**FOR THE WEEKEND OF JUNE 7-8, 2025**

Pentecost Sunday

**Gospel Reading**

Jn 20:19-23

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked,

where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their

midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples

rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

[Jesus] said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me,

so I send you.”

And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive

the holy Spirit.

Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are

retained.”

**Intercession**

May we receive the necessary gifts of the Holy Spirit to carry out God’s mission for us on earth, counting among these fortitude, so that with firmness of mind and heart, we can seek ways to do good, like serving others through support of the Diocesan Ministry Appeal.

**Copy for Bulletin Announcement**

The closed-door metaphor is front and center in today’s Gospel. In fact, it opens with the disciples huddled behind locked doors. They are fearful. Do they not understand that Jesus has risen? Do they not believe the women who went to the tomb to find it empty? Or do they conclude that His body was taken and that He did not rise from the dead as promised?

How are our own doors closed and locked? Do we so intently focus on our own families, circle of friends, work, studies, entertainment that we are blind to the needs of others? Or do we shut ourselves off from God, practicing our faith perfunctorily, because we are afraid of what true intimacy with God would require? Are we like Christ’s disciples (except the “beloved one”) who abandoned the Lord in His time of need?

Let us pray for the strength to unlock the doors we are hiding behind, open them wide, and walk through to greet the Lord with wide arms. May this be the beginning of a deeper intimacy with Christ, one which fills us with such joy that we can’t help but wish to spread His redemptive love, including our support of the Diocesan Ministry Appeal.

**Copy for Pulpit Announcement**

Jesus always seeks to be up close and personal with us. With the disciples, He “came and stood in their midst,” saying, “Peace be with you.” He is both close in physical proximity and in His greeting of friendship. Then, having fulfilled His mission with His death and resurrection, He charges them with continuing His ministry on earth and equips them to do so successfully. “[H]e breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.’” Being close enough to feel one’s breath – it doesn’t get much more intimate than that.

Our Lord empowers His disciples to continue His earthly mission after He ascends to heaven to join God the Father. He blesses them and fortifies them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit when He sends the promise of the Father upon them. Likewise, Jesus blesses our work. What gifts of the Holy Spirit do we rely on to accomplish this work and glorify God?

The Holy Spirit is God’s love alive in the world. We can call on the Holy Spirit for discernment, patience, wisdom, understanding, and more to help us in our daily living just as we can rely on God the Father and Jesus the Son to guide us in this life and to the next to be with them always. Let us share the Holy Spirit, the breath of life and love of God at work in this world, with others through our support of the Diocesan Ministry Appeal. When we do, we will help make our Lord more intimately felt by those in need.

**Social Media Post/Content**

Photo: Beams of bright light breaking through grey clouds; blue skies peeking through the darkness

Header: “Receive the holy Spirit.” – John 20:21

Copy: The gifts of the Holy Spirit can help us in our living today AND prepare us for life everlasting. Through support of the Diocesan Ministry Appeal, we can help others receive the consolation of Christ and gifts of the Holy Spirit.