

### ***In-Between...***

What a privileged period of liturgical time we find ourselves in right now: we are in the period of time between Ascension and Pentecost. These are the last remaining days of this year's great season of Easter Time, and it should be a time of fervent and ardent prayer for the coming of the Holy Spirit; after all, these days are the original Novena! As we read in the *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the General Roman Calendar*, "The weekdays from the Ascension up to and including the Saturday before Pentecost prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete."

As you can see from the information elsewhere in our bulletin, our parish is praying a Novena to the Holy Spirit throughout these days. How are you joining in this time of intense prayer?

### ***Vigil of Pentecost***

Next Sunday we celebrate the great Solemnity of Pentecost. At the conclusion of that day, Easter Time ends and we return to the liturgical season of Ordinary Time. (Look for the change in our liturgical environment!) At Pentecost we commemorate three interconnected realities: the gift of the Holy Spirit being given to the Apostles; the beginnings of the Church; and the start of the Church's mission to all peoples and nations.

The Church encourages all parishes to celebrate a **special Mass as a Vigil of Pentecost**. The character of this **Pentecost Vigil** is not baptismal in nature, as is the Easter Vigil, but rather its focus is one of **urgent prayer**, after the example of the Apostles and disciples, who persevered together in prayer with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, as they awaited the Holy Spirit.

**The 5:00 p.m. Mass next Saturday, June 7, will be a special celebration of a Pentecost Vigil.** This is one of the **major liturgical events** which takes place in the life of our parish, and those who participate in the beauty and solemnity of these "principal" or "major event" liturgies always come away deeply spiritually enriched and uplifted. **Therefore, I ask you to make every effort to attend our special Pentecost Vigil on Saturday, June 7 at 5:00 p.m.**

The Mass will feature several special aspects. Our Entrance Procession will express the richness of our sacramental life as we include all the liturgical ministers, and as we also have newly-baptized, newly-confirmed and new first communicants in the procession. We will celebrate a special Vigil of Readings that includes four Old Testament readings. We will also celebrate **the Sacrament of Confirmation** with four adults who are completing their initiation into the Catholic Church.

It promises to be an uplifting, grace-filled liturgy where, in the words of the invitation which will be prayed at the beginning of the Mass, we will "*meditate on how many great deeds God in times past did for his people*" and during which we will "*pray that the Holy Spirit, whom the Father sent as the first fruits for those who believe, may bring to perfection his work in the world.*"

We look forward to seeing you at the 5:00 p.m. Mass next Saturday, so that, "*by the bright rays of the Holy Spirit, the light of [God's] light may confirm the hearts of those born again by grace*" (taken from the Collect of the Vigil Mass).

### ***Congratulations to our Newly-Confirmed!***

Yesterday, May 31 (or today, if you are reading this after the 5:00 p.m. Mass on Saturday) our parish was blessed to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation for our 8<sup>th</sup>-graders. Bishop Robert Brennan administered the sacrament, and the power and presence of the Holy Spirit was truly experienced not only by those being confirmed, but also by all who participated in the Masses. What an extraordinary celebration of parish life it was! I offer my thanks and appreciation who all who contributed to the day: to April Kleinlaut and the staff of the Religious Education Office; to all the catechists, grade level coordinators and all who offered their time to bring the young people to their readiness for the sacrament; to all the liturgical ministers who offered their service at the Masses; and, of course, to the young people themselves, and their parents and sponsors.

In my letter back to each student as she or he wrote to me to request to become a candidate for the sacrament, I included a sentence that always went something like this:

“Remember that we cannot truly be Catholic without participating in Mass each and every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation. We need to meet Jesus in His Word and in the Eucharist at Mass in order to stay in close union with Him. Give yourself the special gift of regular attendance at Mass; I know your faith will be deeper and your life will be better if you do so. Always be proud and be grateful that you are a Catholic!”

Maybe this week you could take a few minutes and incorporate those thoughts into your prayers as you pray for all the young people who received this Sacrament of Confirmation this year, that they will stay close to the life of the Church throughout their entire life.

### ***Congratulations to Bishop Brennan, too!***

Speaking of congratulations and Bishop Brennan, I would be remiss if I did not publicly offer congratulations to him on the occasion of his 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination to priesthood. Bishop Brennan was ordained a priest on May 27, 1989 and celebrated his first Mass the day after that, right here at OLPH, since this is his home parish (I remember being at that Mass...*little did I know then...!*). Bishop Brennan celebrated the 5:00 p.m. Mass here last Saturday, May 24, to mark the occasion with his family (he asked that it be kept low-key and not advertised as an “anniversary Mass,” but we managed to pull together something simple to surprise him in order to observe the occasion!).

Congratulations, Bishop Brennan, from your beloved home parish of OLPH! Your priesthood has been a gift and a blessing to the Diocese of Rockville Centre as you have served as a parish priest (St. Patrick in Smithtown), as secretary to three bishops (Bishops McGann, McHugh, and Murphy), as Vicar General of the Diocese, as a pastor (St. Mary of the Isle, Long Beach), and, most recently, not only as Vicar General, but also as Auxiliary Bishop. On a personal note: I am grateful for our continued friendship since our seminary days and I thank you for all your support and friendship throughout the years.

### ***Father’s Day Novena of Masses***

Once again we will be having a Novena of Masses for Father’s Day. This is a beautiful

way to remember and pray for your father, living or deceased. Please look for the Father’s Day cards and envelopes around the church. Your intention will be remembered in the Father’s Day Novena of Masses.

### ***Meeting for Ushers***

Ushers: it’s here this week! The mandatory meetings for all ushers are this Monday, June 2 at 7:45 p.m. and this Tuesday, June 3 at 3:00 p.m.; make sure you choose ONE of those meetings to attend. We’ll have time for prayer and for spiritual formation, and then we’ll discuss business items. I look forward to seeing you there. Please be sure to contact Mike Williams if you cannot attend to let him know the reason you cannot be there. Thank you.

### ***In conclusion...***

Together, let’s aim high in Christ. Together, let’s bring out the best in each other. Together, let’s be the best we can be in Christ.

And let’s always remember: LOVE IS A GIFT.

Sincerely,