference Room of the Cathedral. The purpose of this meeting is to share experiences, ask questions, and receive support in a non-judgmental, Christian setting. Parents are especially encouraged to attend. The purpose of this group is not to change the individual, but to meet them where they are on their journey and offer support. If you have any questions regarding the meeting, please contact Msgr. Ronald Jameson via email: alwaysourchildren@verizon.net or by phone at 202-347-3215.

Outdoor Parish Shrines; Memorials and Tributes:

The votive lights burning from **May 31st** through **June 6th**

Shrine of the Sacred Heart

For the Special Intentions of: Carmen and Richard Kosko on the occasion of their Anniversary.

For the Happy Repose of: Bernard Campbell

Shrine of the Madonna & Child

For the Happy Repose of: Christine P. Prieto



Mass Intentions from Pentecost thru the Ninth Week in Ordinary Time

Monday, June 1: Justin, martyr

8:30 am Henry Len

Tuesday, June 2: Marcellinus & Peter, martyrs

8:30 am Rev. G. William Finch

Wednesday, June 3: Charles Lwanga & companions, Martyrs

8:30 am Rev. Msgr. William F. O'Donnell

Thursday, June 4:

8:30 am Father Cornelius Thomas Kane, O.P.

Friday, June 5: Boniface, bishop & martyr

8:30 am Edwin & Rita Walters

Saturday, June 6: Vigil – The Most Holy Trinity

3:30 pm to 4:30pm—Confessions

5:00 pm George Alfred Jones

Sunday, June 7: Solemnity of The Most Holy Trinity

8:00 am George Kiriakon

9:30 am Ruth Warren

11:30am Intentions of Cynthia & Emmanuel Amanyeiwe

Please Pray for: †The Sick and Homebound In Our Parish:

Karen Adkins; Khephren Andrews; Mary Bittner; Margaret Brooks; Lisa Farland; Dennis George; Helen Guditis; Charles Henry; Lena Jacobs; Ray Krok; Joe Makowski; Willie (Bill) Moore; Peter O'Neill; Joe & Irene Pezzuti; Bill Pinchback; Rohland Reich; Molly & Marshall Sashkin; Joe Sico; Margaret Tolzman; Anita Topnick; Margaret Zanin

†For the Deceased:

†Names will be placed on our prayer list for three weeks. To add a name or to request continuing prayers, please contact Carmen Kosko by email at ckosko@stmatthias.org or by phone at 301-459-4814 ext 201.

Apostleship of Prayer—Our Holy Father's Intentions for the Month of June 2009: Foreign Debt Relief.

That international efforts to help poorer nations bring prompt, concrete results to relieve the crushing burden of foreign debt. **The Church in Areas of Violence.** That local Church communities serving areas torn by violence may be supported through the love and help offered by Catholics around the world.

SCHOOL RAFFLE WINNER

Congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Robinson of Bowie, MD (winner of \$350) as winner AND seller of this week's ticket!



Out of the Mouths of God's Kids



While driving in Pennsylvania, a family caught up to an Amish carriage. The owner of the carriage obviously had a sense of humor, because attached to the back of the carriage was a hand printed sign...

"Energy efficient vehicle: Runs on oats and grass. Caution: Do not step in the exhaust!"