

**Parish of St. Joseph, Morningside**  
**PENTECOST SUNDAY, CYCLE B**

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**Pulpit Plan**

<b>Theme</b>	:	<b>The Holy Spirit transforms lives!</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	:	Acts 2:1-11
Responsorial Psalm	:	Ps 104
2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	:	Galatians 5:16-25
Gospel	:	John 15:26-27; 16: 12-15

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- Recently, the YDJ group asked me to tell them the story of my faith journey and what led me to become a priest
  - I told them of the difficult experience my family and I had when I was a young boy and
  - how I tried to hold onto my belief that God would not leave me or my family in such a sad and unpleasant place
  - over the years, I saw that this was true – he did not leave us alone; he led us through some difficult times to a better place
    - God’s Spirit transformed our lives and renewed our family!
- That is what St. Paul was explaining to the Galatians too!
  - If they allowed themselves to be led by the Spirit, they would be able to give up their old, selfish and empty ways of living, and
  - Enjoy lives filled with love, joy, peace and goodness!
    - God’s Spirit could transform their lives and renew their community!
- Today we – just like the Galatians of St. Paul’s time – are in danger of letting society impose its image; its ways on us!
- Look at our society:
  - the standard in public morality,
  - the extent of violence and the increase in crime, and
  - the breakdown of community and family life.
- We Christians breathe this air; we cannot live our faith in some hermetically sealed ghetto protected from everything!
  - Our lives are being drained of peace, kindness, gentleness and self-control!
- In this parish we hope and believe that it can be different!
- We want to help transform lives, families and communities –
  - And we can, by offering everyone an experience of the love of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit!
- As we have journeyed through these last 7 weeks of Easter, we have seen that this is what happened in the early Church – the power of the resurrection – the love of God – transformed people’s lives and their world!
- That is the Good News the Church has to offer – lives are changed by Jesus!

- And yet, if we look closely at many who come to worship on Sunday, they do not always give the impression of a truly living fellowship with Jesus or one another!
- There are many who are Christians on the surface –
  - authentic Christians – people who have had their lives renewed by the love of Jesus – are rarer!
- Hence the reason for our Parish Strategic Plan – our emphasis on Evangelization, Leadership and Formation!
  - All the things we have spoken about recently – we want to create authentic Christian disciples!
- But without an openness to the power of the Holy Spirit, all those plans will come to nothing;
- For the Holy Spirit, the life-giving breath of the Church, is what is able to renew the face of the earth,
- And to do so, it must penetrate the Church just like it penetrated and filled the Upper Room in Jerusalem!
  - it must penetrate my life, your life – we are the Church!
- A Church – people – who practise the faith is not enough: we must live that faith!
- We need a Church composed of men and women who want to belong to Jesus and live for him!
  - When we let the Holy Spirit do this – the Church and the world will be transformed!
- That is why Pope St. Paul VI said, *“the first need of the Church is always to live Pentecost”!*
- Cardinal Suenens said, just after the close of the Second Vatican Council, *“We are now living amid great changes. The Church of tomorrow, if it is faithful to its call, will be like the God of hope, who is both young and eternal. We must not fear the unknown ways of God, nor the renewals needed if the Church is to keep young. We have to accept, as a message for our times, the words found in the 43 chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: ‘Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert...’(Is 43: 18-19).”*
- Gathered together today, we recall and celebrate that first Pentecost
- Gathered together today, we pray for a new Pentecost
  - A new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, for our time, our space,
  - for the renewal and transformation of our lives and our world!