



Church of the Holy Family  
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## Message for the 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter, Year A, 2020

Dear Parishioners of the Church of the Holy Family

In the Gospel text of this Sunday, Jesus mentioned the Holy Spirit in Jn 14 as (1) a Gift of God the Father, (2) another Advocate, and (3) the Spirit of Truth. You may observe that every year from the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter onwards to the conclusion of the Easter Season at Pentecost where the outpouring of the Holy Spirit took place, the Gospel passages are selected from Jn 14 -17, our Lord's Farewell Discourse located at the end of the Last Supper. Here, our Lord wants to prepare his disciples for his eventual departure yet assure them that they won't be abandoned if they stay focus on prayer and putting into action the Lord's commandments. Hence, the Church likewise prescribes these texts for these few Sundays in order to help us to prepare to renew our friendship with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is a Gift of God the Father just as Jesus is and everybody we know. We are reminded of this whenever the celebration for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation is held when the presider pronounced on each confirmant, "Receive the Holy Spirit, the Gift of the Father". Besides, God gives us many blessings for our individual needs and growth, for the needs of our family, for the needs of our community, for the needs of the Church, for the needs of our country and for the needs of the world. In this time, there is an urgent need for God's wisdom to help all the virologists, immunologists, epidemiologists, pharmacologists and many other experts to work together all over the world to hasten our discovery of a vaccine to counter the Covid-19 virus.

In the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, the Holy Spirit is also given to the Samaritans, estranged kin of the Jews. The Holy Spirit is not a gift just for the pioneer disciples but for every believer of Christ. The deacon Philip (feast day 11<sup>th</sup> Oct) has been inducted into this special ministry of the Church along with Stephen and 5 others as mentioned in last Sunday's 1<sup>st</sup> Reading. He travels to Samaria, preach the Gospel to them who after accepting the Word were prayed upon by Peter and John and the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is another Advocate for us just as Jesus Christ is our first Advocate who intercedes for all of us and reconciled us to the Father by His passion, death and resurrection. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, we are told that Christ who is innocent 'died for the guilty to lead us to God.' The Easter Sequence, too, echoes a parallel, '*Christus innocens Patri reconciiavit peccatores.*'

Pope St John Paul II in his Apostolic Letter *Dominum et Vivificantem* 4, "[The Spirit] will help people to understand the correct meaning of the content of Christ message...in the

midst of changing conditions and circumstances...continue the same truth which the Apostles heard from their Master." The Spirit of Truth is to open the minds of believers so as to remember and understand the teachings and commandments of Jesus. Once again, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading tells us that 'in the Spirit, He was raised to life.'

17<sup>th</sup> May is the feast day of St Pascal Baylon. 18<sup>th</sup> May is the feast day of Pope St John I who died in AD 526 while 19<sup>th</sup> May is feast day of Pope St Celestine V and St Dunstan of Canterbury. 20<sup>th</sup> May is the feast day of St Bernardine, patron saint of Siena.

We celebrate the Lord's Ascension on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May, forty days after His resurrection. 22<sup>nd</sup> May is the feast day of St Rita and on 23<sup>rd</sup> May, we commemorate the Martyrs of Cappadocia.

The Response exhorts us to 'Cry out with joy to God all the earth' for 'He did not reject my prayer' (Ps 65:20). Alleluia!