

Grace Notes in Miniature

Tuesday June 2nd, 2020

Dear friends:

I imagine that we are all stunned and shocked by the riots and violence which are taking place across the border to our south. I'm old enough to remember the sixties but, naively I suppose, hoped we had grown from then. So many things continue to remind us that God isn't finished with us yet – which I think demonstrates just how much God loves us as most parents would have shown their children the door by this point. We constantly are reminded that it is our mission to bring about the Kingdom here on earth – and that this is work! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G88rhg1W4xw>

In an article in Aleteia, Bishop Robert Barron writes about Christians refusing to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. He asks why, if so many people claim to be Christians, there is no unity and calls on Christians to “get out of the Upper Room! Light the fire of love in the streets, in the halls of government, in the world of communication, in business and industry, in schools, and in the hearts of your friends and neighbors” to show that we really understand what Pentecost is about. (you can find the whole article at:

<https://aleteia.org/2020/06/02/bishop-barron-pentecost-and-the-fires-in-our-cities/>)

Yesterday, I commented that every Mass should be for us a “little Easter” calling us back to the joy of the Resurrection. We may feel lost and deprived right now as we are unable to gather with our communities to celebrate Mass and receive Jesus in the Eucharist. But, Jesus told us, “remember, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgNGsrwGHz0> (Matt 28:20)

We are initiated, through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, **into the Body of Christ**, which means he is always with us. The Holy Spirit is one of the ways in which he is present to us; the Eucharist is the one we treasure most – but he is still always with us. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQiQbFCwzjk>

As we share in the Celebration from a distance on YouTube, a live-streamed parish Mass or other source, we can always offer an Act of Spiritual Communion. The Archdiocese of Vancouver posted a resource which I have appended to today's GNIM; this resource explains and invites and guides us to compose our own Act of Spiritual Communion so that it may be more personal. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ClqWjbltIbk>



For the month of June, our Holy Father Pope Francis invites us to join him in praying for those who suffer: "We pray that all those who suffer may find their way in life, allowing themselves to be touched by the Heart of Jesus. "

June was traditionally the month of the Sacred Heart and, although the reforms of Vatican II suggested we should focus on individual feast days (this year the Feast of the Sacred Heart is June 19th) many parishes and older people continue to keep the observance. Families used to be consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and display the image in their homes. This devotion can be traced back clearly to the eleventh century and St Bernard of Clairvaux, although indications of the beginnings of a devotion to the love of God



through the heart of Jesus can be found in the writings of such fathers of the Church as Origen, Saint Ambrose, Saint Jerome, Saint Augustine of Hippo, Saint Hippolytus of Rome, Saint Irenaeus, Saint Justin Martyr and Saint Cyprian. They based it on John

7:37-39: ³⁷ On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, ³⁸ and let the one who believes in me drink. As[□] the scripture has said, 'Out of the believer's heart[□] shall flow rivers of living water.'" ³⁹ Now he said this about the Spirit, which believers in him were to receive; for as yet there was no Spirit,[□] because Jesus was not yet glorified.(NRSV)

Here is a prayer of Pope St John Paul II: Lord Jesus, You are Our Lord and Our God.

Make it so we never look at any other star but that of Love and Mercy that shine on Your chest.

May Your heart be, O Our God, our landmark for faith, the anchor of our hope, the continuous help in our weakness, the marvellous dawn of an unshakable peace, the sun that enlightens our horizon.

Jesus, we entrust ourselves to Your Divine Heart without reserve. May Your grace convert our hearts.

Through Your mercy, uphold our families, keep them in the faithfulness of love.

May Your Gospel dictate our laws. May all people and nations of the earth take refuge in Your loving Heart and enjoy the peace You offer the world through a pure source of love and charity, from Your merciful Heart. Amen.

Jan Michael Joncas, who gave us one of our favourite hymns "On Eagles Wings", has written this new piece especially for our comfort during the pandemic. Here is a file from which you can download it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7b7DTQDdpA> and a second in which you can hear a choir singing it with musicians .

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qgNGsrwGHz0>

This final link is a performance of Sweet Sacrament, in which we can immerse ourselves for a few moments of personal Sabbath. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GhK9-tec9fM>

With every blessing

Gillian



Prayers of Spiritual Communion

When we are unable to receive Holy Communion *sacramentally*, we can receive great graces and blessings by expressing our desire to do so in what is called a “spiritual Communion.” This practice goes back many centuries and has a rich tradition.

There are different models for doing this, but they all have these steps in common:

Make an act of faith: *Jesus, I believe that You are really present in the Holy Eucharist. . .*

Make an act of love: *Jesus, I love You because You are all-good and deserving of my love. . .*

Make an act of desire: *I want to receive You in Holy Communion, the Gift You have chosen above all others to share Yourself and Your life with me. . .*

Invite Jesus to come into your heart: *Please come into my heart, my life and everything I do. . .*

Thank Him for being truly within your heart and soul

You can simply use these words or expand on them in your own way. Remember to pray for others too, just as you would if you were at Mass and receiving Sacramentally / physically.

Here are a couple of classic versions of a Spiritual Communion:

Spiritual Communion Prayer by Saint Alphonsus Liguori

My Jesus, I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I long for You in my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You have already come, I embrace You and unite myself entirely to You; never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Saint Josemaria Escriva often taught this version, “I wish, Lord, to receive you with the purity, humility and devotion with which your most holy Mother received you, with the spirit and fervour of the saints.”

St John Vianney said, “If we are deprived of Sacramental Communion, let us replace it, as far as we can, by spiritual communion, which we can make every moment; for we ought to have always a burning desire to receive the good God. Communion is to the soul like blowing a fire that is beginning to go out, but that has still plenty of hot embers; we blow, and the fire burns again. After the reception of the Sacraments, when we feel ourselves slacken in the love of God, let us have recourse at once to spiritual communion. When we cannot go to the church, let us turn towards the tabernacle; no wall can shut us out from the good God.”