

June 2, 2019 - Pentecost and Beyond

Pentecost and beyond: we are entering the final days of Our Year of the Holy Spirit! Jesus is ascending into Heaven (**Ascension Sunday, June 2nd**) and, in less than one week, we will celebrate **the descent of the Holy Spirit** upon the Apostles and all of us on **Pentecost Sunday** (June 9). Here is the program of special parish activities open to everyone to close our Year of the Holy Spirit while preparing us to receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost:

- Thursday, June 6 at 7 pm, or Saturday, June 8 at 10 am: Learn Lectio Divina: Praying the Scriptures - Short video presentation about the Holy Spirit - Learning how to pray the Scriptures using one of the key readings for Pentecost Mass
- Saturday, June 8 at 5 pm: First Pentecost Mass
- Saturday, June 8 at 10 pm: Pentecost Vigil Mass followed by All-night Adoration of Blessed Sacrament (mainly silence with some charismatic prayers; in addition, some praise and worship singing)
- Sunday, June 9 at 8:30 am and 10 am: Masses celebrating Pentecost
- Sunday, June 9 at the 11:30 am Mass: Celebrating our 2019 Graduates (High School and College Graduates are invited to join us, sign-up online: www.olhoc.org/graduate) - Presentation by the Archdiocesan Office of Youth Ministry of "The Outstanding Adult Leadership Award" to our own Coordinator of Youth Ministry and Evangelization, Mrs. Marlen Coles!
- June 9 Workshop at 7 pm: (45 minutes) in English by Catholic Charities: "How to Help Friends and Family Suffering Domestic Abuse" (workshop in Spanish at 8 pm)

Looking beyond Pentecost, we already announced last week that we would enter this coming September into 12 months of celebration: **Celebrating 40 Years: 1980-2020!** We are establishing a **Celebration Committee** in which everyone is welcome to participate. Just call the office to express your interest! The Committee will begin to meet in mid-June and has about two months to make key recommendations. Even if you cannot join the Committee, your inputs are most valuable; just drop a note in the Suggestion Box at the entrance of the Narthex or send an email to office@olhoc.org. The first big celebration will take place at the 11:30 am Mass on Sunday, September 15, the exact date of our "birth" as a parish, when we were "created" by Cardinal Hickey in 1980! We know that **we become what we celebrate.** Let us celebrate the **joy** of 40 years of our welcoming, loving and faithful family of families: **Bringing all to Christ! Sharing Christ with all! Being one in Christ!**

Last week, we had a wonderful celebration for our entire Archdiocese: the installation of our seventh Archbishop, Archbishop Wilton Gregory at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on Tuesday, May 21. Many parishioners came, representing OLHOC well. If you could not participate (the

Shrine was packed!), you may have been able to watch it live on EWTN (you can still watch it on YouTube or the Archdiocese website: www.adw.org). I have never seen so many priests together in our Archdiocese! The entrance procession of priests, deacons, and altar servers took almost half-an-hour! There were a total of eight cardinals, 50 bishops, and several hundreds of deacons and priests! Our new shepherd, Archbishop Wilton Gregory, radiated both **joy and humility!** In his homily, he addressed the painful issues faced by our Archdiocese in the recent past, and very quickly focused on our present and future: while recognizing the richness of the diversity of our Archdiocese, he focused on the importance of our unity in loving Our Lord Jesus Christ and showing that Love to all in our daily lives. I had never met Archbishop Gregory earlier, but he appeared to be very approachable. The Holy Spirit led me to "shake his hand" as the procession of Priests passed by him at the end of the Mass. (I had not planned to do so, and I may have raised some eyebrows among my fellow priests.) His joy was contagious. As our new shepherd, he truly wishes to know all the 140 parishes of the Archdiocese. We hope that he will visit our parish soon and will keep you advised as soon as we hear from him.

Earlier this week, I had a meeting with the Class of 2009, the 7 priests that were ordained with me for the Archdiocese of Washington on the same day, June 20, 2009. Since that time, our Class has met regularly, almost every month, and every June 20, date of our anniversary, we have celebrated a Mass together. Many of you will recall that five years ago, the eight of us celebrated the Mass at OLHOC (June 20, 2014) and invited parishioners we had served in different parishes for our first five years as priests. This year, to celebrate our 10th anniversary, our Class has just decided to celebrate a Mass together at 7 pm at St. Philip the Apostle, Camp Springs (close to Route 5 and the Beltway, about 20 minutes from Waldorf). On behalf of our entire Class, you are all invited to come and celebrate with us our joint 80 years of priesthood, giving thanks to the Lord for all the blessings we have received through the parishioners we have served to date. After the Mass, there will be a reception for everyone at St Philip's Hall. Mark your calendars for **Thursday, June 20, 7 pm** Mass and reception, St Philip the Apostle, 5416 Henderson Way, Camp Springs, Maryland.

Come Holy Spirit, keep filling our hearts with Jesus' Love for us! Come, Holy Spirit, keep guiding our parish, our family of families, as we conclude Our Year of the Holy Spirit and prepare for the times beyond Pentecost and our 40th year anniversary! Come Holy Spirit this Pentecost and continue to keep us united in Christ! Come Holy Spirit! Help us to share our joy of knowing Jesus with all we encounter in our daily lives!

One in Christ,
Fr. Alain