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**BULLETIN B 26 – 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2021**  
**PENTECOST SUNDAY**

My dear brothers and sisters,

This weekend sees the return of our use of the Parish Hall. Yesterday I held a meeting of the parents and their children who are desiring to make their First Holy Communion this October. Today we shall restart Coffee after the 10am Mass. I am grateful to Lucy and Jacinta, who worked so hard this week to deep clean the hall, toilets and kitchen – a labour of love indeed. I'm also thankful that four groups of coffee/tea makers have volunteered to help us.

Christian fellowship is always an important part of our parish family life together, but at this time when many of us have spent so much time in the loneliness of isolation, it's crucial. Having a cup of coffee together is a start, I'm hopeful that our Social Committee can meet soon to discuss and organise some other social events for our parish.

Today we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, often seen as the Church's Birthday. May the Holy Spirit, inspire and lead us, may we experience his presence with us to renew our lives form us into the children that our loving God wishes us to be.

God bless you all.

Fr. John

**TIMES OF MASS THIS WEEK**

Sun	23	Pentecost Sunday	1000 Mass	Mollie Atkinson
			1800 Mass	People of the Parish
Tue	25	St. Bede	1900 Mass	Jim Birchall (RIP)
Wed	26	St. Philip Neri	1000 Mass	John & Elizabeth Hasledon (RIP)
			1030 Adoration and Rosary	
Thu	27	Jesus Eternal High Priest	1000 Mass	Priests in our Diocese
			1030 Adoration and Rosary	
Fri	28	feria of Easter	1430 Funeral Mass	of Terrence McNamara
Sat	29	St. Paul VI	Virtual Pilgrimage	to Walsingham
Sun	30	Trinity Sunday	1000 Mass	People of the Parish
			1800 Mass	Nora Green (RIP)

**THE ROSARY AROUND THE WORLD THIS WEEK**

23	Notre Dame du Cap (Trois Rivières) Canada	For all law enforcement and military personnel and for all firefighters
24	To be confirmed	For all those who provide essential services
25	Basilica of the Blessed Virgin of Ta' Pinu	For all teachers, students and educators
26	Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe Mexico	For all workers and entrepreneurs
27	Mother of God (Zarvanytsia) Ukraine	For all the unemployed
28	Black Madonna of Altötting Germany	For the Holy Father, bishops, presbyters, and deacons
29	Our Lady of Lebanon (Harissa) Lebanon	For all consecrated men and women
30	Blessed Virgin of the Holy Rosary of Pompeii	For the Church
31	Vatican Gardens	For the end of the pandemic and the resumption of our social and economic life

## GOSPEL REFLECTION

The American priest and writer Lawrence Lovasik wrote, "Kind words are a creative force, a power that concurs in the building up of all that is good, and energy that showers blessings upon the world." Lovasik recognised the power of words to transform and to be constructive. Among all the animals, human beings, as rational animals, are the experts at words. Other animals communicate with gestures and noises, but only humans have the power of articulate speech. Language is endlessly creative, from street slang to the greatest works of literature. We can think of how these great works penetrate our culture, the *Odyssey* of Homer, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante, the sonnets of Shakespeare. Traditional cultures transmit stories and histories by word of mouth, so ensuring continuity in their way of life.

We also know that words can deceive and destroy. St James says that the tongue is like a small flame which can set alight huge forests. We all know the corrosive effect that gossip and lies can have on a person's life, and the lives of whole communities. Human beings thrive on the truth. It is part of our nature to want to know and communicate the truth, and language is at its most noble when it tells the truth. Truthful language reflects reality and builds up community. To tell the truth about God, who is beyond our understanding, we need divine inspiration.

The Gospel today is the promise that Jesus makes to send the Holy Spirit – and Pentecost is the fulfilment of that promise. At Pentecost the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit and were able to proclaim the truth of Jesus. Jesus also teaches the connection between the gift of the Spirit and the truth. Without the divine inspiration that comes from God we are unable to fully express the richness of God's being and love.

This giving of the Holy Spirit takes place on two levels, the collective and the personal. At the collective level the Spirit is given to the whole Church, starting with the apostles. The Spirit empowered the apostles to speak many different languages, and also to speak the truth about the love and goodness of God. They were able to convince people of the reality of the death and resurrection of Jesus. On an individual level we receive the Spirit at baptism, and we are given the gifts of faith, hope and charity. As St Paul puts it, we become temples of the Holy Spirit. We are empowered to know and love God and to bear witness to the saving truth.

At the annunciation the Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary so she could give birth to the human body of Christ; at Pentecost the Holy Spirit hovers over the Church to give birth to the mystical body of Christ. At our baptism the Holy Spirit comes to us to empower us. This is a participation in the life of the Trinity.

We live the life of Pentecost primarily through participating in the sacraments, through a life of prayer and good works. The Holy Spirit works through each of the sacraments to heal and illuminate us, to help us live a life of community with God and with each other. The Holy Spirit gives us what are known as the seven gifts, to empower us to pray, to enter ever deeper into the life of the Trinity. As well as the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit there are also the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Today's second reading gives us a beautiful list of these gifts, the results of living a life in the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control. The Holy Spirit dwelling in us does not make us puppets, but empowers us to be genuinely free and achieve our potential as children and co-workers of God.

There is one very concrete way in which we can bear witness to the truth of Jesus and the Gospel. Guided by the Spirit, we can speak of the things of God, we can speak honestly, speaking the truth in love. This can go from explaining our faith to others, to saying kind and encouraging words to each other, the sort of words that build up, not those that destroy. So the Holy Spirit makes us children of God, but also helps us mature in Christ to the fullness of truth; as an ancient hymn puts it, the Holy Spirit is the Father's promise, "teaching little ones to speak and understand".