

Fifth Sunday of Easter
Fourth Sunday after Easter (Latin Mass)
May 15, 2022
Year of Saint Joseph

“Our soul is a little heaven in which the Creator of Heaven and Earth takes up His abode. Is there anything so grand as to see Him, whose grandeur would fill a thousand worlds, hiding Himself in such a little dwelling as our soul!” (Saint Teresa of Jesus)

If we were to combine the Gospels, both taken from Saint John, for the Traditional Latin Mass and the New Order of the Mass, then we would behold a beautiful transition which is taking place. In the Gospel of the New Mass (John 13), Jesus predicts His departure from His Apostles with the words: “I will be with you only a little while longer.” In the Gospel of the Traditional Latin Mass (John 16), Jesus tells His Apostles why He must depart: “for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you, but if I go, I will send Him to you.” As much as He would have wanted to stay and guide His Church, He knew His mission was transitioning to the right hand of the Father to intercede for us as the Eternal High Priest. His Church would not be left orphaned; rather it would be guided by the perpetual Love shared between Father and Son. A love that is itself a Divine Person — the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.

Our Catholic faith teaches us that the Holy Spirit comes and makes His abode with us when we are baptized. We need to be baptized for the Holy Spirit to come and reside fully within our souls. There are certain circumstances where baptism with water using the Trinitarian formula (In the Name of the Father, Son, and Spirit) may be difficult, if not impossible, however the Church does allow for baptism to occur via blood and desire. Baptism is necessary for a Christian for it washes from the Christian the filth of original sin. It is only a much later man-made claim which seeks to diminish the necessity of Baptism instead inserting a profession of belief in Jesus as sufficient.

In the centuries since the day of Pentecost, our Catholic Church has seen it necessary to explain why it was important to receive Baptism and thereby receive the Holy Spirit. Besides the reasons of necessity for salvation and washing away of sin, one more reason, which we shall reflect upon today, is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which occurs within each of us post-Baptism.

I would be willing to guess, we have all heard the statement that a baptized Christian has become a “Temple of the Holy Spirit.” Yet, have we ever considered what that statement actually entails. I will explain it in this fashion. A soul which is alive in a state of grace, free from sin, is a living tabernacle. In the same way as we are obliged to adore and honor God upon our church’s altars and in our tabernacles, we are obliged to honor and adore God present within our souls. Think of it this way, in Mass, God is made present upon the altar through the words of institution spoken by the priest. Through our Baptism, when we are living in and with

Sanctifying Grace, there should truly be no difference between God in our souls and God upon the altar. Both the bread and ourselves are filled with God. Moreover, we profess that one-day God will return again. And on that day, there will no longer be a need or necessity for the Sacrifice of the Mass. Yet, once a soul has received the Sacrament of Baptism, God can reside within that soul for all eternity. Only the Christian can freely choose to evict God from His rightful indwelling within that soul. It is done by a choice. A choice so egregious that it drives out God's enlightening presence and casts the soul into an unforgiving darkness of despair and suffering. The same darkness that Saint John describes in three words referring to Judas as he left the Last Supper: "It was night."

My family, it need not be so with us. When He enters our souls, the Holy Spirit brings with Him ten "house warming presents" to strengthen us against falling into grave/mortal sin. They are the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love; coupled with the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit comprised of wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. My dear family, you are a great gift of God brought into this world. Each of you is a bearer of His Divine Presence. Do not allow that Presence, that Light, to leave you by a choice. For as we all know, it is in the small choices made every day that a soul can either become glorified or debased. As our Blessed Mother Theresa would say and Deacon Bullock would quote: "Let nothing separate you from the love of God."