

MAY Newsletter

MAY FLOWERS

By: Fr. O'Dell

There's an old saying: "April Showers bring May Flowers." Well, this year we certainly have had enough showers (and snow) so I hope that we have plenty of flowers. It occurs to me that the human race really likes flowers, but I wonder if we ever pause long enough to wonder why. After all, there are many beautiful plants growing everywhere, grass, bushes, perennials, what is so special about flowers? I spent a little time thinking about this question this past week.

For one thing, flowers in a special way brighten creation. Their vivid colors and unique shapes bring a sense of life to areas that can suffer from being too bland. You know, grass is great but it's all green. Bushes are wonderful, but they don't have a lot of mixed colors. Leaves on the trees are fantastic, but unless you are looking at them during a couple of weeks in the Fall, they don't have a lot of differing hues. Flowers brighten up the environment and give it a life above and beyond what we normally expect - they make other things shine.

Second, flowers smell fantastic. They bring their own "perfume" to every environment. When you bring a bouquet of flowers into a room, suddenly everything has a more pleasant smell. Some of the odors that linger around and that are sour or rancid are quickly displaced. Flowers are a natural way of pleasing our noses. There is nothing artificial about them at all. I can still walk into a church and smell the spring flowers and remember the same kind of flowers that were placed around the statue of Mary at May Crowning when I was little. Olfactory memory is one of the strongest forms of recall known to humankind. Flowers play a big part in that olfactory memory.

Last, flowers bring beauty into a world that is too often made ugly by the bad things that happen in it. When I see the wonderful colors of a flower, when I examine its shape and size, when I smell its scent, I am reminded of all of the many beautiful things that God has blessed us with here on earth. At times I forget to thank God for all of those wonderful gifts He sends my way because I become captivated by the unseemly things that occur because of sin. Flowers remind me to be grateful for all that I have been given. Seeing the beauty that flowers bring to me, I am also encouraged to pass that same beauty on to others in the way that I treat them. In a way, a beautiful flower reminds me just a tiny bit about what Heaven must be like.

I am talking about flowers today because they serve as symbols to us of the need we have to always keep our faith alive, beautiful and growing just like a living flower. In the same way that flowers perfume the air we breathe, our faith should perfume us with the air of sanctity and holiness by the way we conduct our lives. In the same way that flowers brighten our environment, the spiritual bouquets that we make by our works of charity and our prayers should brighten our souls. In the same way that flowers are beautiful our faith provides us a beauty in our mind and imagination that is beyond description. In the same way that we care for and cultivate the flowers we grow, we are reminded of the need to cultivate our faith. In the same way that flowers of every kind and variety bring joy to our lives and rest to our eyes and hearts, so too does the flower of our faith bring the peace and serenity of Jesus Christ to each and every one of us.

We are blessed during May to have lots of flowers. We are also blessed during the Spring season to renew our efforts make our faith more alive, more vibrant and more pleasing to the Lord. Take some time to place some flowers on the altar of your heart as an offering to God.