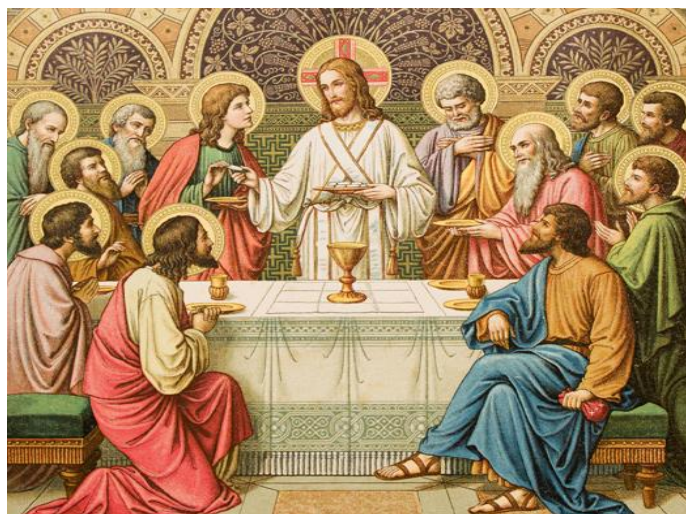


# St. Peter's Church



## *The Most Holy Body and Blood* *June 23, 2019*

### **Mission Statement**

We, the parishioners of St. Peter's Church, are called to holiness by God as present day disciples of Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are united in service to God to share our faith with one another and our community. May our participation in the Holy Sacraments, our ministries and our devotion to Mary bring glory to God and His Kingdom.

### **Emergency Contact**

In the event of an emergency, please call the rectory at 570-724-3371. If no answer, please call 570-329-5762. This is a pager. You will be instructed to enter your phone number and Fr. Bechtel will return your call.

### **Pregnancy Support**

Catholic Social Services (800) 982-4310  
Crisis Pregnancy Help line (888) 4-OPTIONS  
Endless Mountains Pregnancy Care Center (570) 673-4476

### **Religious Education and Formation**

Religious Education classes are held for Pre-K – 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Classes begin in September and conclude in May. Pre-K (ages 3-5) is held during the 8:30am Mass. K-12<sup>th</sup> begins at 9:30am and concludes at 10:40am. To register, please contact the Religious Education Office at 570-724-9789 or the Rectory at 570-724-3371. Children's Liturgy (grades K-4<sup>th</sup>) is held during the 8:30am Mass when Religious Education classes are in session.

### **Welcome to St. Peter's Church!**

If you are visiting Tioga County this weekend, welcome and thank you for worshiping with us! If you are searching for a Spiritual home, we welcome you to join us and invite you to become part of our church family. Please complete this form and return it to the parish office or drop it in the offertory basket.

### **Request for Parishioner Registration Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

47 Central Avenue, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania 16901

Rectory Phone: 570-724-3371 ~ Fax: 570-724-6322

Religious Education Office: 570-724-9789

Website: [www.stpeterswellsboro.org](http://www.stpeterswellsboro.org) ~ Email: [stpch@ptd.net](mailto:stpch@ptd.net)

### **Rectory Office Hours**

Monday through Thursday 9:00–2:00pm

### **Parish Staff**

Pastor: Rev. David Bechtel – [Dbechtel00@yahoo.com](mailto:Dbechtel00@yahoo.com)

Secretary: Connie Spang – [stpch@ptd.net](mailto:stpch@ptd.net)

Business Manager: Patti Mitchell – [stpadm@ptd.net](mailto:stpadm@ptd.net)

Director of Religious Ed.: Melissa Mann – [stpreled@ptd.net](mailto:stpreled@ptd.net)

Assistant Directory of Religious Ed.: Maureen Poirier

Maintenance Staff: Connie Spang, Francis Kennedy

### **Schedule of Weekend Masses**

Saturday Vigil: 5:00pm ~ Sunday: 8:30am

### **Reconciliation**

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 11:45am -12:00noon;

Saturday 4:15 – 4:45pm; By appointment by calling the Rectory.



*On June 26<sup>th</sup>*

*Paul & Marion Patt*

*will celebrate 65 years of marriage! Our Lord made you two as an example for the rest of us. God's blessings on your special day and always. Happy Anniversary!*

### **Parish Contact Listing**

Women's Bible Study – Sue Singer 570-724-2360

Contemplative Spirituality Group – Kate Black 570-724-3047

Cards & Games – Patty Kramer 570-948-9023

Knights of Columbus – George Gamble 570-724-5216

Social Concerns – Karen Plumley 570-439-0175

Parish Rummage Sale – Mary Lasko 570-439-7706

Pat Gorda 570-724-3035

Church Linens & Decorations – Sue Singer 570-724-2360

Buildings & Grounds – Rick Joachim 570-439-2591

Cemetery Committee – Howard Rutledge 570-724-4529

Fundraising Dinners – Paul Urner 570-723-9970

Music Ministry – Christina Simonis 570-724-2085,

Marilyn deGuzman 570-376-5427

Samaritan House – Linda Sampson 570-404-2180

Youth Group – Maureen Poirier/ Melissa Mann 570-724-9789

Eucharistic Adoration – Rhonda Gooch 570-724-3092

Finance Council – Priscilla Walrath 570-724-2056

Parish Council – Rectory 570-724-3371

Worship Committee – Rectory 570- 724-3371

Sunday Nursing Home Communion – Eileen Evert 570-439-4470

Prayer Chain – Kate Black 570-724-3047

Order of Secular Carmelite – Lori Makos 570-724-3371

ChristLife – Norb Josten 570-724-9095

Prayer Shawl Ministry - Jan Bernethy 307-267-0677

# The Most Holy Body & Blood

June 23, 2019

Date	Time	Confession Time and Mass Intention
Monday 6/24	No Mass	
Tuesday 6/25	7:30am	In Memory of Mary Agnes Bushner (David & Alice Bechtel)
Wednesday 6/26	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of David Grab (Grab Family)
Thursday 6/27	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Memory of Margaret Arena (Family)
Friday 6/28	11:45am-12:00pm 12:10pm	Confessions In Honor of Pope Francis & Hierarchy (Wayne & Sue Singer)
Saturday 6/29	4:15-4:45pm 5:00pm	Confessions All Living and Deceased Members of St. Peter's Parish
Sunday 6/30	8:30am	In Memory of Tom Stager (Friends of Polish Dinner)

The Sanctuary Candle is offered in Memory of  
Jacqueline Gitchell (Thomas Family)

## The Week Ahead

### SUNDAY, June 23, 2019

Parish Breakfast – 9:30am, Parish Center

### TUESDAY, June 25, 2019

Adoration - 8:00am-6:30pm; Benediction – 6:30pm

Virtus Training – 6:00pm, Parish Center

AA/Al-Anon – 8:00pm, Parish Center

### WEDNESDAY, June 26, 2019

Deanery Mass – 6:00pm, deGuzman Residence

### THURSDAY, June 27, 2019

Cards & Games – 12:00noon, Parish Center

### FRIDAY, June 28, 2019

Rectory Closed

## GOODIES FOR OUR TROOPS

This month's Goodies for our Troops items are: *foot aids, eye drops, lip balms, sunscreen, trail mix, flavored sunflower seeds, beef jerky, slim jims, Oreos, tootsie pops, lollipops & personal notes*. A donation box can be found at the entrance of the church.

## FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

This month's food pantry items are: Canned Tuna, ham, or chicken. A donation box can be found at the entrance of the church.

## ST. THOMAS/ST. CATHERINE MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday 7:00pm, St. Catherine, Westfield

Sunday 10:30am, St. Thomas, Elkland

## Ministers of the Altar Schedule

### June 29<sup>th</sup>/30<sup>th</sup>

#### 5:00pm

Altar Servers: J.Grab, E.Hazelton, I.Hazelton

Lectors: T.Sampson, D.Sherman

E. Min.: D.Kerestes, V.Anthony, B.Butler, K.Wilcox

#### 8:30am

Altar Servers: W.Steinbacher, X.Tellgren, A.Tokarz

Lectors: R.Kramer, P.Kramer

E. Min.: T.Tokarz, T.Gamble, K.Tellgren, M.Stirnaman

## Sacramental Information

**Baptisms** - Parents anticipating the birth of their first child are asked to attend baptismal instructions classes before the birth of their child, if possible. Note: Baptisms cannot be scheduled until all the necessary paperwork is completed. Contact the Rectory to schedule.

**Confirmation** - Confirmation is administered every year to all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in our Parish Religious Education program. Children wishing to receive Confirmation must be enrolled and participating in the program for two years before they are eligible to receive the sacrament.

**Marriages** - In order to complete the necessary paperwork, couples are asked to contact the Rectory at least one full year in advance of the proposed marriage date.

**Anointing of the Sick** - Please contact the Rectory if a member of your family has become sick or hospitalized.

**Monthly Visitations** - Any parishioner who is homebound and wishes to receive the Eucharist on a monthly basis is asked to contact the Rectory to schedule a visit.

**Rite of Christian Initiation in Adults** - R.C.I.A. prepares those who are unbaptized for full initiations into the Catholic Church. The program is adapted to the needs of each person. Contact the Rectory for more information.

*"Jesus speaks in the silence of the mystery of the Eucharist and reminds us each time that following him means going out of ourselves and making our lives not something we 'possess,' but a gift to him and to others." Pope Francis*





## Liturgical Reflection

### Corpus Christi

#### FIRST READING: Genesis 14:18-20

The First Reading speaks of Melchizedek, a king and priest of the city of Salem. He was seen as one who prefigured Jesus. Jesus, too, was priest and king. He, too, was the kind of Jerusalem. He, too, offered bread and wine at the Last Supper just as Melchizedek did when he met Abraham.

#### RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 110

Psalm 110 is a royal psalm, written to commemorate the enthronement of a new king in Israel. In ancient times kings were also considered to be priests. Remember how David sacrificed animals when he brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem and how Solomon sacrificed animals when he dedicated the temple in Jerusalem. The proclamation at the end of the psalm was intended for the new king, for like Melchizedek, the new king was both a priest and king. This was also true of Jesus, who is king and priest (and also prophet). In fact, it is even more true of Jesus, for he is king forever. It is also true for us, for in our Baptism we are given a share in Christ's dignity; we are given the dignity of priest, prophet, and king.

#### SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

The Second Reading contains the oldest written version of the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Paul was writing this account to help the Corinthians understand the gravity of their sin in their failure to be charitable to the members of their community, for in the Eucharist, we are in communion with God and also with our brothers and sisters.

#### GOSPEL: Luke 9:11-17



Jesus is portrayed as compassionate throughout the Gospel of Luke. In the beginning of today's Gospel, Jesus heals those who are ill and later nourishes the crowd of over five thousand. There were five loaves and two fish. This makes seven items, and seven was the perfect number. What was given to Jesus was already good (for this was all the disciples had), but Jesus blesses it and multiplies its goodness. This miracle is presented as a predecessor to the institution of the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The twelve baskets of fragment are for the twelve tribes of Israel. No one in Israel would be hungry - physically or spiritually.

## Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

This Eucharistic day, observed with such solemnity throughout the world, began in a quiet Belgian convent in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with the vision of a holy nun, St. Juliana. In her vision, she saw the moon, full and bright. It was glorious, except that one part of its disk was in shadow. The meaning of the vision was then revealed to her: the moon represented the liturgical year; the shadow, a missing feast in honor of the Blessed Sacrament. Julian spoke to her confessor about what she had seen. Amazingly, within thirty-five years, Pope Urban IV had established the Feast of Corpus Christi, in the Church's universal calendar. Hundreds of years later, in 1849, Pope Pius IX added the Feast of the Precious Blood celebrated July 1. Following the Second Vatican Council, the two liturgies become one solemnity in honor of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.

Of course, we already had a day honoring the Eucharist: the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday, which even includes a procession with the Blessed Sacrament. On Holy Thursday, we walk with Jesus to the Mount of Olives, to keep watch with him on the night of his betrayal. On Corpus Christi, we walk in the afterglow of Easter Time, in company with the Risen Lord.

Corpus Christi is one of the most Catholic of days, an expression of our faith in the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. And yet, this celebration is also outward looking, carrying the liturgy out of the church and into the streets. We come together in all our diversity and we celebrate our unity.

## Parish News and Activities

### LAUREL FESTIVAL REPORT

Income: Booth Receipts & Donations	\$5,390.00
Expense: Supplies, Fee, Taxes	<u>2,270.96</u>
Profit:	<u>\$3,119.04</u>

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### PARISH BREAKFAST

Parish Council is hosting a parish breakfast **TODAY**, Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup>, following the 8:30am Mass. Pancakes, eggs, sausage, fruit, and drinks will be served. All are welcome to attend. Please join us!

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### DEANERY MASS CELEBRATED

The annual Deanery Mass held at the deGuzman residence, will be celebrated on Wednesday, June 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00pm. Bring a dish or snack to pass and a lawn chair. **All are welcome!** Questions? Call 570-376-5427. (Directions: 287 N, 249 N to Keeneyville, turn right to Osceola, 1 1/2 miles to Box 818.)

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## VIRTUS TRAINING OFFERED AT ST. PETER'S



This Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, a *Virtus: Protecting God's Children for Adults*, session will be held in the Parish Center. This training is required for

any adults (employees or volunteers) who have direct contact or routine interaction with children. The session will begin at 6:00pm and last approximately three hours.

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## ADULT FAITH FILM SERIES

St. Peter's will present an adult faith film series on Wednesday evenings from July 24<sup>th</sup> to August 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in the Parish Center. The films are free of charge and have been selected to enrich and inspire our faith journey. The first film is *Chariots of Fire*. In this 1981 Academy Award winner for Best Picture, two very different men on the UK Olympic team vie to win Olympic gold to demonstrate to the world the worth of their deeply held convictions. A friendship builds between the two in this true story that is as strong as their desire to win in the 1924 Paris Olympics. Discussion & Refreshments to follow. Please join us!

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## SAFETY AND SECURITY UPDATE

As part of our ongoing safety and security evaluation and implementation, there will be a change in when the church building will be open. The time has come to lock the church doors during the evening and overnight hours. Beginning in September the church doors will be unlocked and open from 8:00am – 5:00pm on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday; 7:00am – 5:00pm on Tuesday; 4:00pm until after Mass on Saturday; 8:00am until after Mass or Religious Education classes are over on Sunday. All other hours, the doors will be locked and you will not be able to enter the building. If you currently have a key signed out (daily sacristan, candle or linen volunteer, etc.) please note that your key will still work for the interior doors such as the Sacristy or holy room, but your key will not open any of the outside doors to the church. You will have to perform your "church duties" during the hours listed above, when the building is open. While this is a big change for us, and one that may take some getting used to, it is a necessary step in our ongoing safety and security efforts, and we appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

**Safety  
& Security  
UPDATE**



## St. Peter's Church Vacation Bible School

Open to all children ages pre-k through 6<sup>th</sup> grade

Join Us for the "Mane" Event this Summer  
with Bible Lesson Activities, Crafts, Games, Snacks and Fun!

**Dates:** Monday July 15<sup>th</sup> through Thursday, July 18<sup>th</sup>

**Time:** 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

**Location:** Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday at St. Peter's Parish Center  
Thursday at Woodland Park; lower pavilion

**For more information and to register, visit [vbspro.events/p/5bd861](https://vbspro.events/p/5bd861)**

**Be a Blessing...Volunteer!**

Adults and students in grades 7-12 are needed to help make VBS a fun and successful event for the children of our parish. Please consider volunteering your time and talents. Details can be found on the registration website or contact Melissa Mann at [stpreled@ptd.net](mailto:stpreled@ptd.net) for more information.

To close out Vacation Bible School, a family potluck picnic will be held at Woodland Park on the final night for all children, volunteers and their families. Additional details will be emailed once registration is confirmed.

## That's The Way It Is



Picture it: the year is 1994 and I am a sophomore at the local Catholic high school. I remember one day the school was having Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Throughout the day students were assigned times to go to the chapel and pray. When I went to the chapel during my assigned time there were several other students already in the chapel. One of them was a friend of mine. Upon graduation he was entering the seminary along with some of the other seniors. The other students present were the school jocks. They played all the sports; they drove the nicest cars and had everything going for them. All the boys wanted to be them and all the girls wanted to be their girlfriend. In short, they were the quintessential jock.

I went in to the chapel and sat in a pew for prayer. During the prayer time the jocks acted, well, like jocks. They were laughing and talking and having a grand old time. I ignored them and prayed. I don't claim that I was the perfect student or that I had the appreciation for the Blessed Sacrament that I should have had. I also did not have the appreciation for school that I should have had. I got into my fair share of trouble for stupid things. One thing I did know was that the chapel was not a place to act up. Whatever appreciation I did not have that I should have had for the Blessed Sacrament, at least I knew that I should be respectful in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament.

At one point I noticed my friend look up from his prayer, turn around, look at the jocks, then turn back around, shake his head, then go back to prayer. My friend, now a priest for the Diocese of Allentown, does not know that I noticed this and if he were asked about this would probably not even remember it. I remember it like it was yesterday. I remember it because that day when he looked at the jocks, he looked at them like he pitied them. When he shook his head, the manner in which he shook his head suggested that he felt sorry for them. The manner in which he shook his head suggested that he wished they could have what he has: namely the ability to pray and have a relationship with the Lord of Lords. That day, I realized my friend had more maturity than many adults I knew. My friend was not impressed with the jocks; my friend was not interested in having what they had. Quite the contrary: my friend wished the jocks could have what he had and see in the Blessed Sacrament what he saw. Because they did not have what he had, because they did not see what he saw in the Blessed Sacrament, he pitied them. It is not that my friend wasn't interested in girls, cars, sports, or being good at sports; what guy isn't interested

in that when they are in high school? My friend wasn't stupid. It is that my friend realized that some things are more important.

This Sunday is the Feast of Corpus Christi. It is a feast where we highlight and honor the Blessed Sacrament in our Liturgical prayers. The Blessed Sacrament is the greatest treasure that the Church has. The Blessed Sacrament is what makes the Catholic Church Catholic. This Sunday might be a good time to ask yourself whether you really believe what the Church teaches regarding the Blessed Sacrament. What does the Church teach? The Church teaches that what appears to us as simple bread and wine is really the body, blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. If you do not believe this and are not open to believing this, then I have to respectfully ask why are you even Catholic? If you struggle to understand this truth but otherwise are open to believing it, you are not alone. It is a difficult truth to comprehend. Many truths of God are difficult to comprehend. Theology is Faith seeking understanding. God asks us first to believe; the comprehension comes later.

For all the things I don't know and for all the faults I have, there is one thing I know: the only reason I am Catholic is because of the Blessed Sacrament. There are millions of enticing reasons not to be Catholic, not the least of which is all the scandals the Church has faced and continues to face. If it were not for the Blessed Sacrament I would have left the Church years ago. I am Catholic because despite all the imperfections of the Church, God is here in the Blessed Sacrament. For me, that fact is the only reason that matters in terms of why one should be Catholic and stay Catholic. If you see what I see by Faith in the Blessed Sacrament, you will never leave the Church.

Before I close, I would like to take the opportunity to invite you to come to adoration on Tuesdays. We need people to sign up for one hour time slots. The Blessed Sacrament cannot be left unattended. If we do not have the necessary time slots filled we will have to adjust the time of adoration. God wants to give us many graces and blessings when we adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament!

That's the way it is,

Rev. David W. Bechtel, Pastor

## Stewardship

Sunday Collection June 16, 2019: \$ 4,995.29  
Weekly Goal to Meet Projected Expenses: \$ 5,800.00  
Difference :(\$ 804.71)  
Year-to-Date Budget Variance:(\$ 8,326.95)

*We are grateful to all those who financially sacrifice every week to support our parish and its ministries.*



## Can You Spend One Hour?

We, as Catholics, are truly blessed. We have with us, the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. He is with us in His Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. What makes us even more blessed is we have the opportunity to visit Jesus during Eucharistic Adorations. In Eucharistic Adoration, we are not just thinking about God, we are with God! Can you spend one hour? We are in need of Adorers, if we want to continue adoration every Tuesday as it is now. Please consider committing to spending one hour with God and sign up on the adoration schedule found on the bulletin board in the church.



*"The time you spend with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the best time you will spend on earth. Each moment that you spend with Jesus will deepen your union with Him and make your soul everlastingly more glorious and beautiful in Heaven, and will help bring about everlasting peace on earth." Mother Teresa*

## Priests for Life

**Eucharistic Citizenship** - "The Eucharist ... spurs us on our journey through history and plants a seed of living hope in our daily commitment to the work before us. Certainly the Christian vision leads to the expectation of "new heavens" and "a new earth" (Rev 21:1), but this increases, rather than lessens, our sense of responsibility for the world today. I wish to reaffirm this forcefully at the beginning of the new millennium, so that Christians will feel more obliged than ever not to neglect their duties as citizens in this world. Theirs is the task of contributing with the light of the Gospel to the building of a more human world, a world fully in harmony with God's plan." -- Pope John Paul II, 2003.

## Diocese of Scranton News

### MASS IN REMEMBRANCE OF VICTIMS OF VIOLENT OR TRAGIC DEATH

The Diocese of Scranton is offering the annual Mass in remembrance of victims of violent or tragic death. This Mass is offered for the families and friends of those who have died in tragedy, especially through murder, suicide, and accident. The Mass is scheduled for Thursday, July 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm in Saint Peter's Cathedral, 315 Wyoming, Scranton. All persons who have lost a loved one through tragic and traumatic death are invited to this liturgy. We ask that the names of deceased loved ones are registered on registration forms which are available in the parish office or on the website, [www.dioceseofscranton.org](http://www.dioceseofscranton.org). Questions concerning this Mass may be directed to the Office for Parish Life at 570-207-2213.

## EVENING OF REFLECTION FOR GRIEVING

An evening of reflection for those who are grieving will be held on Sunday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 6:00pm, at Saint Monica Parish Hall 363 West Eighth Street, West Wyoming. The evening includes Prayer and Scripture, Video, Words from Father Peter Tomczak, time to share and refreshments. Please make plans to attend this beautiful evening of consolation, For more information or to register please call Joanne Austin at 570-288-6785.

## DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH?

**SALVATION** - Many Protestants believe we are saved by Faith Alone and they say Catholics believe they can "work" their way into Heaven. How do you answer that?

Nowhere in the official teaching of the Catholic Church, does it teach that we can "work" our way into Heaven. The Catholic Church does not now, nor has it ever, taught a doctrine of salvation by works...that we can "work" our way into Heaven.

Nowhere in the Bible does it teach that we are saved by "faith alone." The only place in all of Scripture where the phrase "Faith Alone" appears, is in James...James 2:24, where it says that we are not...not...justified (or saved) by faith alone. So, one of the two main pillars of Protestantism...the doctrine of salvation by faith alone...not only doesn't appear in the Bible, but the Bible actually says the exact opposite - that we are not saved by faith alone.

If works have nothing to do with our salvation...then why do many passages in the New Testament that talks about judgment, say we will be judged by our works, not by whether or not we have faith alone? We see this in Romans 2, Matthew 15 and 16, 1 Peter 1, Revelation 20 and 22, 2 Corinthians 5, and many, many more verses.

If we are saved by faith alone, why does 1 Corinthians 13:13 say that love is greater than faith? Shouldn't it be the other way around?

As Catholics we believe that we are saved by God's grace alone. We can do nothing, apart from God's grace, to receive the free gift of salvation. We also believe, however, that we have to respond to God's grace. Protestants believe that, too. However, many Protestants believe that the only response necessary is an act of faith; whereas, Catholics believe a response of faith and works is necessary...or, as the Bible puts it in Galatians 5:6, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love...faith working through love...just as the Church teaches.

## News from the Vatican



### **FIRE OF GOD'S LOVE, THE POWER OF HIS WORD**

Pope Francis reflects on the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles gathered with Mary in the Upper Room, and says the same Spirit continues to dwell in us, as he continues his catechesis on the Acts of the Apostles, focusing specifically on the day of Pentecost.

*Prayer and Breath* - The Pope described the Apostles, gathered around Mary in the Upper Room, as being “in prayer”. Prayer is the “lung”, said the Pope, “that gives breath to disciples of all times; without prayer one cannot be a disciple of Jesus”. The descent of the Holy Spirit, he said, was “an event that exceeded their expectations”: they were “surprised” by the “force of a wind that reminds us of the...primordial breath”.

*Wind and Fire* - To the wind is then added the fire, continued Pope Francis. The fire reminds of us the burning bush because, in the biblical tradition, “fire accompanies the manifestation of God”. In the fire God delivers his living word, said the Pope, and the fire itself expresses God’s work of “warming, illuminating and testing hearts”. On Mount Sinai, we hear the voice of God. In Jerusalem, on the feast of Pentecost, it is the voice of Peter. Despite his own weakness, once filled with the fire of the Spirit, Peter’s words acquire strength, “capable of piercing hearts... For God chooses what is weak in the world to confuse the strong”, said Pope Francis.

*Truth and Love* - “The Church is born of the fire of love”, continued the Pope, a fire that “breaks out at Pentecost and manifests the power of the Word of the Risen One imbued with the Holy Spirit”. The words of the Apostles themselves become imbued with the same Spirit. They become “a new, different word, which can be understood, as if it were translated simultaneously into all languages”. This is the language of “truth and love, which is the universal language: even the illiterate can understand it”.

*Communion and Reconciliation* - Pope Francis went on to describe the Holy Spirit as “the creator of communion, the artist of reconciliation who knows how to remove barriers between Jews and Greeks, slaves and freedmen”. The Holy Spirit “makes the Church grow by helping it to go beyond human limitations, sins and scandals”, said the Pope. “Only the Spirit of God has the power to humanize” and to create connections, “beginning with those who receive Him.”

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## **SIN AGES THE SOUL, THE SPIRIT KEEPS IT YOUNG’**

Pope Francis says “sadness is not a Christian attitude,” and commented on how it is possible to overcome the difficulties of life with the support and closeness of the Holy Spirit. Remarking on Jesus’ farewell speech to the disciples before going to Heaven, the Pope said He gives us a true catechesis on the Holy Spirit. The disciples, he noted, are sad to hear that their Master will soon leave them, but Jesus reproaches them pointing out that although “grief has filled your hearts...it is better for you that I go.” “But how can one not be sad?” he continued, and said that “to counter sadness, we pray to the Lord to keep the renewed youth of the spirit within us.” It is the Holy Spirit, the Pope said, who ensures that we continue to be renewed and youthful in our faith.










The Holy Spirit, Pope Francis explained, gives us the capacity to carry our crosses. He reflected on the reading from the Acts of the Apostles that tells of how Paul and Silas, who had been stripped, beaten, chained and imprisoned, sang hymns to God. The Holy Spirit, he said, renews everything. The Holy Spirit accompanies us in life and sustains us. And calling the Spirit the ‘Paraclete,’ the Pope explained the meaning of this “strange” word – which - he said, refers to “He who is near me and supports me so that I don’t fall, so I keep my spirit youthful. A Christian is always young, and when the heart of a Christian begins to age, so does his Christian vocation. Either you are young in heart and soul, or you are not fully Christian” he said.

The Pope said that there is sorrow and pain in all of our lives, but he highlighted the example of Paul and Silas who were beaten and were suffering, and yet, he said “they were full of joy, they sang...” He explained that this is where the “youthful” part comes in as youth looks ahead with hope. But to be able to have this youthful attitude, he added, we need a daily dialogue with the Holy Spirit, who is always with us. It is the great gift that Jesus left us: this support, which allows us to go forward.”

Pope Francis concluded his homily with words of encouragement and hope saying that even if we are sinners, the Spirit helps us to repent and look ahead: “speak to the Spirit who will give you support and restore your youthfulness. Sin, on the other hand, he said ages one: the soul ages, everything ages. In life there are difficult moments, but in these moments “we feel that the Spirit helps us to move forward...and to overcome difficulties. Let us ask the Lord not to lose this renewed youthfulness, not to be Christians who have retired and have lost their joy. A Christian never retires.”



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Pavlock, Jerry Pierce, Joann Black, Gabriel, Melissa & Daniel Espinoza, Lori Lopaz, Patricia Quattrone, Larry Jackson, Katie Seip, Lisa Jones, Floyd Williammee, Renee Kennedy, Gay Furlong, Fran Rose, Christine Palmer, June Sherman, Kathy Smith, Tim Bogaczyk, Beth Valdez, Virginia Shaefer, Charles Barrett, Joe Engel, Darleen Kohler, Victoria Salerno, Bob Snyder, Don Brooks, Paul Beuter, Cole Salerno, Mark Kilmer, Frank Dziengowski, Jr., Stephen Horvatch, Fr. Paul Mullen, Helene Carpenter, Clark Hewitt, Everett Dean Brown, Roberta Mahar, Bud Boyce, Marian Coolidge, Kay Evans, Elizabeth Payne, Cindy Sereno, Denny Young, Cindy Copp, Carolyn Tester, Tom Brown, Richard Stankiewicz, Jim Callahan, Mary Antoniwi, Ruth Russell, Edward "Turk" Cruttenden, Agnes Worden, Anne Marie Beuter, Carol Fasick, Skip Warriner, Beverly Willsea, Stephanie Calicchia, Jacoby Aratari, Doris Coumbe, Michael Bowen, Lou Kirby, Shannon Pierce Jones, Steve Ziemak, Ted Zuchowski, and Cody Bowers.



Eternal Rest Grant Unto Them, O Lord and  
Let the Perpetual Light Shine Upon Them.

Lord, this we know, no matter how difficult life may be at this time, we know you will not stop loving us and will always hold us in the palm of your hand. We are reaching to you, Lord, to hold us, comfort us, and heal us. Lord, this we know, you are faithful in your love for us today and forever. You are with us, and we are with you. Amen.