

St. Joseph's Parish
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PENTECOST SUNDAY

Pentecost with Christmas and Easter, ranks among the great feasts of Christianity. It commemorates not only the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and Disciples, but also the fruits and effects of that event: the completion of the work of redemption, the fullness of grace for the Church and its children, and the gift of faith for all nations.

And when the days of Pentecost were drawing to a close, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a violent wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as of fire, which settled upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in foreign tongues, even as the Holy Spirit prompted them to speak (Acts 2, 1-4). We would do well to hold fast to the Letter to the Corinthians, reminding us that there are a variety of gifts but one God, who draws together everything that has been given to each for the good of all. So many in the world are divided against each other.

We must stop for a moment on this Pentecost and consider our brothers and sisters in faith who we scarcely recognize as our neighbour. God longs for us to see and rejoice in the gift that has been placed in the other. The Spirit can do extraordinary things amid great diversity if we recognize that God desires and calls the ones we don't understand just as much as he needs and calls us. Whatever we have, we have been called to offer to Jesus to put at his service and that of his Kingdom and invite others to do likewise.

Today ~ particularly at Holy Communion, the power of the Holy Spirit will come down upon us; fiery tongues will not be seen, but invisible tongues of fire will not be absent. There was still another external manifestation of the Holy Spirit; the apostles and disciples were enabled to speak various languages.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

UPDATE ON STAY AT HOME ORDER ~ Earlier this month, the provincial government announced that the current stay-at-home order **will be extended** until at least June 2, 2021. Current restrictions for places of worship (limit of 10 people inside the church at any time) remain in place.

Yesterday afternoon, the provincial government shared their “Roadmap to Reopen”, outlining a three step approach that will be implemented throughout Ontario. Some key points from the government document as they relate of places of worship:

- Before the implementation of the “Roadmap to Reopen”, current measures for places of worship (limit of 10 both inside and outside) remain in place.
- Step 1 of the “Roadmap to Reopen” is expected to be introduced the week of June 14. Each step will last a minimum of 21 days ~ movement to the next step is also impacted by the number of positive COVID-19 cases in the province, demand on the Intensive Care Unit in hospitals as well as the vaccination rate for Ontarians.
- Step 1 limits indoor gathering at places of worship to the current hard cap of 10 people. In Step 1, outdoor religious services may be conducted without limits as long as 2 m distancing is maintained.
- Step 2 ~ first week of July at the earliest ~ places of worship are permitted 15% capacity.
- Step 3 ~ at least 21 days following the start of Step 2 ~ places of worship are permitted “larger indoor services, rites or ceremonies” ~ no specific number or percentage is provided.

FIREWORKS ~ The Knights of Columbus were unable to acquire a permit to sell fireworks this May long weekend due to COVID restrictions ~ but they hope to be able to provide their services for the July long weekend. We will keep you informed.

We continue to adhere with provincial restrictions and there are NO public masses at St. Anthony’s and at St. Joseph’s only 10 permitted in the building and reservations must be made through the office. Thank you for your patience and ongoing support as we navigate these latest developments.

Fr. Oswin Fernandes