

May 27-28, 2017

Thoughts from the pastor,

Last week I wrote about another reason why people have joined the Catholic Church. There are many more reasons because God calls each of us differently since we are each unique. This is a part of the work of the Holy Spirit. At the Last Supper Jesus told the apostles: "it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you." (Jn.16:7) The Holy Spirit is that Advocate. With His physical presence Jesus could offer us a way of knowing God through our five senses. But that limited Him to those who could see and hear him at that time. He gave us His Word, which comes from the Father and we now have as the Bible. The Word spread through the apostles and then all His followers. But the Holy Spirit has a different set of gifts to offer us.

The Holy Spirit can offer things to us that do not come through the five senses. The primary gifts of wisdom, understanding, right judgment, knowledge, courage, reverence, and fear of the Lord, come from the Holy Spirit's work in our minds. These gifts and many others can direct us to do amazing things. The Saints are examples of that. Jesus gave us the Holy Spirit so that we would have those possibilities as individuals.

The Holy Spirit guides the Church, through the popes and bishops, the Sacred Scriptures and Sacred Tradition. But the Holy Spirit also is able to work with each one of us personally. In this way I can be touched by God from where I am at this point in space and time, but also in who I am at this moment; and so can you. God wants to be with each of us, and He wants us to be with Him. We just have to open our hearts to Him.

Some might think that the only way to pray to the Holy Spirit would be to join a Charismatic Prayer group. This is possible and many have been blessed in this way, but it can be much easier. It can simply be a matter of sitting with Scripture each day and praying: "Come Holy Spirit" before you start to read. Do that each day and you will be opening yourself to the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart. The more you do it the more you will be open and the more gifts you will receive.

My next effort to build the family at SEAS will be this weekend. It is Memorial Day weekend. It is a time to remember those who have died in service of our country and all of our deceased loved ones. At the end of Mass I am going to simply ask everyone to take a moment and find out which deceased loved ones the people around you are praying for. Be sure and mention which deceased loved one you are praying for also. After all, it is here in church with the Lord, that we have the closest connection with our loved ones who are in the hands of the Lord.

If you were here last weekend you should have had a chance to see the Ascension window. It is in place and is a wonderful completion of that space in the narthex. Notice that Jesus looks even more magnificent than in the Resurrection window. I presume that is because He is excited to head back to heaven and be with the Father. The apostles have a look of amazement on their faces. That would be because the last words of Jesus before He ascended were: "And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." (Mt.28:20) They were probably still trying to figure out how that was going to be the case as He was disappearing from their sight. You will notice that there are only nine apostles and not eleven. The other two didn't get into the picture. You can stump the children with that observation. Two apostles have very special cloaks with oak leaf patterns on them. I presume these two apostles are Peter and John. I also presume that James would be the one with his hand on the shoulder of John, since they are brothers. I hope you enjoy that scene because one of the other reasons that people join the Church is because they are inspired.

God bless you,  
Fr. Frank