

The Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 2nd August 2020

How wonderful to be back! It feels like Easter Day! The Resurrection of the church! We entered into lockdown in the middle of Lent and, in many ways, it feels as though we have never emerged from the desolations of Holy Week – until today! Perhaps, in years to come, these past few months will be known as the “long Good Friday” of the Church.

Resurrection is not merely a restoration to life (the old life) but resurrection to **new** life! And we must pray that this may be true of us also – that, through the grace of God, we may come together (as God’s people/the Body of Christ) with stronger ties to each other, with deeper feelings, with a new hunger and thirst for the life of grace.

We have been through a wilderness experience – and we have been through that **together** – and we have come through on the other side!

On Divine Mercy Sunday, you will remember, I solemnly blessed and re-consecrated our two parishes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament from the front steps of St. Joseph’s Church. And the Lord has brought us through – to this glorious Easter Day in the life of the church! And now we must pray for Pentecost – a new Pentecost in the life of the Church. A deep slumber was forced upon us, a “little death” in the life of the church, but now (on this Day of Resurrection – this “Easter Day” in the life of the church) we must pray for Pentecost.

The prophet Ezekiel had a vision – a famous vision - in which he sees bones coming together, and then flesh growing on those bones. He says, “ there was a rattling of bones, and the bones came together, bone to bone. And, as I looked, there were sinews on them and flesh had come upon them, and skin covered them – but, there was no breath in them. Then the Lord said to me, “Prophesy to the breath”, so I prophesied, and the breath came upon them and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great host”. As the Body of Christ, we have been separated from one another – disjointed – but now the Lord has brought us together again – not to be a lifeless body (without breath) but to breathe breath into us! “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit” says the Lord. (Zechariah 4 v 6). Remember the words of St. Paul, “Consider your call brethren, not many of you were wise, not many of you were powerful, not many of you were of noble birth – but God chose what is weak in the world, to shame the strong, so that no human being might boast in His presence” (1 Corinthians 1 v 26f). It is all of God! Pentecost can only be a Work of the Holy Spirit! And we must pray that God will now “crown” His mercies to us, not only in the resurrection of the church today (after this long “Good Friday”) but with a new Pentecost.

We call upon the prayers of Our Blessed Lady that she petition her Divine Son for us that, from the Throne of His Glory, He may send down the Holy Spirit on us!

“ Come DOWN, O Love DIVINE! SEEK Thou this soul of mine! And VISIT it, With Thine own ardour glowing! O Comforter draw near, Within my HEART appear, And KINDLE it, Thy Holy Flame bestowing”

“Come Holy Spirit! Renew the face of the earth! And enkindle in us the FIRE of Your love!” – to Whom, with the Father and the Son, be glory, honour, majesty, dominion and power, now and for ever. Amen!