

Sixth Sunday of Easter Year A

17 May 2020

INTRODUCTION:

Life is messy and confusing, so too the word of God. We might see in today's first reading grounds for a neat distinction between baptism (in Jesus' name) and confirmation (the giving of the Holy Spirit by the apostles' laying on of hands).

This is confounded by other accounts of the freewheeling activity of the Spirit in the early church and by the later complex history of confirmation.

What is clear, however, is today's urgent need for us, the people of God, to realise how gifted we are in word and spirit. Living this boldly will make for a messy church but that's exactly what Pope Francis welcomes.

There is a sense of joy in this week's readings, especially in the Gospel promise: The Spirit will be given to us, and the Lord will be in us and we in the Lord.

PRIEST: Dear friends, God our Father sent the Paraclete to us as Jesus promised. United in the Spirit of Truth, let us pray for the needs of all our sisters and brothers.

- For the world-wide church, our local diocese and our parish. May the church at every level be a vibrant community of the Holy Spirit.
- For all who looked forward to being baptised at the Easter Vigil this year. May they await their full initiation with patience, faith and hope.
- For leaders guiding their nations through the coronavirus crisis. May they chart the way forward with wisdom, justice and courage.
- That deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.
- We renew our thanks for the dedicated workers and volunteers maintaining essential community services. May they enjoy our full and lasting appreciation.
- For the needy and vulnerable in our midst unable to claim government support. May welfare agencies and the whole community come to their aid.
- For teachers and support staff throughout the school system. May they meet the challenge of re-opening with enterprise and zeal.
- For all whose diversity of culture enriches the life of the nation. May their contribution to the vitality of society be valued and welcomed.
- That each of us may manifest the fruits of the Holy Spirit as we minister to each other with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control.
- For our families, friends and fellow parishioners. May the experience of the pandemic spur us to work even more readily for a new world of justice, love and peace.
- For all the baptised and confirmed, that they claim the freedom that is theirs as the children of God.
- For the recently deceased, farewelled by so few, and for those whose anniversary of death occurs around this time. May they see the face of God and live.

PRIEST: God of all goodness, you have made your love known to us in Jesus and still bless us with the Spirit of truth. Keep us on the way that leads to you. We ask this through Christ, our risen Lord.