

A number of things are happening this weekend, as is usually the case. Last weekend we had well-attended First Communion Masses at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. with 59 children receiving Jesus for the first time with great faith and excitement. A special thanks to all those that prepared the children for this new, ongoing relationship with Christ: Mrs. Gold, Mrs. Capone, Peggy Bradley, Kristine Hillmann, Ashely Guinn, Grant Huslig and Gilda Rivero to name a few. May the Lord bless them for their labor of love in guiding these children.

Of course, parents are the primary teachers and models of their children in faith. The Lord will help every parent to fulfill the promises that they made at their child's baptism: ***"You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him (her) in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him (her) up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?"*** The Sunday Eucharist is one of the main ways we continue to remain in the Lord's love and receive the grace we need.

This weekend is Mother's Day weekend. Life is a gift, a miracle, and our mom's played a big part in that for us. Usually, all our mom's want in return for all of their sacrifices and care for us is our presence, a kind word of gratitude, and some love in return. If your mother has died, then a prayer and a Mass offered for the repose of her soul is the greatest gift we can give her and continued gratitude to God for her. If your mother was very wounded and couldn't show you the love you needed, then she may need your prayers even more and may she find the healing and peace that only the Lord can give.

You will notice flower sales in the vestibule after the Masses. The funds go to support the good work of the Women's Center of Greater Chicagoland. The Women's Center has qualified staff and volunteers who counsel women that are considering having an abortion. They offer counseling, free ultra-sounds, adoption referrals, baby/toddler cloths, car seats etc...along with financial and social service referrals. Buy some flowers for your own mom and support a good cause too.

This weekend we also have a second collection that supports Catholic Charities of Chicago. Our mothers have supported us throughout our lives, we know how important mothers are to a child's wellbeing, and many moms need help in that role. Mothers and children are the largest group that Catholic Charities assists from counseling for pregnant mothers, to housing for families facing homelessness and domestic abuse, to care for aging mothers and grandmothers and more. Visit www.catholiccharities.net for more information. May God bless you for your generosity.

This is also Ascension Sunday when Jesus bodily ascended to heaven while the disciples watched Him depart. Two angels spoke to them saying: ***"Men of Galilee, why are standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus...will return in the same way as you have seen Him going to heaven."*** Jesus gave the disciples a mission, they were sent into the world and weren't meant to stay watching and waiting, inactive, or unproductive. Jesus promised that they would receive ***"power, when the Holy Spirit comes to you."***

Each one of us has a mission, a God given purpose that will allow us, in our own way and in our own vocation to give witness to Christ...so as to not just sit back and watch life go by.

God bless you,

Fr. Mike

