

FROM FR. MIKE

May 28, 2023

We have already received considerable feedback on people's interest in receiving the Precious Blood from the common cup. If you have not yet filled out a preference form, please do so, they are available in the pews, the drop box is by the baptismal font and gift table area. The response so far has been positive enough that we will anticipate offering at least one station for the Precious Blood by the first weekend of July.

That being said, more stations for Holy Communion, under either species, requires more Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. We may only begin with one common cup for the Precious Blood, not just based on the limited demand, but also on the limited supply of helpers. This is Pentecost weekend, the day we celebrate that Christ and the Father send us the power of the Holy Spirit enabling us to witness to Christ and give ourselves in service to the Lord and His Church.

How fitting that today we are commissioning all of our lay-ministers, liturgical and non-liturgical. Each ministry will be mentioned by name and all these ministries carry out some form of Christ's commands to love God and neighbor through the corporeal and spiritual works of mercy. Listen closely to the ministries being mentioned, perhaps you or a loved one has been helped by the SVDP Society or Food Pantry. The school, RE and SPRED programs pass on the faith. The Shawl Ministry and Ministers of Care offer prayerful comfort and the Lord's presence in the Eucharist to the homebound. We have received so much from Jesus through His Church and our parishes throughout our lives, a love and grace often mediated through others.

You may be in that time of life when you can respond to Christ's call to service. As you listen to the various lay ministries, both liturgical and non-liturgical, how is the Lord calling you, here and now to serve in the Church for the people of God?

Today is the Solemnity of Pentecost, one of the most important days in the Liturgical year, sometimes called the birthday of the Church. Jesus promised that He would not leave us as orphans, that it was better for us that He left because He would send another Advocate/Comforter. That is a bold claim since many of us might think that if Jesus Christ were physically present in His risen body that He might set all evils right in the world, and there would be peace and harmony. Why is it better that Jesus ascended, and the Holy Spirit has been sent?

The Holy Spirit is the power of God that allows people to give witness to Christ. Without this power from on high, the disciples would still have been afraid, hiding in the upper room. Even seeing Jesus risen wasn't enough to keep them from going back to their trades like Simon Peter who went during the days before Pentecost. No one can say "*Jesus is Lord*" except by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit gives us strength to work through our fears and be courageous in a way not possible otherwise, if we take a step of faith. I recently had a father of a young son say how his son has been transformed in a positive way by his early experience as an altar server. New altar servers often come in with a set of fears that they then overcome with God's help and perseverance. Every one of us has some experience when we said a halting yes to the Lord and He empowered us to do things we thought were beyond us.

Jesus wants us all to mature in faith in Him, to live up to our full potential in Him, that is why the Spirit is sent. We each have gifts to give, at every age.

"To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit."

God bless,

Fr. Mike

