



St. Mary's R. C. Church

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Newsletter

Pentecost Sunday

May 31st 2020

My dear parishioners at St. Mary's and St. Paul's,

Today the church's sacred liturgy brings us to the great Solemnity of Pentecost. It should have been a very busy and joyful weekend in the parish with the celebration of Confirmation at St. Mary's on Saturday and at St. Paul's on Sunday. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit comes to all the young people who were to be confirmed and give them the gifts they need at this stage of their journey. Let's remember also Bishop Toal who was looking forward to spending the weekend with us.

The Solemnity of Pentecost is the celebration of the gift of the Holy Spirit. I offer these words from Pope Benedict for your reflection:

“The Holy Spirit is first and foremost a Creator Spirit, hence Pentecost is also a feast of creation. For us Christians, the world is the fruit of an act of love by God who has made all things and in which he rejoices because it is ‘good’, it is ‘very good’, as the creation narrative tells us (Genesis 1:1-31. Consequently God is not totally Other, unnameable and obscure.

God reveals himself, he has a face. God is reason, God is will, God is love, God is beauty. Faith in the Creator Spirit and faith in the Spirit whom the risen Christ gave to the apostles and gives to each one of us are therefore inseparably united. The gospel passage offers us a marvellous image to clarify the connection between, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Father; the Holy Spirit is portrayed as the breath of the Risen Jesus Christ. Here the Evangelist John takes up an image of the creation narrative, where it says that God breathed into the nostrils of man the breath of life (Genesis 2:7).

The breath of God is life. Now the Lord breathes into our soul the new breath of life, the Holy Spirit, his most intimate essence, and in this way welcomes us into God's family. With Baptism and Confirmation this gift was given to us specifically, and with the sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance it is continually repeated: the Lord breathes a breath of life into our soul.”

Pope Benedict XVI

I hope you find these words from Pope Benedict helpful. In every situation, even very difficult ones, the Holy Spirit breathes life into us and invites us to choose life. The Holy Spirit creates the bond of love between Jesus and the believer and so invites us to follow Jesus in all the circumstances we will face on our journey through life. To say we are living in unusual times and circumstances is to state the obvious; the Coronavirus has led us into uncharted territory and we are trying tentatively to find our way forward into a new type of life. We will need courage to be creative in our response and so we very much need the help of the Creator Spirit. May the Holy Spirit guide each one of us to go on choosing life and help us in a creative response to the challenges we are facing together.

Father O'Brien

Let me share with you the names of those who have died during these weeks when we have been unable to gather for Mass:

John Boyce
James Donnelly,
Mary Teresa Lees,
Silvio (Steve) Ferri,
Tess McMahan,
Helen Brown,
Margaret McCluskey,
James McDougall,
John Henderson,
Tom O'Brien,
James McMenemy,
Frances Murphy,
Brian Porteous,
Susan McAteer,
Margaret Boyd,
Julia (Sheila) O'Neill
Stephen Mann

I know you will remember these men and women in your prayers and also their families, who said farewell to a loved one in the most difficult of circumstances. It is painful not to have the beauty of the Requiem Mass in the church and the comfort and strength that comes from the good presence of family and friends and neighbours.

A Greeting to the Communities at St. Mary's and St. Paul's Primary Schools

My dear friends at St. Mary's and St. Paul's Primary Schools,

You are often in my thoughts and prayers, especially when I celebrate Holy Mass each morning in St. Mary's Church or St. Paul's Church. I can tell you that Cadzow Street and Backmuir Road have become very quiet without you coming and going from school. I miss your joyful presence very much.

I have always looked forward to those special days when you walked from school to church so that we could celebrate Mass together. The parishioners and I looked forward to seeing you, from Primary 1 to Primary 7, accompanied by your teachers and the support staff. I cannot tell you how special it is for me as your parish priest to look out at you from the altar and to see the whole community gathered for Mass. It is a wonderful sight!

We are always at our very best when we gather together around the altar with Jesus, who loves each one of us very much. I miss hearing your voices reading the Holy Scriptures and saying your prayers and I miss very much listening to your wonderful singing. A day without music is like a day without sunshine!

The lovely month of May, dedicated to Our Lady would have been a very busy month for us with the celebration of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. We were all looking forward to these special moments together. Please tell your parents that I am thinking about them also and I look forward to celebrating these sacraments with you when it is safe to do so.

I would like to say a special word to the pupils of Primary 7. I cannot tell you how sorry I am that you are missing the final months of your time with us at St. Mary's Primary and at St. Paul's Primary. Normally all sorts of lovely events would be enjoyed together as a way of saying thanks for your years together at St. Mary's or at St. Paul's.

How you have grown and in so many ways! I hope you might get the chance to look at a photo of yourself in Primary 1 and then to look at yourself in the mirror. I think you will see just how much you have grown and changed since your Mum and Dad brought you into the Primary 1 classroom. I think you will agree there is so much to say 'thank you' for.

Of course you will be looking forward to beginning a new stage of your life at High School. I pray that the Holy Spirit will give each one of you the graces you need for the years ahead. May you be happy and safe at High School.

Finally, I look forward to the joyful day when we can all meet again at St. Mary's or at St. Paul's to celebrate the eucharist together. In the meantime look after each other with kindness and care,

Yours sincerely,
Father O'Brien