

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – JULY 15, 2018

Dear Families and Parishioners,

Jesus before he ascended into Heaven promised to have God the Father send the Holy Spirit to the Apostles. This happened on the Jewish Feast of Pentecost. Today, that sending is renewed in the Sacrament of the Holy Spirit, **Confirmation**. God the Holy Spirit comes to each one of us in a new Pentecost and in a special way.

The person of the Holy Spirit is God coming to us as a **companion**. The Holy Spirit is like the **wind** in the sails as we journey on a turbulent sea. God the Holy Spirit acts like a **stage prompter** to guide us through the myriads of possibilities both good and bad in life. The Holy Spirit does not intrude visibly but rather whispers to us in ways only known to the human person.

What parent would reject having the child Jesus as a buddy for their son. Parents would pay thousands of dollars to have a young Virgin Mary as a best friend for their teenage daughter. God the Holy Spirit is all this and more.

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of love within the family of the Holy Trinity. This love sends thoughts of inspiration, develops coincidences, motivates action, discerns possibilities, guards from tragedy, supports in weakness, and uplifts in sadness. The Holy Spirit does all this invisibly and unobtrusively by entering our minds and hearts which are made in the image and likeness of God.

The Sacrament of the Holy Spirit is Confirmation. Teenagers cannot receive the Sacrament of Confirmation without the support of their parents. Jesus was most explicit, “When one denies the Holy Spirit, this is a most serious offense and hard to be forgiven.” (Mark 3:28 -30). **A gift of the Holy Spirit is an opportunity especially for teenagers in those most difficult years of transition.** The opportunity of Confirmation is likewise an opportunity for parents to grow in the understanding of their Faith and to support their children with a gift of God that is immeasurable in words or dollars.

Two dates are set in July to meet with the parents of the Confirmandi, grandparents and indeed others who want to explore the working of the Holy Spirit. You need to come to only one of these two sessions in July. **The first is Wednesday, July 18th at 7:00 PM in Gaudete Hall. The second opportunity is Sunday, July 29th after the 10:30 AM Mass in Gaudete Hall.** We hope to explore and to share with each other how the Holy Spirit acted in our life even though we were unknowing. We should share these incidences with each other as a way of prompting our understanding. If we do not understand in ourselves how the Holy Spirit touches us, it will be impossible for us to talk and lead our children.

The Parish Festival's 99th Year

St. Joseph Parish had both a festival in the summer and a bizarre in the fall. Mary Denny has told us well that the festival/bizarre originated in 1919 after the First World War. The July Festival grew, changed, and morphed into what we now know as a Family Festival opened to the entire community. St. Joseph Parish is proud to be the center of St. Joseph Village and sponsor this family get-together where people eat together, dance together, enjoy their young children playing together, and watch their young teenagers explore their futures. I personally want to thank all the workers for the festival for making this opportunity for the community open to all.

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.
July 15, 2018