

PENTECOST SUNDAY

ST. NICHOLAS PARISH

WELCOME BACK! It has been eleven weeks since we have been able to be together. You have been filled with all kinds of news, some of it very confusing which has added to a great deal of anxiety for so many. But we are here. We are here to pray. This is the most important thing for us now. We are here to hear the Word of God and to come to Communion. We need this because this is most important to us. So, Let Us Pray Today.

This Sunday we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost. The Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks of the day of Pentecost in paragraph 1076. *“The Church was made manifest to the world on the day of Pentecost by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Spirit ushers in a new era in the ‘dispensation of the mystery’ – the age of the Church, during which Christ manifests, makes present, and communicates his work of salvations through the liturgy of his Church, ‘until he comes.’ In this age of the Church, Christ now lives and acts in and with this church, in a new way appropriate to this new age. He acts through the sacraments in what the common Tradition of the East and the West calls ‘the sacramental economy’; this is the communication of the fruits of Christ’s Paschal mystery in the celebration of the Church’s ‘sacramental’ liturgy.”* In short, the Holy Spirit makes Christ present in the Church as well as within the world. This Holy Spirit is vibrant and dynamic. The Church is the Sacrament of Salvation by drawing us into communion with Christ. The Holy Spirit is the Unifying factor. We recall that day when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. We know that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Love and Truth that proceeds from the Father and the Son. As the purest and absolute Love, the Holy Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son. This love is so perfectly actualized that it is a “Person”: Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity: The Holy Spirit is God. We pray in the creed; the Holy Spirit *“proceeds from the Father and the Son”*. The Triune God comes into the world in the Incarnation and now in the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit. The great the Love of God draws us into communion with the Holy Trinity in and through Christ and his Church.

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is physically manifested through the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnate Word through whom all creation comes to be. In the Second Person we have the fullness of Divinity and Humanity in perfect communion. We are reminded from the beginning of Genesis and the beginning of the Gospel of St. John that all creation came to be through the Word spoken by God. The Holy Spirit present at the beginning of creation (the mighty wind over the abyss) and at the Incarnation (the Holy Spirit will overshadow you) is creative and gives life. This is wonderfully displayed in humanity. We are “called” into being, have life and are created in the *image and likeness* of God. From the very beginning we are lovingly called to life and invited to live in the fullness of love and life in God. Our destiny is to share in the very life of God: Salvation. Love is our origin, our calling and our final destination. However, we find this difficult to understand and live because of Original Sin and our free will.

The path to the inner life of God (Love) is revealed in and through the Incarnate Son of God: Jesus Christ. *“No one can come to the Father but through me.”* John 14:6. It is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Love and Truth, who descended upon the Blessed Virgin Mary through whom Jesus Christ entered our world. It is also the same Holy Spirit who descends upon the Apostles which constitutes the birth of the Church: The Body of

Christ in the world today. Through Jesus Christ and His Church, we are drawn by the power of the Holy Spirit into this deep communion of love with God. It is through Jesus Christ and his Church that we find our salvation.

We cannot know and understand this without the Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit to come to know and love God. We need the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

We are drawn into greater communion with God in Sacred Scripture, most especially through the Gospels. It is the Holy Spirit who inspires the Scriptures. It is the same Spirit we call upon as we read the Scriptures. It is the same Spirit who assists us in plunging deeper into God’s self-revelation in the Scriptures. We need the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, to assist us to come to know and love God. We cannot know and love God without the Holy Spirit. At best we can only know something about God without the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit animates the life of God within us and the Church. We receive life through Christ, we live this life in Christ, and we come to the Father through Christ. Christ’s gift to the world is His abiding presence in the Church and her Sacraments. The power of the Holy Spirit present at the conception of Jesus as he descended upon the Blessed Mother is the same Holy Spirit who descended upon the Apostles in the upper room, the birth of the Church. The Church is thus the presence of Christ in the world today. It is in the Church where we encounter Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit our lives continue to be reconfigured by the Word of God and the Sacraments. We can call it our “continuing conversion” to Christ.

It is through the Sacramental life of the Church that we are drawn closer to God. We know that the Sacraments are encounters with Christ just as the scriptures are encounters with Christ who is the Word of God made flesh. The Sacraments communicate the saving grace of God: Jesus Christ. As Catholic Christians we know and understand that the Sacraments of the Church are *essential* for our life in Christ. The Holy Spirit, alive in the sacramental action of the Church assists us in bringing our encounter with Christ to greater maturity.

Consider the early life of the Church. The Apostles along with many people encountered Jesus Christ personally. They witnessed many things. Most especially the Apostles witnessed Jesus’ passion, death, resurrection and Ascension. However, they did not fully understand what they were witnessing. It was necessary for them to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit for them to come to understand the truth of all they were privileged to witness. If we consider all that we know and understand today about Jesus Christ in comparison with the early Christians, we can appreciate the growth and development of our Christian Faith. This growth could only be possible with the Power of the Holy Spirit.

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to the Church and the Baptized for the maturing of the presence of Christ in our lives, our church community and the world. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are necessary for our ongoing conversion to Christ. The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon Christians are *wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord*. These gifts empower the Church and the Christian to enter deeper into our life in Christ. These Gifts complete and perfect the natural virtues for those who are open to receive them, giving them divine insight and empowerment.

We know this to be true since the teachings of the Church continue to grow in greater insight and wisdom. The development of the doctrines of the Church has taken place under

the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We know the greater clarity and articulation of our faith through the history of the Church: As the Catechism referred “*in a new way appropriate to this new age.*” The Holy Spirit, the heart and soul of the Church, continues to bring the fullness of Christ’s presence into our lives and the world. As this is true of the Church it is also true for us. Our understanding and insight into the teachings of Jesus have matured and developed over our lifetime. However, this does not happen without our cooperation with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We must spend time in prayer seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit to grow in the knowledge and understanding of our faith. It’s not magic. It must come from a sincere and honest desire to know, love and trust our Lord Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. This is what the Church has done over her history and it is what is necessary for us as well.

On this feast of Pentecost, we recall the beginning of the Church as a mighty wind came down upon the Apostles. Something new is created: The Church. We live in this new creation by virtue of our Baptism. We live in Christ. We are filled with His Holy Spirit. It is with the Holy Spirit of God that we live and move and have our being. We allow the Holy Spirit to guide us trusting that our final destination is that perfect communion of love in God.

Have a Joy filled Week.
Father Ralko

This week we pray Week I of the Liturgy of the hours.

ELCETRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS

St. Nicholas Church has a convenient way to make your regular offerings. With our electronic giving program, you can easily set up a recurring giving schedule. We encourage you to set up a schedule of recurring contributions. It’s convenient for you and provides much-needed consistency for our church. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. Even when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, our church will continue to receive your contributions on an uninterrupted basis. To become an electronic giver, call or visit the church office for a brief form to fill out.

Sacrament of Reconciliation – Confessions are currently by appointment only.

Please do not use the cry room unless absolutely necessary.

The room is too small to afford social distancing and should only be used on a very limited basis. Thank you.

During this time when we do not have the **Music Issues** available for use, each Sunday's songs will be posted on the St. Nicholas website for you to download to your phones and sing from your phones during Mass, or even print them off for yourself. These are options to help you participate and praise God in song as fully as possible during these uncertain times.

With the return to Church, **Baptisms** can now be scheduled. Pre-Jordan classes will be scheduled individually. Please call the office to schedule both Pre-Jordan classes and Baptisms. (740) 453-0597, ext. 14.



Summer Office Hours

PARISH OFFICE SUMMER HOURS

The Parish Office will have irregular summer hours at least for the next few weeks. Please call to make sure we are open.

For I know the
Plans
I have for you,
declares the *Lord*
Plans to *Prosper* you
and not to harm you
Plans to give you
Hope and a Future
-Jeremiah 29:11

Congratulations to all area 2020 graduates!

BISHOP ROSECRANS HIGH SCHOOL/ BISHOP FENWICK SCHOOL SCRIP PROGRAM

Gift cards in our SCRIP program at Bishop Rosecrans High School and Bishop Fenwick Schools can still be purchased. As of now, any special SCRIP orders will be ordered on Monday’s. SCRIP is still being sold from inventory. If you would like to purchase SCRIP at any time or need information about our program, please email Julie Wagner or call the school office at (740) 452-7504. A time will be arranged for the gift cards to be picked up.

You don’t even have to purchase the physical cards!! Go to shopwithscrip.com and set up an account to purchase ecards that will automatically be downloaded to my wallet in your account where the gift cards can be used from your phone or can be printed for future use. If you have already purchased a physical card from our SCRIP program, you can reload the card as many times online and still earn the percentage towards tuition.

The American Red Cross is looking for local volunteers throughout Ohio that would be willing to help at blood drives and local disasters. In addition, we are also looking for "HELP FROM HOME" volunteers to help with volunteer support. All required training and resources will be provided. For more info, send an email to volunteerohio@redcross.org or visit our volunteer website at www.redcross.org/volunteer Blood Donors are also needed in every area - visit redcrossblood.org to find the closest donation site near you to schedule an appointment! Thanks in advance for your consideration.

PENTECOST SUNDAY

This weekend, the Church celebrates **Pentecost**, one of the most important feast days of the year that concludes the Easter season and celebrates the beginning of the Church. Here's what you need to know about the feast day:

The timing and origins of Pentecost

Pentecost always occurs 50 days after the death and resurrection of Jesus, and ten days after his ascension into heaven. Because Easter is a moveable feast without a fixed date, and Pentecost depends on the timing of Easter, Pentecost can fall anywhere between May 10 and June 13. The timing of these feasts is also where Catholics get the concept of the Novena - nine days of prayer - because in Acts 1, Mary and the Apostles prayed together "continuously" for nine days after the Ascension leading up to Pentecost. Traditionally, the Church prays the Novena to the Holy Spirit in the days before Pentecost.

The name of the day itself is derived from the Greek word "pentecoste," meaning 50th.

What happens at Pentecost?

In the Christian tradition, Pentecost is the celebration of the person of the Holy Spirit coming upon the Apostles, Mary, and the first followers of Jesus, who were gathered together in the Upper Room. A "strong, driving" wind filled the room where they were gathered, and tongues of fire came to rest on their heads, allowing them to speak in different languages so that they could understand each other. It was such a strange phenomenon that some people thought the Christians were just drunk - but Peter pointed out that it was only the morning, and that the phenomenon was caused by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit also gave the apostles the other gifts and fruits necessary to fulfill the great commission - to go out and preach the Gospel to all nations. It fulfills the New Testament promise from Christ (Luke 24:46-49) that the Apostles would be "clothed with power" before they would be sent out to spread the Gospel.

Where's that in the bible?

The main event of Pentecost (the strong driving wind and tongues of fire) takes place in Acts 2:13, though the events immediately following (Peter's homily, the baptism of thousands) continue through verse 41.

Readings for Week of June 1

Mon.	Gn 3:9-15, 20	Jn 19:25-34
Tues.	2 Pt 3:12-15a, 17-18	Mk 12:13-17
Wed	2 Tm 1:1-3,6- 12	Mk 12:18-27
Thurs.	2 Tm 2:8-15	Mk 12:28-34
Fri.	2 Tm 3:10-17	Mk 12:35-37
Sat.	2 Tm 4:1-8	Mk 12:38-44
Sun	Ex 34:4b-6, 8-9	Jn 3:16-18

Our thoughts and prayers remain with those serving our country currently and with their loved ones at home. We pray for a safe homecoming and that the world may one day be at peace.

Happy Birthday, Church

It was right after Pentecost that Peter preached his first homily to Jews and other non-believers, in which he opened the scriptures of the Old Testament, showing how the prophet Joel prophesied events and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. He also told the people that the Jesus they crucified is the Lord and was raised from the dead, which "cut them to the heart." When they asked what they should do, Peter exhorted them to repent of their sins and to be baptized. According to the account in Acts, about 3,000 people were baptized following Peter's sermon. For this reason, Pentecost is considered the birthday of the Church. Peter, the first Pope, preaches for the first time and converts thousands of new believers. The apostles and believers, for the first time, were united by a common language, and a common zeal and purpose to go and preach the Gospel.

Pentecost vestments and customs around the world

Typically, priests will wear red vestments on Pentecost, symbolic of the burning fire of God's love and the tongues of fire that descended on the apostles. However, in some parts of the world, Pentecost is as White Sunday, referring to the white vestments that are typically worn in Britain and Ireland. The white is symbolic of the dove of the Holy Spirit, and typical of the vestments that catechumens desiring baptism wear on that day. An Italian Pentecost tradition is to scatter rose leaves from the ceiling of the churches to recall the miracle of the fiery tongues, and so in some places in Italy, Pentecost is sometimes called Pascha Rosatum (Easter roses). In France, it is tradition to blow trumpets during Mass to recall the sound of the driving wind of the Holy Spirit. In Asia, it is typical to have an extra service, called genuflexion, during which long poems and prayers are recited. In Russia, Mass goes often carry flowers or green branches during Pentecost services.

What's Happening in Our Parish

MONDAY, June 1, The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of The Church

9:00 a.m., Mass: Jeff Steed, Church

TUESDAY, June 2, SS Marcellinus and Peter

9:00 a.m., Mass: Ruth Marie Nau, Church

WEDNESDAY, June 3, St. Charles Lwanga

9:00 a.m., Mass: Edwin Staley, Church

THURSDAY, June 4

9:00 a.m., Mass: Pastor's Intention, Church

FRIDAY, June 5, St. Boniface

9:00 a.m., Mass: Margaret Denbow, Church

The Most Holy Trinity

SATURDAY, June 6, St. Norbert

5:15 p.m., Mass: Albert Crock, Church

SUNDAY, June 7

8:15 a.m., Mass: St. Nicholas Parishioners, Church

10:45 a.m., Mass: June Shawger, Church