

***The Epiphany of the Lord (English)***  
***Most Holy Name of Jesus (Latin)***  
***January 5, 2025***  
***Year of the Holy Spirit***

*“Christian life is the reproduction of Jesus in souls; and perfection, the most faithful and perfect reproduction, consists in the transformation of souls into Jesus.” (Archbishop Luis M. Martinez, The Sanctifier, p.5)*

On the first Sunday of the New Year, it has been our custom to announce a theme for our parishes’ reflection. This year, I would like to offer the Holy Spirit as the source and focus of our reflections. As Christians, we should have a devotion to the Holy Spirit. However, it has been my experience that the Holy Spirit is rarely reflected upon. Consider the last time you heard offered a homily, talk or teaching solely based upon the Holy Spirit. We have done so during our Wednesday night “teaching” Masses, but these programs are not, generally, able to be attended by the majority of our parishioners. It is my intention to remedy this by offering two reflections each month upon the Holy Spirit and, hopefully, inspire within each of us a deeper appreciation of and a proper devotion to the Holy Spirit.

Not wanting to reinvent the wheel, Archbishop Luis Maria Martinez (1881-1956) crafted a beautiful reflection upon the Holy Spirit in his work, The Sanctifier. The Archbishop reminded the reader of his book, concerning one point which applied to both the Holy Spirit and the spiritual life of the individual. The Holy Spirit is tasked with reproducing the image of Jesus Christ within the soul of each person. The more the person conveys this image, both in word and deed, the deeper the individual’s relationship with God becomes. This is the beginning of sanctity found within.

To accomplish this goal, the Holy Spirit may be likened to a master artist. I would like you to consider this introductory image over the next week. Imagine a lump of clay upon a potter’s wheel. The clay possesses no particular form. It is just an unorganized lump of clay. The first principle the Holy Spirit, as the master artist, wants to convey to the clay is that IT IS a lump of clay. It is not a chunk of coal hoping to become a diamond. It is a lump of clay which needs to be formed. Its form will be that which best allows it to give praise to God, but it must begin with the truth that it cannot accomplish its final form without the hands of the master artist shaping it. And, to shape the clay, there must be a formal, ordered process which the master adheres to. This process is an action of Love. Not any random feeling we call love, but the Love which proceeds from the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit, which Christ names the Spirit of Truth, loves us and develops us in an ordered way. For Love, the Holy Spirit, gives to the soul order and meaning thus combating the sinful chaos within each of us which, could potentially, draw us away from God.