



Stronica Proboszcza



The Pastor's Page

May 20th, 2018

Solemnity of Pentecost

Month of the Our Lady

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Niech będzie pochwalony Jezus Chrystus! Praised be Jesus Christ!

We celebrate today one of the *highest* of all Church Holy Days. It is the Solemnity of Pentecost, the Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin Mary 50 days after the glorious Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This most important event in the history of our Church occurred after the disciples and Blessed Mother had spent nine days locked away in the upper room where the Last Supper had been eaten. What did they do during those nine days? Of course they prayed! This was in fact the first novena ever prayed!

They had so much on their minds and hearts that it was natural for them to turn to God in deep prayer. They had just witnessed the Ascension of the Lord Jesus into Heaven. He was gone! Certainly they felt His absence from their close-knit group. Most likely their minds were still reeling from the fact that He had truly risen from the dead! And now He is gone, but He made some promises before He left. One was that He would go and prepare a place for them and then some day, come back again to take them. He also promised He would not leave them orphans: "I am with you always until the end of the world!" And finally He promised to send them the Paraclete – the Holy Spirit of God.

They had all had contact with the Spirit before, during their days with Jesus over the last three years. Mary had encountered the Holy Spirit over and over during her 33 years with Jesus. Now this Holy Spirit of God, the third person of the Blessed Trinity would be coming to make a permanent dwelling place in their hearts and the hearts of all humanity. The Spirit would be picking up the work of God where Jesus had left off at His Ascension.

This was an earth-shattering event. It was in fact the beginning or *birth* of the Church. Definitely worthy of classification as a Solemnity on the Church's liturgical calendar, and yet... so many Christians and Catholics do not recognize or realize this Pentecost Sunday to be any different than any other Sunday. At Christmas we fill the church with enthusiastic worshippers wishing to prayerfully greet the infant Jesus again. The same is true at Easter. Unfortunately we are still learning to recognize the importance of today's Solemnity of the descent of the Holy Spirit.

Hopefully we are beginning to see that without the Spirit's divine assistance we are just powerless to do anything good and pleasing to Almighty God. Hopefully we will begin to turn more and more to this mysterious person of the Trinity and there find all the strength and power we need to live lives that reflect our Catholic faith. This day let each one welcome into our world, our church and our lives the Spirit of God whose descent upon the apostles and Mary we commemorate today.

Come, O Holy Spirit! Make Your Choice! Bless Our Parish!

This Weekend the entire parish turns its attention to the action of the Holy Spirit that will take place at the 4:30 PM Mass on Saturday. I am very grateful for the good number of parishioners who felt committed and bold enough to offer themselves for possible selection for service on the Parish Pastoral Council. Once again I want to remind each parishioner that it is our duty to pray to the Holy Spirit, not only that the right candidates will be chosen for service but also that the entire membership of the council will work together with each other and the pastor for the betterment of the whole parish. This should be an ongoing prayer, offered frequently!

Whoever's names are pulled from the ciborium this Weekend ARE UNDOUBTEDLY the persons that God Almighty wants to serve on the council of this church at this time! I believe this without a doubt! I cannot stress enough, that we are not just leaving this important issue "to chance," as some have suggested. Rather we are leaving our future in God's hands and really what else can we do? I look forward to working with the new group for many years and continuing to really build up our community! God bless our new Parish Pastoral Council!

*We are confident that the Holy Spirit will choose the best candidates
for the Parish Pastoral Council Today!*

Zielone Świątki – Pentecost – the Green Holiday

In Poland the Solemnity of Pentecost is usually better known to the faithful by its folk name – *Zielone Świątki* – the green holiday. This most important religious holiday is known by this folk name primarily because of the time of year it always occurs, and for the way the faithful decorate to observe it. The *Green Holiday* is always in springtime. This year it falls in mid spring because its date of celebration is determined by Easter. By this time of year nature is at its deepest green. The brown grass of fall and winter has come alive again in the richest shades of green. Trees that were once bare now are covered with green leaves again. Nature is filled with life again.

Religious people realize that all life comes from God through God's Holy Spirit. Each Sunday in our creed we profess: *We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life.* How true this is as nature's greening proves it! And so in Poland and other parts of Eastern Europe people decorate for this feast by bringing as much greenery indoors and to their living spaces as possible.

Doors and windows on the outside of a house are trimmed with pine, spruce and cedar. Inside homes and churches, branches of birch and ash are used to decorate altars, porches and gates. In days gone by country folk would even decorate their horses and wagons with greenery. There is something very beautiful and even holy about the beautiful green color of God's creation coming alive around us in springtime. Not only are the fragrances of the blooming apple trees and lilac bushes delightful but also the smell of a freshly mowed lawn! This is the spirit of a Polish experience of Pentecost! Here's wishing all readers an intense experience of the *Green Holiday!*

Sunday, May 20th – the Feast of St. Bernadine of Siena

St. Bernadine was born at Massa Marittima, near Siena in Italy in 1380. He lost both parents before he was seven years old. When Bernardine was 20, the plague struck his city of Siena, Italy. As many as two dozen people a day were dying from the disease. Everyone else was terrified of catching the plague, so hospital patients were left to die alone and unattended.

Bernardine not only agreed to run a hospital, but he also brought twelve friends with him. For four months they worked day and night to bring cleanliness and order. They cared for the sick and consoled them. Afterward, Bernardine was worn out and became ill himself. He never completely recovered his health.

Soon after that, Bernardine, at age 22, joined a Franciscan friary, and was ordained a priest two years

later. So many friends and relatives came to see him that he moved to a much quieter place with a more severe lifestyle. For the next twelve years, he spent his time praying and preparing for whatever God might want him to do.

In 1417, at age 37, Bernardine began preaching. Before his life was over, he would travel on foot throughout all of Italy. He drew tremendous crowds at each stop. His open-air sermons would last for hours, and he delivered several every day. In one city, Perugia, he was able to work out a peaceful end to civil war. He is still honored there. Especially known for his devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus, Bernardine devised a symbol – IHS, the first three letters of the name of Jesus in Greek, in Gothic letters on a blazing sun. The devotion spread, and the symbol began to appear in churches, homes and public buildings.

Bernardine loved preaching so much that he turned down three offers to be named a city's bishop. But he did say yes when asked to serve in a leadership post as General of the Franciscans Friars of the Strict Observance. In that job he improved the education for all the friars in his care. When he started there were 300 friars in the community; when he died there were 4,000. But he missed preaching, so for the last two years of his life, although he was in poor health, he went back to the strenuous life of a traveling preacher. He died at Aquila in Italy in 1444 at age 64, and was canonized six years later.

Our Lady Help of Christians

AUXILIUM CHRISTIANORUM

FEAST DAY – THURSDAY MAY 24TH

“Spread devotion to Mary, Help of Christians, and you will see miracles.” So advised Saint John Bosco, whose reverence to Mary as Help of Christians, or *Auxilium Christianorum*, led him to construct the Church of Mary Help of Christians in Turin in 1863 and has helped make this title one of the Blessed Mother's most popular.

Bosco had two dreams that prompted his devotion. In the first, he faced a menacing crowd of cursing and fighting youths, whom he attempted unsuccessfully to subdue with his bare fists. A “majestic” man pulled him out of the fracas, then ordered Bosco back in to take charge “not with blows but with kindness.”

Bosco objected: “Why do you ask impossible things of me? Who are you, anyway?”

The man replied, “Ask my Mother. I will give her to you as your teacher and guide, and she will make it all possible.”

Suddenly, a woman stood beside Bosco and reassured, “In due time you will understand.”

In the second dream, Bosco saw two pillars arising out of a storm-tossed sea to anchor Peter's bark (the Church). The taller pillar, surmounted with the host, bore the inscription “The Salvation of Believers.” The shorter pillar had a statue of Mary on top and was inscribed “Help of Christians.”

Bosco was not the first to profess devotion to Mary as Help of Christians. In 1576 Bernardino Cirillo, archpriest of Loreto, published a litany, approved by Pope Clement VIII in 1601, that invoked Mary as *Auxilium Christianorum*. This invocation may have arisen out of the victory at the Battle of Lepanto, which many attributed to the intercession of the Blessed Mother. Because of her aid, Pope Pius V hailed her as Our Lady of Victory, Help of Christians.

Also, when Pope Pius VII was freed from captivity after the Battle of Waterloo, in thanks to God and Mary he instituted the feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians, to be celebrated on May 24th.

In *The Glories of Mary*, Saint Alphonsus de'Liguori (1696-1787) recalled even earlier references: Saint John Damascene's (c. 676-eighth century) description of Mary as “the prepared and always ready help of Christians, by which they are all delivered from dangers” and Saint Cosmas of Jerusalem's (third century) depiction of Mary as “all-powerful to deliver us from sin and hell.” Saint Alphonsus also related how Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) addressed Mary; “Thou art an invincible warrior in defense of thy servants, fighting against the devils who assail them.” Historical writings are replete with references to Mary's helping her children in times of need, including the *Sub tuum praesidium*, the oldest prayer addressed to Mary. It was found on a papyrus dating from the end of the third century, a time of great danger for Christians, and prizes

Mary for her assistance given in time of conflict.

Scripture also speaks of the feminine strength that will conquer evil and protect dependents. Genesis prophesies a woman whose seed will crush the serpent's head (3:15), and Revelation tells of a woman whose son will "rule all the nations with a rod of iron" (12:5). Mary is held to fulfill these prophecies.

As Help of Christians, Mary becomes for all Christians a model of the active, providing assistance to her children and moving heaven and earth to correct evil and bring about God's will.

Saturday, May 26th – the Feast of St. Philip Neri

St. Philip Neri was born in 1515 in Florence, Italy, into a family of modest income. As a young man Philip Neri came to Rome in 1536, where he went out to the squares, shops and banks. There he challenged the other young men he met, asking them when they meant to begin doing good. Many of them, rich and poor alike, soon joined him. They volunteered in the hospitals of the city to care for patients. They did the dirtiest jobs. In the afternoon, they met with Philip for prayer, song and study at a place called the Oratory.

Philip was good at guiding those who wanted to grow in their prayer. Pilgrims who came to Rome to visit its holy places attended his teachings in such great numbers that a large room had to be built to hold them all. This room was called the Oratory. People in trouble felt calmed just by being in the same room with him.

He was ordained a priest at age 36 in 1551. Many people came to him for spiritual direction. Some of them also became famous saints, including Ignatius of Loyola, Francis de Sales and Camillus de Lellis. Palestrina was one of Philip's followers and composed music for services at the Oratory. Through his apostolate in the confessional and his spiritual conferences, he attracted a group of followers who ultimately formed the Congregation of the Oratory in 1575.

Yet Philip never took himself seriously. He wore old clothes and once shaved off half his beard just because people were saying how saintly he looked. When the pope wanted to honor Philip by appointing him a cardinal, the pope hung a cardinal's hat on Philip's door. A cardinal's hat is flat, so Philip tossed it in the air like a Frisbee. One of the people Philip guided, Francis de Sales, said that "a sad saint would be a sorry saint." Philip's joy was convincing to so many people that he would come to be called the second apostle to Rome. By the time he died at age 80, the whole city had been transformed by the spirit of the Oratory.

Jest to cnota nad cnotami, trzymać język za zębami!

It is a virtue above all virtues, to keep one's tongue behind one's teeth!

To Our Lady

Lovely Lady dressed in blue –
Teach me how to pray!
God was just your little Boy
Tell me what to say!
Did you lift Him up sometimes,
Gently, on your knee?
Did you sing to Him the way
Mother does to me?
Did you hold His hand at night?
Did you ever try,
Telling stories of the world
O' and did He cry?

Do you really think He cares
If I tell Him things –
Little things that happen,
And do the Angel's wings
Make a noise? And can He hear
Me if I speak low?
Does He understand me now?
Tell me – for you know.
Lovely Lady dressed in blue,
Teach me how to pray!
God was just your little Boy
And you know the way.