

JUNE 3 / 4, 2017

Pentecost Sunday

1. In today's second reading, St. Paul reminds the Corinthians, "There are different gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different ministries, but the same Lord." How am I using my gifts for the common good?
2. The pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the followers of Jesus at Pentecost marks the beginning of the Church. They experienced a sudden burst of energy and joy; the work of the Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to continue his own work. The disciples were strengthened in their faith that the Risen Christ would come again. In the meantime, the message about Him had to be proclaimed. The Holy Spirit is within each of us in a profoundly unique and robust way, engaging us, encouraging us. As stewards of this magnificent gift, how are we responding? How are we proclaiming the Risen Christ?

OR This weekend we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit among the believers of the early Church. Saint Paul reminds us of the special power the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon us and how that power gives us the potential to live extraordinary lives of faith. Good stewards recognize this power and use their gifts, through God's channel of grace, to transform their lives and the lives of others, and thus hasten God's Kingdom. Good stewards know that it is through the Holy Spirit that they can proclaim: "Jesus is Lord."

3. **"Peace be with you!" (John 20:19-23)** On that first Easter Sunday the disciples were behind **locked doors**. Jesus entered the room despite the **locked doors**. He said, "Peace be with you!" A week later he appeared to them again in the same room. They were still behind **locked doors**. On Pentecost, fifty days after the resurrected Jesus first appeared to the Apostles, they accepted their responsibility to be good stewards of the message and the mission of Jesus Christ. They were at peace with their faith in Jesus as the Risen Lord. They came out from behind the **locked doors** and courageously proclaimed the Good News. They have passed on that responsibility to each of us in our own time. They challenge us to come out from behind **locked doors**, the barriers we build to avoid being Jesus present in our world. Are we at peace with our faith in Jesus as the Risen Lord? Are we doing our part to carry on the mission and speak the message of Jesus?

June 10/11, 2017

The Most Holy Trinity

1. The Gospel today is sometimes called “the Gospel in miniature” because it so concisely sums up the Gospel message. In even more condensed form, “God loved... God gave... ” is the paradigm for stewardship. We give because we love.
2. In the Creed, we profess our faith each weekend in Jesus, God’s only Son, the risen Christ who continues His loving, active presence in the world through the Holy Spirit. We believe in an intense, loving communion of three persons in one God. This divine communion of love that binds Father, Son, and Spirit is the same communion that unites and nurtures us as a communion of faith; so that we can be one even as the Trinity is one. It is a communion of women and men with God and each other. This week reflect on how you can contribute to your parish being as “one.”

OR In today’s second reading Saint Paul’s final appeal is a call for unity. God created that unity. Good stewards who share Christ’s life in the Eucharist belong to each other, just as God in the three persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit enjoy unity. We are an intimate part of God’s divine bond, God’s “family.” Saint Paul maintains that we ought to act that way. In the Church there is a bond of family, yet plenty room for variety. Christian stewards use their uniquely varied gifts to live a Trinitarian faith, in unity, promoting Christ’s peace and justice. How do we promote unity in our parish?

3. ***“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all! (2Corinthians 13:11-13)*** At the beginning of the celebration of the Eucharist, and whenever we sign ourselves in the name of our Triune God, we proclaim our belief in Three Persons in One God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Their eternal and mutual relationship of Giver, Given, and Gift is a witness and a challenge to us to share in that relationship with them and with each other and with all others. The mystery of the Trinity invites us to acknowledge that we are a gift from God. All that we are and have has been given to us for our own benefit and enjoyment, and for us to share with others. As gift, given, and giver we share in the life of the Trinity and we make present to others the Mystery of the Trinity. Being a cheerful and joy filled giver begins with being grateful for what we have been given. And so we sign ourselves with a cross as we say, “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” as a constant reminder that we are gift, given, and giver.

JUNE 17/18, 2017

Body & Blood of Christ

1. The Scriptures today remind us that, “we, many though we are, are one body for we all partake of the one loaf.” How are we using our gifts of time and talent to build up the Body of Christ?”
2. God sent His only Son so that He might be present to us in a way which he could relate in the person of Jesus. In turn Jesus gave us the gift of the Eucharist, that he might be present to us always. In the Eucharistic prayer at Mass, what was once ordinary bread and wine is transformed into the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Good stewards understand that when they leave the Eucharistic celebration, they bring Christ’s very presence, his peace and his healing to a broken world. After participating in the Mass, how do we honor the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ? How do we choose to bring His presence to others in our family, neighborhood and world?

OR Among the compelling Eucharistic themes proclaimed in today’s readings is the notion of “participation” as found in Saint Paul’s letter to the Corinthians. Good stewards are part of a Eucharistic family: loving, welcoming, serving. An important part of living as a steward comes about in the many ways we can participate in the life of the Church. No matter how much time we have to give, no matter what our skills or interests, no matter what our level of commitment, there is a way to participate as a good steward to enrich our lives, and build up the Body of Christ.

3. ***“The bread I will give you is my flesh for the life of the world.” (John 6:51)*** These were very disturbing words for the Jews, who asked, “How can this man give us flesh to eat?” Before we judge them too harshly, we should remember that we have the witness of two thousand years of Christians who had great devotion and sacrificed much, often their lives, for their faith in the Real Presence of Jesus. For the Jews listening to Jesus this was a strange concept that produced grotesque images. Today, many Jews, non-Catholic Christians, and non-Christians no longer question our belief in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Some wish to share in our Communion. They appreciate the privilege we have of receiving Christ in His Body and His Blood, so that we may be strengthened to be His Body and Blood for others in the world. Do we truly appreciate that privilege and are we good stewards of the Body and Blood of Jesus that we receive?

June 24/25, 2017

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1. The psalmists assure us that “the Lord hears the cry of the poor.” Often, however, He answers their need through the generous gift of good stewards.

OR “Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed,” Jesus tells us in the Gospel today, “and nothing hidden that will not become known.” May our stewardship of God’s gifts be such that we would not be ashamed if it were seen in the clear light of day.

2. St. Paul writes that it is through the tremendous generosity of God, the Father that we have the great gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the gift that keeps on giving: by his calling, teaching, healing, reconciling and loving presence in our lives. Jesus reads the signs of the times for us: the relational, social, political, and economic situations in our personal lives. The good steward rejoices in the gift of Jesus through joys and sorrows, good days and bad; through gladness and anxieties, hopes and disappointments. As believers, we have faith in the authenticity of the gift of Jesus. The question for us is: How do we respond to such a generous gift?