

Congratulations Graduates: Congratulations to all our graduates...

High School	Bob Clark	College Degrees	Bill Clark
	Emily Lukens		John Frost
	Cora Mallory		Rachel Pawson
	Carey Smith		Emily Willoughby
	Joey Yuncker		

You have worked very hard and we are proud of you. We pray God's blessings to you wherever life takes you.

Scripture Today:

On the Solemnity of Pentecost the Church was born, and is reborn every time we are renewed in the Spirit of Pentecost.

The Jewish people celebrated Pentecost for centuries before it became the feast of the descent of the Holy Spirit. It was a celebration of the fiftieth day of Passover, a feast requiring every Jewish man, woman and child to come to the Temple at Jerusalem. This explains the large crowd present there fifty days after Jesus rose from the dead. They used this time to commemorate the giving of the Ten Commandments of the Law to Moses on top of Mount Sinai, where God revealed himself in wind and fire – the same way God reveals his Spirit at Pentecost.

In John's Gospel, Jesus appears in the Upper Room on that first Easter night, breathing his spirit on his Apostles and saying, *Peace be with you*. In that moment, Jesus takes away their fears that his body may have been stolen, and he assures them that he is both risen and glorified. This event draws our minds back to the book of Genesis (2:7) where God created Adam, but he did not have life until God breathed his Spirit into his nostrils. In the Upper Room, the Apostles had long since been charged with the task of preaching and building God's kingdom, but they did not have the capability of fulfilling this mission until Jesus breathed his God-given power upon them.

Just as God created Adam and gave him life, so too, Christ, who is God, created the Church and gives her the Spirit who guides her and protects her. Adam was created to know, love and serve God. He disobeyed and became a mere mortal. The Church was instituted by God to help all human beings to pick up where Adam left off – to make God known, loved and served by all. In as much as she obeys this great commission, the Church leads us back to immortality. In our creed, we profess faith in "the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life." Life is what the Spirit has given to the Church, and through baptism and confirmation, this same gift is given to all who believe.

At Pentecost, God comes to us as Spirit, calling all people to a new way of life. Hundreds of new disciples began that day to live according to the Spirit of God – living in charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, faith, mildness and temperance.

Jesus said at Easter, *As the Father has sent me, so I send you* (Jn. 20:21). In word, wind and fire, as in the body and blood, Jesus gives us his Spirit once again, renewing in us that same command he once gave to his first disciples – that we go out to all the world and make disciples. Today, we say with believers throughout time, *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*, Come, Holy Spirit – come into our hearts, come into our parishes, come into our homes, and renew the face of the earth.

On this Pentecost Sunday, it's a good time to reflect on our role as disciples, and that the church needs every one of us to be all that she can be. A disciple is one who follows. We are all called to be disciples, but we follow Jesus in different ways, according to the talents and charisms we have been given. Discipleship, as you practice it, will likely look quite different than the way I practice it. We can spend a lifetime learning how to follow Jesus, as we grow in our faith and love for him. The business we should be about is doing what God asks us to do, to the best of our ability. That might look different as we grow and change — as our life circumstances change.

How have you experienced the Holy Spirit at work in your life? Have you ever felt inspired to reach out to someone in need? That's the Holy Spirit. Have you ever tried to share your faith with someone? That's the Holy Spirit. Have you ever fought hard against temptation and won? That's the Spirit. Have you ever left Mass or come out of a prayer time feeling refreshed and closer to God? That, too, is the Holy Spirit!

In the mystery of Pentecost, we accept the transforming responsibility of taking on the work of Christ's healing and redemption ourselves. We are each a channel for that power and energy. We are called to unplug the obstructions that block who we are meant to be and become true instruments of the Spirit. On Pentecost, fifty days after Easter, we celebrate the roaring entry of the Holy Spirit. Today we celebrate the fruits and effects of that driving wind and scorching flame that filled the apostles with a new wisdom, a wisdom that transformed their timidity by an infusion of divine breath into speeches of divine enthusiasm ("enthusiasm" literally means "to be filled with God"). The "God-with-us" of Christmas has been transformed to the "God-in-us" at Pentecost.

Alpha this week: What about the church?

Talk summary:

- Is it possible to be a Christian, to be a follower of Jesus, and not go to church?'
- What does "going to church" mean? What is church?

Baptism Congratulations: Our faith community congratulates Gerald and Megan Leonard on the baptism of their child Evan Joseph.

CSA 2017: Our annual Catholic Services Appeal (CSA) campaign has begun. Our quota is about \$45,000. As of this writing, we have collected about \$14,700 in pledges, or about 30% of our goal. I know we can make our quota as we have for the past several years. If you don't have a pledge card for CSA, there are some at the doors of the church. CSA serves the bigger world church and our local diocese. It is worth your support.

I hope you will consider a gift of 1% of your annual income, and any money that comes back to the parish will be used for future evangelization, youth ministry, and whole community catechesis programs.

RCIA: Are you or someone you know seeking to complete their initiation into the Catholic Church? Maybe you have not been baptized and would like to be? Either way, if you have questions about this process, I would encourage you to contact me. I am here to serve you and guide you through a process that can be life altering. Don't let another year slip by without you or someone you know doing what you or they have wanted to do for years. Don't be afraid to extend this invitation to those you know in the area. Jesus commanded us to "Go and make disciples" and that is the task of every baptized member of the church. Sometimes a simple question like: "Have you ever considered becoming Catholic?" can lead to amazing results!