

Thoughts from the Rectory ...

Dear friends of St. John the Evangelist,

Following last weekend's Masses and the recent meetings of our pastoral commissions, I am grateful to your shared enthusiasm in the work we do as a parish. Established as a portion of the Christian faithful, worshipping here on Main Street for 75 years now, we are a vibrant community of men and women eager to serve the Lord and one another in the proclamation of the Gospel and the works of virtue. In your faith, hope, and love lived out each day in varied and unique ways, you and I continue to build upon the gifts we have received.

In a most special way today we celebrate the great gift that is Pentecost, the Descent of the Holy Spirit. For nine days now, we have prayed ardently together with expectation and eagerness, just as St. Mary and the first Apostles gathered in Jerusalem, awaiting the fulfillment of the Father's promise. God promises us that He is with us always, as we hear in the words of the Divine Son Himself. It is by His Spirit that we know the Lord, and through Him, engage the world each day as authentic brothers and sisters in Christ, and nobly adopted sons and daughters of God. In Him we know the way! "If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit"!

This past week we marked the 101st anniversary of the birth of Pope St. John Paul II. A year ago we were to be on pilgrimage together in Poland to celebrate the centennial of his birth, yet we know how 2020 turned out for all of us. Nevertheless, I would like to share with you the words of this saintly and holy pope of our times, as he himself visited his homeland for the first

time since his papal election and celebrated Pentecost:

On the day of Pentecost, in the Jerusalem upper room, the promise is fulfilled that was sealed with the blood of the Redeemer on Calvary: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (Jn 20:22-23). The Church is born precisely from the power of these words. The Church is born of the power of this breath. After it had been prepared during the entire life of Christ, the Church is definitively born when the Apostles receive from Christ the gift of Pentecost, when they receive from him the Holy Spirit. The descent of the Spirit marks the beginning of the Church, which throughout all generations must bring mankind—both the individuals and the nations—into the unity of the Mystical Body of Christ. The descent of the Holy Spirit means the beginning of this mystery and also its continuance. For the continuance is a constant return to the beginning.

May Pope St. John Paul the Great's famous prayer in the city square be our own:

*Let your Spirit descend.
Let your Spirit descend,
and renew the face of the earth,
the face of this land!*
Amen.

St. John the Evangelist, pray for us!

Fr. Pierz