



Stronica Proboszcza



The Pastor's Page

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Solemnity of Pentecost

Month of the Sacred Heart

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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 late 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!*

Tuesday, June 11th – the Feast of St. Barnabas

One of the earliest disciples of the new Christian faith was a Jew from the island of Cyprus named Joseph. As the book of Acts of the Apostles explains, Joseph was so generous that he sold his farm and gave the proceeds to the apostles. He was so filled with faith that the apostles gave him a new name. They called him Barnabas, which means "the son of encouragement."

In those days, most Christians were Jewish. They thought it was a mistake to talk about Jesus to people who were not Jewish. The Jewish Christians in Jerusalem decided to send someone to find out what was happening in Antioch, where many people who weren't Jewish were interested in the faith. For this important task they chose Barnabas.

Barnabas reported back that he thought the Christians in Antioch were filled with the Holy Spirit. He realized that many more people would be open to hearing Christ's message, if someone with a powerful faith were there to help him preach. So he convinced St. Paul to come with him to Antioch. They stayed for a year and drew so many new Christians that Antioch became the second capital of the Christian faith.

Paul and Barnabas then traveled to other towns. Some leaders were afraid to trust Paul because earlier in his life he had persecuted Christians. But Barnabas lived up to his name and encouraged Paul to preach. Barnabas also encouraged St. Peter and other Christian leaders to accept Paul into the community. He reminded them of Jesus' call to bring salvation "to the ends of the earth." Barnabas himself obeyed that call so faithfully that, even though he was not one of the Twelve, the Book of Acts honors him with the title of apostle. St. Barnabas was stoned to death in Salamis at Cyprus.

Thursday, June 13th - the Feast of St. Anthony of Padua

St. Anthony made such an impression on Padua in Italy that he is still admired there 700 years later. He is a much loved saint throughout the Church. St. Anthony was actually of Portugal, not Italy. He was born Ferdinand and took the name Anthony when he entered religious life. His parents were nobles, and he could have chosen to live in luxury. But St. Anthony decided to devote his life to prayer and study. He became an Augustinian priest. He was a brilliant student who came to know the Bible inside out.

Ten years later St. Anthony learned about a new order, the Franciscans, who did missionary work. He wanted with all his heart to join them, and soon he was able to arrange it. He became a Franciscan Friar in 1219. St. Francis of Assisi, who had founded the order of Franciscans, was still alive. His spirit of poverty and love fired St. Anthony's heart. St. Anthony traveled to Morocco to preach the gospel. But severe illness sent him sailing for home. His ship blew off course and he landed in Italy instead. By chance, St. Francis had called the friars together there at this very time, so St. Anthony attended their meeting. Soon afterward the other friars heard St. Anthony preach. They realized he had a great gift. The wayward ship had steered him to what would become his life's work – preaching throughout Italy and France.

When St. Anthony preached, no church could hold the crowds that came to hear him. He spoke in the marketplaces and town squares. Because of what he said, parents and children made peace with each other. People gave back things they had stolen. People who had told lies admitted them publicly and corrected them. Maybe that is why St. Anthony is known as the patron saint of lost items. He worked to find lost people. His words were especially powerful because everyone knew that St. Anthony practiced what he preached. He was a humble person who chose to live in poverty. So many people experienced the love of God through his work that he became known as a "wonder worker." St. Anthony spent the last three years of his life in Padua. He died when he was only 36 years old.

In our church St. Anthony's image is found in the second stained glass window from the vestibule on the parking lot side of the church and in the mural painted on the side wall by Our Lady's altar. In both depictions he is shown together with the Child Jesus and holding the white lily of purity. The window was offered long ago by Mr. Antoni Kortas. In that depiction the Child Jesus appears on a cloud standing before a crucifix on an altar where St. Anthony seems to have been praying. At the saint's knees are a holy book and a flagellum which strict religious used on themselves to do penance. Near the saint is another large potted white lily.

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Before ascending into heaven Our Lord promised to send the Holy Spirit to finish the work He had begun in the souls of His Apostles and Disciples. The Church has identified seven spiritual gifts with which the Holy Spirit enlightens the mind, strengthens the will and inflames the heart of a Christian with love of God. Each day we should think of these gifts that have been bestowed on us at the time of our Confirmation and need to be continually strengthened by the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts.

The Gift of Fear of the Lord/Dar Bojaźni Bożej – Timor Domini

Fear of the Lord fills us with a sovereign respect for God, and makes us dread nothing so much as to offend Him by sin. It is a fear that arises, not from the thought of hell, but from sentiments of reverence and filial submission to our heavenly Father. It is the fear that detaches us from worldly pleasures that could in any way separate us from God. *They that fear the Lord will prepare their hearts, and in His sight will sanctify their souls. (Ecclus. 2:20)*

The Gift of Piety/Dar Pobożności – Pietas

Piety begets in our hearts a filial affection for God as our most loving Father. It inspires us to love and respect for His sake persons and things consecrated to Him, as well as those who are vested with His authority, His Blessed Mother and the Saints, the Church and its visible Head, our parents and superiors, our country and its rulers. He who is filled with the gift of piety finds the practice of his religion, not a burdensome duty, but a delightful service. Where there is love, there is no labor.

The Gift of Fortitude/Dar Męstwa – Fortitudo

By the gift of Fortitude the soul is strengthened against natural fear, and supported to the end in the performance of duty. Fortitude imparts to the will an impulse and energy which move it to undertake, without hesitancy, the most arduous tasks, to face dangers, to trample under foot human respect, and to endure without complaint the slow martyrdom of even lifelong tribulation. *He that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved. (Mt. 24:13)*

The Gift of Knowledge/Dar Umiejętności – Scientia

Knowledge enables the soul to evaluate created things at their true worth in their relation to God. Knowledge unmask the pretense of creatures, reveals their emptiness, and points out their only true purpose as instruments in the service of God. It shows us the loving care of God even in adversity, and directs us to glorify Him in every circumstance of life. Guided by its light, we put first things first, and prize the friendship of God beyond all else. *Knowledge is a fountain of life to hi that possesses it (Prov. 16:22)*

The Gift of Understanding/Dar Rozumu – Intellectus

Understanding, as a gift of the Holy Spirit, helps us to grasp the meaning of the truths of our holy religion. By faith we know them, but by Understanding we learn to appreciate and relish them. It enables us to penetrate the inner meanings of revealed truths and through them to be quickened to newness of life. Our faith ceases to be sterile and inactive, but inspires a mode of life that bears eloquent testimony to the faith that is in us; we begin to *walk worthy of God in all things pleasing, and increasing in the knowledge of God. (Col. 1:10)*

The Gift of Counsel/Dar Rady – Consilium

Counsel endows the soul with supernatural prudence, enabling it to judge promptly and rightly what must be done, especially in difficult circumstances. Counsel applies the principles furnished by Knowledge and Understanding to the innumerable concrete cases that confront us in the course of our daily duty as parents, teachers, public servants, and Christian citizens. Counsel is supernatural common sense, a priceless treasure in the quest of salvation. *Above all these things, pray to the Most High, that He may direct your way in truth. (Ecc. 37:19)*

The Gift of Wisdom/Dar Mądrości – Sapientia

Embodying all the other gifts, as charity embraces all the other virtues, Wisdom is the most perfect of the gifts. Of wisdom it is written: *all good things came to me with her, and innumerable riches through her hands. (Wis. 7:11)* It is the gift of Wisdom that strengthens our faith, fortifies hope, perfects charity, and promotes the practice of virtue in the highest degree. Wisdom enlightens the mind to discern and relish things divine, in the appreciation of which earthly joys lose their savor, while the Cross of Christ yields a divine sweetness according to the words of the Savior: *Take up your cross and follow Me, for My yoke is sweet and My burden light. (Mt. 16:24 & 11:30)*