



# Parish Week

Jesus, I trust in You  
Jezu ufam Tobie

Sunday,  
24 April 2022

## Saturday, 23 Apr. / St. George, martyr

- 8.00 am Mass: Int. Brigitta Wagner (Christa Hahn)
- 5.00 pm Mass: † Raquel Lim Salientes (family)  
- RCIC Easter Octave Initiation

## SUNDAY, 24 APR. / EASTER 2-C / DIVINE MERCY

- Homilist: Deacon Ramon Villardo
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection: Maintenance

- 9.00 am Mass: Int. Thanksgiving for Healing (Ludy Ganigan)
- 10.30 am Mass: † Lea Abi Najem (Amalia Haddad)
- 12.00 pm Mass: Int. Special intention (Lyli)
- 7.00 pm Mass: Pro Populo

## Monday 25 Apr. / St. Mark, evangelist

- 8.00 am Mass: † Gloria Macabali (family)
- 7.00 pm Mass: Int. Erin Candappa (friends)

## Tuesday, 26 Apr. / Our Lady of Good Counsel

- 8.00 am Mass: Int. † Mike & Carol Morra  
(53<sup>rd</sup> Wedding Anniversary)

## Wednesday, 27 Apr.

- 8.00 am Mass: † Mr. & Mrs. A.G. Francis (Shoba Ryan)

## Thursday, 28 Apr. / St. Peter Chanel, priest & martyr

- 8.00 am Mass: † Kenneth Klempert (Michael Ruocco)

## Friday, 29 Apr. / St. Catherine of Siena, virgin & doctor

- 8.00 am Mass: † Michael Joseph Martin (Christine)

## Saturday, 30 Apr. / St. Pius V, pope

- 8.00 am Mass: † Noel Fernando (Christa Hahn)
- 5.00 pm Mass: Int. Thanksgiving Frontline Workers  
(CWL Council, St. Maria Goretti Parish)  
Saturday Class 1<sup>st</sup> Communion

## SUNDAY, 1 MAY / EASTER 3-C

- Homilist: Fr. Edwin Galea
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection: ShareLife Collection (2<sup>nd</sup> offering)

- 9.00 am Mass: † Deceased Bastiampillai family members (Caroline)
- 10.30 am Mass: † Alex Rodrigues (D'Souza family)
- 12.00 pm Mass: † Julie Menezes (Lillian D'Souza & family)
- 2.30 pm St. Maria Goretti School 1<sup>st</sup> Communion
- 7.00 pm Mass: Pro Populo

# Focus on the Word

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter, Year C

Acts 5.12-16; Revelation 1.9-19; John 20.19-31

God of everlasting mercy, who in the very recurrence of the paschal feast kindle the faith of your people, increase the grace you have bestowed, that all may grasp and rightly understand in what font they have been washed, by whose Spirit they have been reborn, by whose Blood they have been redeemed. Amen.

## Pray for the Deceased

**Michael Arends, Rufina Baltonado, Gabriel Callus, Ralph Crasto, Mary Luciani, Cherie Majchrzak, Maria Liza Guiao Matias, John Murphy**

The **11 soliders killed** by ISIS gunmen in the **military base Diyala, Iraq**

## Upcoming Collections

### 24 April: Maintenance

The 2<sup>nd</sup> collection on Sunday, 24 Apr., will be for the support of our major parish projects through the *Maintenance Collection*.

### 1 May: ShareLife

On 1 May, the second collection will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> Offering for our annual *ShareLife Appeal*, for all the agencies that help us to live the Gospel by caring for our brothers and sisters in need.

## COMING UP

52e22

- 2 May Infant Baptism Parent/Godparent Meeting (7:40 pm)
- 5 May St. Maria Goretti School Confirmation Mass (7.00 pm)
- 8 May **Mother's Day;**  
- Infant Baptism (1:30 pm)
- 11 May Wedding: Camigo - Dos Remedios (2.00 pm);  
- Evening of Adoration, sponsored by the Toronto Archdiocese OFFICE OF CATHOLIC YOUTH (5.30 – 9 pm);  
- Memorial Mass for † Patrick De Caires (7 pm)
- 14 May Wedding: Newton - Amalrajah (11:30 am);  
- St. Albert School 1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion Mass (2.00 pm)  
SVP Bundle Up Weekend
- 15 May St. Albert School Confirmation Mass (7.00 pm)
- 19 May Wedding: Andres - Dela Cruz (1:00 pm)
- 21 May 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection: **Pope's Works**
- 22 May 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection: **Maintenance**
- 29 May 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection: **ShareLife**
- 5 June Infant Baptism Parent/Godparent Meeting (7:40 pm)
- 6 June Wedding: Ironmonger - Tsoi-A-Sue (11:30 am)
- 11 June 2<sup>nd</sup> Collection: Marygrove Camp;
- 12 June - Infant Baptism (1:30 pm)

## Website [stmariagoretti.archtoronto.org](http://stmariagoretti.archtoronto.org)

For more information on Parish activities, such as the schedule of upcoming **Sacramental** celebrations, check pages 3 and following in the website bulletin.

## ShareLife 2022



Our 2022 *ShareLife* Campaign is underway. *ShareLife* is LIVING THE GOSPEL by bringing the hands of Christ to those in need. It is making a difference.

When you support *ShareLife*, you support agencies like MARY CENTRE. Here's how your support makes a difference for the work of this agency:

"Thank you to all who donate to *ShareLife*. With each donation we receive, MARY CENTRE is able to attain its goals of assisting people in their efforts in building a good life, and also provide a safe place for people to stay who have a developmental disability, so that their families, caregivers and themselves can get some needed respite."

Since our *ShareLife* campaign began, our parishioners have contributed generously toward our goal of: \$42,000.00.

Thank you for your faithful support! Please give generously. The next *ShareLife* Sunday is 1 May.

### A Special Gift DIVINE MERCY BOOKLETS

We thank a generous benefactor for his kind gift of the beautiful **Divine Mercy** booklets to our Parish. Your gift is appreciated.

## RCIA, RCIC

*Rites of Christian Initiation of Adults & Children*



Please remember in your prayers the Adults who received Sacraments of Initiation, and joined/renewed their membership in the Church at the Easter Vigil on 16 April; and the Youth who will be Initiated at the 5 pm Mass on 23 April.

The RCIA meets Friday evenings at 7.30 pm; the parallel RCIC process for the Youth meets Saturday mornings.

*The next meetings:*

RCIA Adults, 22 April and 6 May, 7.30 pm

RCIC Youth, 10.00 am, 23 April, which is the morning of the *Easter Octave Initiation* at the 5.00 pm Parish Mass; and then on 7 May, 10.00 am.

## Upcoming Weddings

**Allan D'Souza and Annabelle D'Souza**

*23 April 2022*

*St. George's Catholic Church, Wembley, London, England*

**Abe Sena and Jan Wage**

*16 July 2022*

**Anojan Kathiramalairajah and Suesana Manoharan**

*20 August 2022*

*Our Lady of Good Health Parish*

## OCY Adoration Evening 11 May

The Archdiocesan *Office of Catholic Youth* is holding an Evening of Adoration on Wednesday, 11 May, 5.30 – 9 pm. The program:

5:30	Set up / Music	7:55	Silent Adoration
7:00	Mass	8:15	Exhortation, Music
7:35	Testimony	8:25	Benediction
7:40	Exposition	8:30	Closing hymn
7:45	Exhortation, Music	8:40	Social

## The Sacrament of Baptism

*Congratulations* to the newest members of our Church, born again in water and the Spirit as brothers & sisters of Jesus:

26 December 2021

**Reign Xavier Kaiden Stewart**

30 January 2022

**Boulos Norman Risk**

5 February

**Denise Reign Domingo**

**Maxine Grey Domingo**

19 February

**Aaron Dominic Andres**

**Meilani Gnanasingam**

**Jayhde Alexiel Magdirila**

**Mayah Elysse Ramos**

19 March

**Jordyn Murphy**

**Ruanqing Margaret Su**

**Lawrence Leo Su**

20 March

**Leo Thomas Liao**

26 March

**Greyson Kent Caranyagan**

9 April

**Florence Emilia Michal Alleyne**



Reign Xavier Kaiden Stewart, 26 Dec.

# Easter Flowers

*Many thanks to all who sponsored the Easter Flowers in our Sanctuary. The dedications are posted on the Vestibule bulletin board, and in the website bulletin. God bless you!*

## In Honour/Intention

**All Healthcare Providers  
The Blessed Virgin Mary  
The Corbillon-Racoya Families  
Ibrahim  
Jonathan de Silva  
The Dosumu Family  
Mother of God  
Peace for Russia & Ukraine  
The Penalosa Family  
St. Maria Goretti (1)  
Cheripie Tiburcio  
Thanksgiving  
Cristeta Villanueva  
Lloyd Williams**



## In Memory of

**All Souls  
Espiridion Antigua  
Porferio & Melitona Asonio  
Sofronia & Maria Austria  
Aloysius Bastiampillai  
Eleno & Salome Bernardino  
Deceased Members of the Camacho Family  
Cusia Cho  
Cypriana Cyrus  
Esperdion & Juliana Datinguindo  
Clive Francis & Agapet Fernandez  
Victor Fernando  
Feliciano R. De Guzman  
The D'Souza & Rodrigues Families  
Marcelo & Anastacia Durano  
Marcelino & Aurea Gabales  
Bernabe Gaje  
The Gittens Family  
Liu Tseng Hsiang  
J. & Theresa Joseph  
Deceased Members of the Laurel Family  
Felipe & Emelia Laurel  
Peter Joseph Liu  
Deceased Members of the Macabali Family  
Linda, Teofisto Jr. & Ted Magdadaro  
Liu Fang Chin Mei  
Deceased Members of the Mulla Family  
Eufrazio & Silveria Mundo  
The Nidea Family Members  
Mr. & Mrs. Roberto M. Pilapil  
Learie Patterson  
Graciano & Judith Primero  
John Blanco Racoya  
Ambrosia & Maria Santacruz  
Moises & Cresecia Sardua  
Deceased Members of the Serneo Family  
Paz Segador  
Arjune & Nandrani Singh  
Yacintha Sivakumar  
Thangarani  
Felisa & Juan Trinidad  
Eduardo Villanueva  
Eileen Wright**





## Sacramental Preparation

The Sacramental Preparation programs are now underway in our Parish Schools. Video presentations have been uploaded to our website, with family guides linked to them. Click on the line below each video, which reads: “*For more information, click here.*”

The next scheduled celebrations are:

### April

- 30 Saturday Class  
1<sup>st</sup> **Holy Communion Mass**, 5.00 pm

### May

- 1 St. Maria Goretti School  
1<sup>st</sup> **Holy Communion Mass**, 2.30 pm
- 5 St. Maria Goretti School  
**Confirmation Mass**, 7.00 pm
- 14 St. Albert the Great School  
1<sup>st</sup> **Holy Communion Mass**, 2.00 pm
- 19 St. Albert the Great School  
**Confirmation Mass**, 7.00 pm

[Photo above:

Thanks to all families who submitted the registration forms for 1<sup>ST</sup> COMMUNION students of **St Albert the Great School**.

CONFIRMATION for students *who are not in our Parish Schools* will go ahead this Spring. Families may now contact **Fr. Edwin** after any Sunday Mass to enroll Candidates who are in Grade 7 (or above, due to the pandemic). Preparation will begin immediately, so the Sacrament can be celebrated before the Summer.





# Sinners and Saints Alike Need Divine Mercy

This Sunday is the *Feast of the Divine Mercy*.

The first thing I want to say about mercy is: I need it! There is no progress in the Christian life – indeed, there is no Christian life – without mercy. We could even say that progress in the Christian life is itself an ever-deeper awareness of our need for and experience of God’s mercy.

I bet, like me, you’ve rolled your eyes whenever you’ve read the saints talking about what “wretched sinners” they were. Oh, sure you were, Mother Teresa ... whoever! But the more I’ve journeyed into intimacy with Jesus (which is to say the more I’ve journeyed into the depths of God’s mercy, which is to say the more I’ve journeyed into the depths of my own misery), the more I’ve come to believe that these saints really *were* aware of how sinful they were.

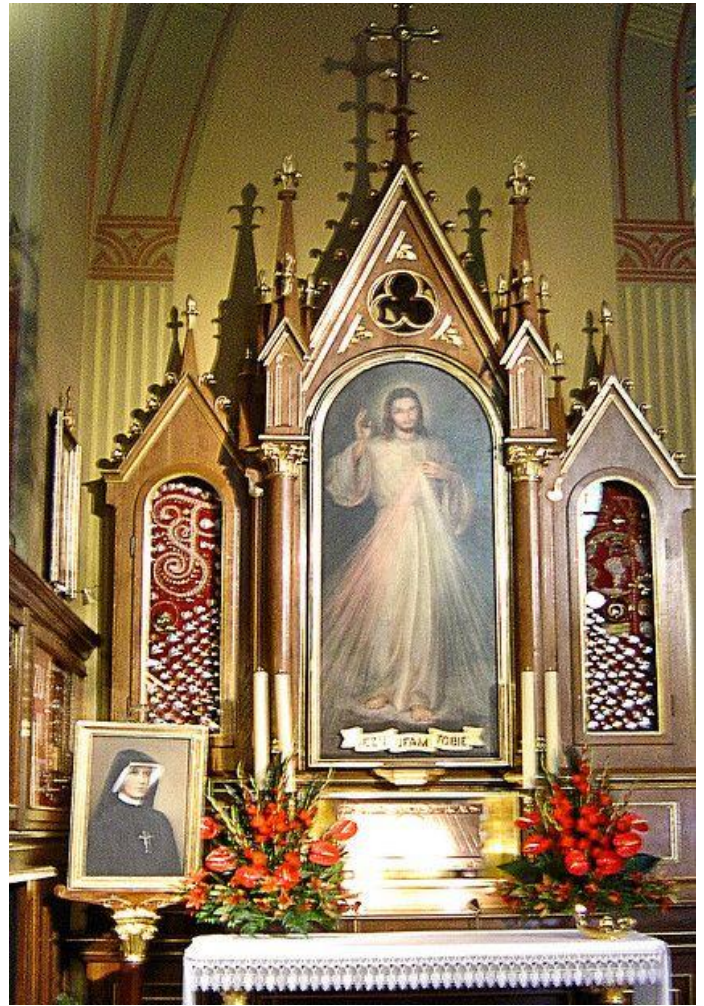
After all, that’s what made them saints: they didn’t cover up their sinfulness with a pious mask; they didn’t hide their sinfulness behind self-righteous “accomplishments.” They simply basked and bathed – continually – in God’s mercy.

That’s the journey of the Christian life. It’s realizing that all we are before God are souls with a gaping, bleeding need for his mercy. Without exception. That’s what our humanity is. Even Mary, conceived without sin, is a nothing in her humanity but a need for God’s mercy – a need that, in her case, was met right at the moment of her conception and sustained her throughout her life, but a need nonetheless!

Sometimes, growing up, we get the impression that “saints” are somehow those who are no longer “sinners.” That’s the dichotomy; that’s the way we talk. We talk of saints and sinners as if they are two groups of entirely different kinds of people, as if saints weren’t also sinners.

Growing up with this false dichotomy in my head, I thought I needed to hide my sin to be “acceptable,” to be “lovable.” For years I hid my inner misery from myself, from others, from God, because I thought it was repulsive; I thought it made me “unlovable.” To those who aren’t full of mercy, it is repulsive.

But, guess what mercy means? The Latin form is *misericordia*, and it means “having a heart for the misery of others.” In fact, our misery actually entices God. It attracts his heart to us.



[*The Divine Mercy altar in Sister Faustina’s chapel*]

Hiding my misery from God and others, I came to believe I had some sort of “strength” to offer my wife, my kids, the Church, and the world. The Lord in his mercy (and my wife, in hers) has been helping me see that all I really have to offer is my weakness. To this end, I have found the teaching of St. Therese of Lisieux of great benefit. Pope Pius XII summed up her insights well when he wrote:

*“We must take St. Therese at her word when she invites the most unregenerate as well as the most perfect to count nothing of value before God, save the radical weakness and spiritual poverty of a sinful creature.”*

Speaking from experience, it seems that only through various painful trials, in which our misery becomes undeniable, do we come to accept that God’s grace is sufficient for us, that his power is made perfect in our weakness (see 1 Corinthians 12.9), and that he is “rich in mercy” (Ephesians 2.4).

If he is rich in mercy, we should have no fear taking an honest look at our gaping, bleeding need for it.

# Litany of Trust

From the belief that I have to earn Your love

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear that I am unlovable

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the false security that I have what it takes

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear that trusting You will leave me destitute

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From all suspicion of Your words and promises

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the resistance to childlike dependency on You

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From refusals and reluctances in accepting Your will

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From anxiety about the future

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From resentment or obsession with the past

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From restless self-seeking in the present moment

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From disbelief in Your love and presence

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of being asked to give more than I have

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the belief that my life has no meaning or worth

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From the fear of what love demands

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

From discouragement

*Deliver me, Jesus.*

That You are continually holding me, sustaining me,  
loving me *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That Your love goes deeper than my sins and failings  
and transforms me *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That not knowing what tomorrow brings is an invitation  
to lean on You *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That You are with me in my hurting *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That my suffering, united to Your own, will bear fruit  
in this life and the next *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That You will not leave me orphan, that You are present  
in Your Church *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That Your plan is better than anything else  
*Jesus, I trust in You.*

That You always hear me, and in Your goodness  
always respond to me *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That You give me the grace to accept forgiveness  
and to forgive others *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That You give me all the strength I need for what is asked  
*Jesus, I trust in You.*

That my life is a gift *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That You will teach me to trust You *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That You are my Lord and my God *Jesus, I trust in You.*

That I am Your beloved one *Jesus, I trust in You.*

**Sr. Faustina Maria Pia, Sister of Life**

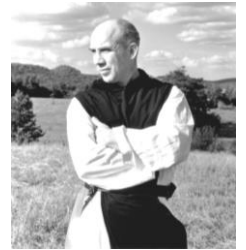
# Now and Forever

We are part of the unfathomable weave of the universe, immersed in its deep mystery. Its dance has already begun: it has always been in process. Each of us has a role in it. Jesus and his Father are working (John 4:34) for the good of all Creation and we can tune in to their signals and do likewise. Thomas Merton says that every moment and every event in every person's life plants seeds of spiritual vitality in their hearts. This is the divine at work on Earth: this is grace, and grace is everywhere. All is sacred, and so are we. We are called even now to share with all of Creation 'in the freedom of the children of God' (Romans 8:21).

'See, the home of God is among mortals. God will dwell with them and they will be God's people'.  
(Revelation 21:3)

**Fr. Brian Grogan, S.J.**

## The Prayer of Thomas Merton



My Lord God,  
I have no idea where I am going.  
I do not see the road ahead of me.  
I cannot know for certain where it will end.  
nor do I really know myself,  
and the fact that I think I am following your will  
does not mean that I am actually doing so.  
But I believe that the desire to please you  
does in fact please you.  
And I hope I have that desire in all  
that I am doing.  
I hope that I will never do anything  
apart from that desire.  
And I know that if I do this you will lead me  
by the right road,  
though I may know nothing about it.  
Therefore will I trust you always though  
I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.  
I will not fear, for you are ever with me,  
and you will never leave me  
to face my perils alone.

# We Remember our Instructions for **CONFIRMATION**

## **Water: a symbol of new life in Christ**



Each time we Christians enter a church, dip our hand in the holy water font, and trace with water the sign of the cross on ourselves, we are recalling our *Baptism*. This simple gesture reminds us that God has created us anew through Baptism. When we cross ourselves, we recall that we are Baptized; this helps us remember that we are disciples of Jesus and members of God's family.

As Baptized disciples, we also prepare and celebrate our *Confirmation*. These two sacraments are so closely linked that preparing for confirmation means first recalling our Baptism. And Baptism and Confirmation prepare us for Eucharist, for celebrating at the Table of the Lord.

## **Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist**

When adults or older children prepare for initiation in the Catholic Church they spend a lot of time, sometimes years, preparing themselves. At the end of this time, the Church celebrates with them the three sacraments of initiation:

### **Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.**

If we grow up in a Catholic family, we are Baptized as young children, shortly after we are born. As we grow, we learn how to make a Confession, and we receive the Sacrament of *Reconciliation*. Then we prepare to share in *Holy Communion* which is to share in the body and blood of Christ. Then we can study our faith more deeply, and receive the Sacrament of *Confirmation*.

## **Our Baptism story**

### **1. My Name**

My parents chose a special name for me. My Christian name connects me to all the holy men and women who lived before me, and who were heroes.



### **2. Where I was Baptized**

My family belonged to a Parish, a community of faithful people. They asked the Church to welcome me as a new member, and to make me a brother or sister of Christ by Baptism.

### **3. Date of Baptism**

At conception, every person begins 2 journeys; the journey of the *body*, which ends in death, and the journey of the *soul*. The soul is joined to Christ in Baptism, and this opens the door to eternity.

### **4. Godparents**

Some people stood up for me and agreed to be my Prayer Partner with God, asking him to help my family to raise me as a member of his Church.

### **5. Special Memories**

When I see the pictures of my Baptism, I recall the stories my family told me about my big day.



## The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

**Wisdom** is the gift of knowing the right choices to make to live a holy life. The gift of Wisdom helps you to avoid the things that could lead you away from God.

**Understanding** is the gift of comprehension, or the ability to grasp the meaning of the teachings of the Church. The gift of Understanding helps you be tolerant and sympathetic of others. It helps you sense when someone is hurting or in need of compassion.

**Counsel**, or Right Judgment, is the gift of prudence. The gift of Counsel helps you make choices to live as a faithful follower of Jesus.

**Courage**, or Fortitude, is the gift that helps you stand up for your faith in Christ. The gift of Courage helps you overcome any obstacles that would keep you from practicing your faith.

**Knowledge** is the gift of knowing and enlightenment. The gift of Knowledge enables you to choose the right path that will lead you to God. It encourages you to avoid obstacles that would keep you from him.

**Reverence**, or Piety, is the gift of confidence in God. This gift of reverence inspires you to joyfully want to serve God and others.

**Wonder and Awe**, or “Fear of the Lord,” is the gift of wonder and respect that encourages you to be in awe of God. The gift of Wonder and Awe moves you to so love God that you do not want to offend him by your words or actions.

## The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

These are signs that the Holy Spirit is alive within us and helping us to live the Catholic faith:

**Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Generosity, Gentleness, Faithfulness, Modesty, Self-control, Chastity.**

## The Communion of Saints

Just as the Sacraments are part of our Christian family heritage, so too are people who have lived before us and worked to create the kingdom of God.

At Mass, we say that we believe in the *Communion of Saints*.

This is the assembly of all Christian women and men who have lived and died and are now living in heaven. Think of the Communion of Saints as our *heroes*, or as our cheering section upstairs. We often ask the Saints to pray with and for us so that we may be stronger in our faith.

**St. Maria Goretti, St. Albert** and **St. Joan of Arc** are three of the best-known members of the Communion of Saints. They love us and ask for God’s help so that we can live as disciples.





# CONFIRMATION

## The Commissioning: *Go and Make Disciples of all Nations*

**BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION and the EUCHARIST**  
together comprise the **SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION.**



Confirmation completes Christian initiation, and strengthens the Candidates by the gift of the Holy Spirit. They are empowered to serve as witnesses of Christ, to spread and defend the faith by their words and deeds.

### *The Commissioning of the Disciples* (Matthew 28.16-20)

- <sup>16</sup> Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee,  
to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.
- <sup>17</sup> When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.
- <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them,  
“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
- <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them  
in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
- <sup>20</sup> and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded  
you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

## My Sponsor

Confirmation Sponsors “Accompany the candidates, present them to the Bishop for anointing, and then help them fulfill their baptismal promises by the influence of the Holy Spirit.” (*Rite of Confirmation*, # 5)

Since a Sponsor has such a significant role to play in the development of Confirmation candidate it is important that this person be one who is a living example of faith, one whose actions reflect the actions of Jesus.

A Sponsor offers prayer and encouragement during the Confirmation preparation process and as their candidate matures in life.

# The Arrival of the Holy Spirit

After the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus, the Apostles were left amazed, and they were unsure what to do. Jesus came and spent 40 days with them, and promised that they would receive the Holy Spirit.

## *The Descent of the Holy Spirit* (Acts 2.1-4)

- <sup>1</sup> When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.
- <sup>2</sup> And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
- <sup>3</sup> Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them.
- <sup>4</sup> All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.



# Reconciliation

Receive this Sacrament, and return a completed slip at your next Mass.

## *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (1 Corinthians 12.1-7)

- <sup>1</sup> Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.
- <sup>4</sup> Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;
- <sup>5</sup> and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord;
- <sup>6</sup> and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.
- <sup>7</sup> To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.



## **The Life of the Early Church** (Acts 2.14a, 36b-38,41-42)

<sup>14</sup> Peter stood with the eleven and addressed the crowd,

<sup>36</sup> “Let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

### *The First Converts*

<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?”

<sup>38</sup> Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>41</sup> So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

## **The Spirit in the Old Testament**

The Hebrew word for “spirit” (*ruah*) can also mean “wind” (Gn.8:1; Num.11:31; 1Kg.18:45) or “breath” (Gn.7:15; Ec.3:19; Jer.10:14). The two images can be combined so that *wind* is the *breath of God* (2 Sam 22:16; Ps 18:15; Is. 40:7).



“Breath” is a common expression in Scripture for the human spirit (Gn.41:8; Exod 6:9; Ezek 3:14). The start of life is divinely willed; and the end of life is the return of our spirit to God, who gave it in the first place (Ec.12:7). The power of God is visible in myriad ways, but it was seen especially in the charismatic leaders of the Israelites, the prophets, and those who fulfilled God’s saving will.

## **The Spirit in the New Testament**

As with the Hebrew *ruah*, the Greek word *pneuma* can likewise mean “wind,” “breath,” or “spirit.” But in the New Testament, we also see explicitly what was hinted at in the Old Testament: that the Spirit is not an impersonal force, but a divine Person, who is God along with the Father and the Son.



*St. Peter Basilica, Rome: Holy Spirit window.*



# Confirmation

## Gift of the Holy Spirit

BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION and the EUCHARIST comprise the SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION. Confirmation completes Christian initiation, and strengthens the Candidates by the gift of the Holy Spirit. They are witnesses of Christ, bound to spread and defend the faith by their words and deeds.

## Origins of the Sacrament

The Old Testament prophets announced that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the awaited Messiah for his saving mission. The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his Baptism in the Jordan by John was the sign that this was the expected one: the Son of God, who would communicate the Spirit to the entire messianic people. On Pentecost, filled with the Holy Spirit, the Apostles began to proclaim the mighty works of God, and Peter declared this outpouring of the Spirit to be a sign of the messianic age.

In the Letter to the Hebrews, the doctrine on Baptism and the Laying on of Hands is listed among the first elements in Christian instruction. The Laying on of Hands is recognized as the original sign of the Sacrament of Confirmation, which perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church.

## The Bishop

The original ministers of Confirmation are the Bishops, the successors of the Apostles. They have received the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders. (The Bishop may transfer this mandate to the local Parish Priest.) The Sacred Chrism used for the Anointing was blessed at the Mass of Chrism at the Cathedral during the previous Holy Week.

## The Sponsor

The Sponsor is a fully-initiated member of the Church who:

- ❖ Represents the community; ❖ Will support the parents;
- ❖ Testifies that the Candidate will be a witness for Christ.

The original Godparent may perform this duty; or another adult who serves as an example of Christian living.

## The Name

The Confirmation Name is the Christian *Baptismal* name, or the name of another *Saint* who will serve as a lifelong patron and prayer partner to the newly-confirmed.

## Effects of Confirmation

The purpose of the Sacrament is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as it was given to the Apostles on Pentecost:

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind...divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them the ability. (Acts 2.1-4).

The entire Church benefits by Confirmation: it conveys the grace of *Pentecost*, enabling us to live with the fruits of the Holy Spirit:

*Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Generosity, Goodness, Perseverance, Mildness, Faith, Modesty, Continence, Chastity.*

Confirmation has several important effects:

- (1) **It makes us more aware of God;**
- (2) **It releases the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit:** Wisdom, Knowledge, Counsel, Understanding, Courage, Piety and Reverence of the Lord.
- (3) **It unites us more firmly to Christ;**
- (4) **It binds us more perfectly to the Church;**
- (5) **It gives us strength to spread and defend the faith by our words and actions in order to:**
  - ✕ be true witnesses of Christ;
  - ✕ confess the name of Christ boldly;
  - ✕ never be ashamed of the Cross.

Confirmation perfects the grace of Baptism, and imprints a spiritual mark or permanent, indelible character on the Christian's soul. A Candidate for Confirmation who has attained the age of reason must profess the faith; be in the state of grace; desire to receive the Sacrament; and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both in the Church and in the world.

## The Liturgy

Confirmation is ordinarily celebrated within the context of the Holy Mass. Following the Proclamation of the Word of God, the Sacrament is administered in this order:

*Presentation of the Candidates*

*Homily*

*Renewal of Baptismal Promises*

*Laying On of Hands*<sup>1</sup>

*Anointing with Sacred Chrism*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> LAYING ON OF HANDS: The Bishop faces the people and introduces the prayer. Then he (and any concelebrating Priests) extend their hands over the Candidates, and ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit upon them.

<sup>2</sup> ANOINTING WITH CHRISM: Candidates walk to the Sanctuary. The Bishop goes to them individually, takes some Chrism, addresses them by their Confirmation Name, and makes the Sign of the Cross on their foreheads.

*Bishop:* “ \_\_\_\_\_ , be sealed with  
the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

*Newly Confirmed:* “AMEN.”

*Bishop:* “Peace be with you.”

*Newly Confirmed:* “AND WITH YOUR SPIRIT.”

