

Pentecost Sunday 2020 (A) 5/30/31/2020

Dear families and friends of the Co-Cathedral of St. Theresa Church,

Greetings of peace!

I am happy that our church reopens on the feast of the Pentecost!

The refrain of our entrance song, "Come, Lord Jesus, send us your Spirit, renew the face of the earth," is a fitting prayer for all us as we start to gather as a faith community. It expresses our need to humbly kneel before God for the grace of his renewing Spirit.

We have bear in our memory how our families and the global community are shaken, if not fractured, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In our country, we have around 100,000 people died caused by the deadly coronavirus, which we mourned and prayed that their souls might find rest in God.

The pandemic continues to endanger our life and health and inflicted terrible pain on low-income families who are already struggling to meet both ends. Many people lose their jobs. Yes, the pandemic continues to cause restlessness and anxiety in our lives. But we are bringing and offering all these things to our celebration today to ask God for healing and strength. I need to tell you this: Although God did not will these painful realities happen, he hears the prayers of millions of people. Indeed, his divine providence sustained us to survive and thrive. I am convinced that God is reshaping our humanity.

What a providential way it is to reopen the church during the feast day of the Pentecost. Isn't it? God gathers us all so that he can speak to us through the sacred scriptures, the gestures, and prayers of the Mass, through the presence of one another.

Yes, today, we celebrate the feast of Pentecost. It is significantly an incredible event of our faith. Something awesome that happened in the history of the world after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus. The risen Lord breathed his Spirit unto the fearful, devastated, and troubled disciples. This gift of breath reminds us of the breath that gave life when God created the world. In the story of creation from the Book of Genesis, God breathed his Spirit, and so life began. The breath of Jesus during the Pentecost refashioned or recreated the disciples into a new creation, into a new humanity.

It can be said that Pentecost is an event of a new creation. It is an event that removed the disciples' doubt and gave them the peace which transformed them into joyful and passionate witnesses of Jesus. And the Church was born!

And let me tell you this, that moment of bestowing the Holy Spirit upon the disciples is not just a history of the past. The incredible event remains fresh and alive. It never fades nor loses its power; it continues in our times. Our celebration of the Pentecost is a celebration that the Holy Spirit is ever-present in our Church, that the Holy Spirit is continually refashioning, recreating the Mystical Body of Christ.

I believe that many, if not all, who may have been fearful, troubled, and anxious because of the deadly coronavirus, somehow, after having a long-standing look at the worst happening in our time, there are lessons we learned. In the face of the invisible enemy, we recognized our vulnerability, but we also become aware of our sense of family and community. This enemy was/is/will be defeated through the cooperation of the community. The worst happening in our country and our global community, therefore, while it caused restlessness or anxiety to all, rekindle our sense of human solidarity. It makes us survive and thrive. I believe this not just because of our human strength; it is the working of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is refashioning, recreating our human family. WE ARE ALL REBORN!

And so, we are here to celebrate the birthday of the Church. We celebrate the birthday of the Body of Christ. It was into this body that we were baptized and confirmed. Through the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, we received the Holy Spirit's fullness, just as did the disciples on Pentecost. So, Pentecost is not only an event that we remember and celebrate. It is an ongoing reality in our Christian life! The risen Lord breathes all the good characters that we need, to be selfless human beings, and so become his witnesses.

Let us continue to tell this story. The Holy Spirit is upon us, confirming in our midst the breath of Jesus, his life. This breath of life is a gift that unites us with Jesus, who is forever interceding for us to the Father and feeds and nourishes us, here and now, through the Holy Eucharist. Like the first Pentecost, this breath of our Lord sends us to be his peace, forgiveness, and his message in refashioning our world.

Let it be the prayer of our community: Come, Lord Jesus, send us your Spirit, renew the face of the earth. Renew me, renew our family, renew us all, renew our community, renew the face of the earth. Amen!

In Christ,

Fr. Manny Hewe
Pastor, CCST