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**Sent:** Wednesday, May 13, 2020 4:13 PM  
**To:** Julie Greer  
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**Subject:** Update Letter to Priests  
**Attachments:** Dominican Homily Help May 17, Sixth Sunday of Easter.docx; Dominican Homily Help May 24, The Ascension of the Lord.docx

*This is the daily email from Father Lumpe for Bishop Brennan – he is still having computer issues.*

Good afternoon brother priests. I do have a few items for you today.

In the midst of all of our practical preparations for the return to public worship and sacramental life, we should be aware of the catechetical and evangelical opportunity in our midst. Many priests and others in our parishes and schools have used this time to grow closer to Christ and in their appreciation of the sacraments. Many have struggled in the absence of regular sacramental life. Consider touching upon the importance of public worship and the sacraments, especially confession and the Eucharist. Attached are some homily helpers to begin to address these and other topics:

May 17: Sixth Sunday of Easter (by Fr. Raymund Snyder, O.P.)

May 24: The Ascension of the Lord (by Fr. Bernard Mulcahy, O.P.)

More will be forthcoming.

Also, I would encourage you to share with parishioners and others via the broadest possible means (social media and so forth) these two items from Pope Francis:

(1) The Holy Father's encouragement for a devotion to Our Lady of Fatima:

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-05/pope-encourages-devotion-to-our-lady-of-fatima.html>

(2) the opportunity for global prayer tomorrow, May 14, with the Holy Father, to end the pandemic: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-05/pope-francis-invitation-to-14-may-prayer.html>

Finally, Bill Davis has some additional, updated information on the SBA Payroll Protection Program:

46. **Question:** How will SBA review borrowers' required good-faith certification concerning the necessity of their loan request?

**Answer:** When submitting a PPP application, all borrowers must certify in good faith that “[c]urrent economic uncertainty makes this loan request necessary to support the ongoing operations of the Applicant.” SBA, in consultation with the Department of the Treasury, has determined that the following safe harbor will apply to SBA’s review of PPP loans with respect to this issue: Any borrower that, together with its affiliates,<sup>20</sup> received PPP loans with an original principal amount of less than \$2 million will be deemed to have made the required certification concerning the necessity of the loan request in good faith.

SBA has determined that this safe harbor is appropriate because borrowers with loans below this threshold are generally less likely to have had access to adequate sources of liquidity in the current economic environment than borrowers that obtained larger loans. This safe harbor will also promote economic certainty as PPP borrowers with more limited resources endeavor to retain and rehire employees. In addition, given the large volume of PPP loans, this approach will enable SBA to conserve its finite audit resources and focus its reviews on larger loans, where the compliance effort may yield higher returns.

Importantly, borrowers with loans greater than \$2 million that do not satisfy this safe harbor may still have an adequate basis for making the required good-faith certification, based on their individual circumstances in light of the language of the certification and SBA guidance. SBA has previously stated that all PPP loans in excess of \$2 million, and other PPP loans as appropriate, will be subject to review by SBA for compliance with program requirements set forth in the PPP Interim Final Rules and in the Borrower Application Form. If SBA determines in the course of its review that a borrower lacked an adequate basis for the required certification concerning the necessity of the loan request, SBA will seek repayment of the outstanding PPP loan balance and will inform the lender that the borrower is not eligible for loan forgiveness. If the borrower repays the loan after receiving notification from SBA, SBA will not pursue administrative enforcement or referrals to other agencies based on its determination with respect to the certification concerning necessity of the loan request. SBA’s determination concerning the certification regarding the necessity of the loan request will not affect SBA’s loan guarantee.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, The guidelines have been translated into Spanish and we hope to have those along with the letter to the faithful in English and in Spanish for you tomorrow.

Our Lady of Fatima, pray for us!

+Bishop Brennan

Dominican Homily Help  
Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year A  
May 17, 2020

This Sunday's readings make a decisive turn towards the coming feast of Pentecost. As a whole, they introduce a theme of hopeful preparation for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Christ's words give us hope in the coming graces of Pentecost but also confidence in the Spirit already present in believers through charity.

1st Reading: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

- The passage presents us with a clear distinction between the sacraments of baptism and confirmation. Philip, one of the recently ordained deacons, goes to Samaria, works miracles, and preaches the Gospel. Though the verse is omitted, note that those who hear the Gospel are baptized (v. 12). For the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, however, the Samaritans must wait for the laying on of hands by the apostles (i.e. bishops) Peter and John. Christian initiation is not complete without confirmation and the Church rejoices as new members continued to receive the Spirit.
- The episode of Simon the Magician is conspicuously omitted. Simon was among the newly baptized in Samaria. He proposed to buy the power to give the Holy Spirit (whence comes "simony"). Peter rebukes Simon for thinking the sacraments to be a commodity. Simon accepts the rebuke in humility and asks for Peter's prayers. The incident reminds us that the only currency in the sacramental economy is gratuitous gift. Only by freely receiving the Holy Spirit ourselves will we be filled with his gifts and fruits and, God willing, the charisms of the Spirit.

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 3:15-18

- "Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts."—This verse presents the same puzzle as the first petition of the Our Father, "Hallowed be thy name". How could we sanctify God? We do so by allowing his holiness to spread further in us and in others.
  - "The sanctification of his name among the nations depends inseparably on our life and our prayer" (CCC 2814)
  - "We ask that, just as the name of God is holy, so we may obtain his holiness in our souls" (St. Peter Chrysologus, quoted in CCC 2814). We "sanctify" Christ by allowing his holiness to permeate the whole of our lives: "As he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct" (1 Peter 1:15)
  - "When we say 'hallowed be thy name,' we ask that it should be hallowed in us, who are in him; but also in others . . . for we ask it to be so in all men." (Tertullian, quoted in CCC 2814)
- "Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence . . ." Peter refers to the whole of our profession of faith as "our hope". Christians live in hope as examples to the world, being ready to explain our faith (especially our hope in the resurrection and Christ's victory over death) in a calm and peaceful manner that is attractive to others.

Gospel: Jn 14:15-21

- Christ prepares his apostles for his departure but also to receive the Spirit. Through our liturgical reading of this text, Christ prepares his Church for the annual celebration of Pentecost. The liturgical calendar is not a mere pattern of remembrance, but a schedule of divine action! Every Pentecost we should expect to be renewed in the Spirit and pray to be so.
- This Gospel highlights the invisible missions of the Son and the Holy Spirit and their inseparable connection. Just as the Son is sent in the Incarnation, so too he is sent in our minds as divine Wisdom. Just as the Spirit descends on Pentecost, he is sent in our hearts as Divine Charity lifting our wills up in the virtues of hope and charity. The missions of the Son and the Spirit connect us to the Father: "On that day you will realize that I am in my Father and you are in me and I in you." ([Cf. Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I, q. 43, a. 5](#))
- We could paraphrase Christ's teaching: "Do not worry. Whoever has me has the Spirit and whoever has the Spirit has me!" The apostles should anticipate a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but in a way he is already present through the love of Christ. A sign of this is that they have accepted his Word.
- The way for Christ and the Holy Spirit to remain in us is to persevere in his commandment "love one another as I have loved you." Love and commandment are united. Pentecost is the celebration of the giving of the law to the people of Israel. It is fulfilled in the giving of the "New Law" of grace in the person of the Holy Spirit who is Divine Love, Love with a capital "L" since it is his proper name.

An Inventory of the People's Current Dispositions:

- We are addressing our preaching to people in circumstances perhaps more diverse than ever.
- Let us remember:
  - Many feel isolated from family and friends. Others experience the tension of living, studying and working in close quarters with loved ones for the last two months. Some feel anxious by the permanent or temporary loss of regular work.
  - Many are disappointed that important events and liturgies have been postponed: graduation, first communion, confirmation, weddings, RCIA sacraments of initiation.
  - Many people are looking forward to returning to Mass as soon as public Masses resume. Sadly, many of those at risk would like to return to Church soon, but will need to remain at home out of prudence.
  - Some remain indifferent and may struggle returning to a practice of attending Sunday Mass even once risks are low. Others may even feel bitter that churches have remained closed for so long.

Proposing the Word in this Moment

- Let us make an act of faith that through the liturgy, God provides us with the manna of the Word appropriate for the day. Let us pray too that the Word is living and effective for those who hear us.
- Consider addressing the message of the first reading, to those who have had a major sacramental event postponed. Just as the Samaritans needed to wait for a greater fullness (in this case the outpouring of the Holy Spirit), some of our people (e.g. catechumens, candidates, confirmands)

have been asked to wait. Not only do “good things come to those who wait”, but we are *made good by the waiting*. The Spirit of God “hovers over the waters” of their hearts to prepare them. How is God using the extra time to help them prepare?

- The delay in receiving the sacraments painfully though powerfully reminds us that the sacraments are free gifts given at God’s good pleasure and not a commodity to be received on demand (as Simon the Magician mistakenly thought).
- Whether someone will be able to return to Mass soon or not, let them know the Lord desires to accomplish profound interior work within them through power of the Holy Spirit. “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” “I live and you will live.”
- Ordinarily, Easter and the sacrament of baptism take the liturgical centerstage. This year, though truly paschal in faith and hope, Eastertide has remained rather Lenten in sensibility. In God’s providence we are preparing for a festive “accent” or “stress” upon our celebration of Pentecost this year. Exhort people to pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit like they have never received. Though he comes in baptism and confirmation, we may pray for a “new mission” of the Holy Spirit into our hearts. God knows that extraordinary times call for abundant gifts ([Cf. Aquinas, Summa Theologiae, I, q. 43, a. 6, ad 2](#)). We pray that he might bury himself deeper within that we might reach new depths of sanctity.
- To those experiencing general sadness and uncertainty, preach hope. In times of darkness, God desires to move us to a greater hope in eternal life. The mission of the Holy Spirit is the driving force that can elevate our wills to hope even in the face of immense trials! To borrow an image from Emily Dickinson, let our hope “perch in the soul and sing the tune without the words and never stop!” May the Spirit hum “alleluia” in our hearts even if we are not yet gathered to sing it together! Even over our world bent out of shape from sin and sickness, the Holy Spirit still tenderly “broods with warm breast and bright wings” (G.M. Hopkins). He desires to renew us in his love each day: “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning” (Lamentations 3:22-23).

#### Recommended Prayers and Poems for Reflection

- [Prayer of St. Elizabeth of the Trinity](#)
- [G.M. Hopkins, God’s Grandeur](#)
- [Emily Dickinson, Hope is the Thing with Feathers](#)

## **The Ascension of the Lord, May 24, 2020**

“And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

- Ascension is a movement. Jesus was present with his disciples in his risen, glorified body, and after 40 days he ascended, in his human body, entering heaven where he remains a priest for ever, interceding for us and offering, in his humanity, perfect love and adoration to God. He was here, and now he is gone?
- In a way, yes, Jesus is gone. He said he had to go, and he went. He went to prepare a place for us. And he went promising to be “with you always”, and also to send the Holy Spirit to make sure we would not be lost without the visible presence of Jesus.
- How is Jesus still with us? Above all, in the Eucharist. The same glorified humanity, the same Body and Blood, are on our altars—in substance, most mysteriously, and not in their proper accidents. Jesus is really present. Not “virtually” present, as in a picture or a video transmission, or by some exercise of his power from a physical distance. (Short excursus on the real presence if you like.) If the Virgin Mary had a picture of Jesus, that would have been small comfort after his Ascension. But she had him in the Eucharist, and knew it through faith. She must still have missed his face and touch and voice, even while finding him really present in the Eucharist.
- Catholics are now without Mass. How is Jesus still with us if we can’t enjoy his real sacramental presence? (Can’t go to Mass, pray before the Blessed Sacrament, receive Communion.) He said “I am with you always”! Did he mean “I am with you always, but only if you are always with me in the Eucharist”? No, he did not mean that. As awesome and precious as His sacramental presence really is, Jesus is with us in other ways also.
- Detail some ways Jesus is present even apart from the Eucharist. E.g., (1) where 2 or 3 are gathered in His name, (2) where the Word is heard, read, and preached (so tune in to Mass if you find that helpful!), (3) as God he is in our soul, really and substantially, if we are in the state of grace (we can find him there, too), (4) Jesus is present in our neighbor, especially in our neighbor who needs our mercy/charity, (5) as God, Jesus is present and with us in all the ways that God is present. “In him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28).
- Want to get more theologically technical and metaphysical? (6) God is omnipresent (a) by his power operating in every place as creator and ruler of all, (b) by his omniscience, which means all things are “present” to him all the time, and (c) by his essence—i.e., “in the immensity of His power He reaches into all things which are in place, because He is the universal cause of being. Thus He is wholly wheresoever He is, because by His simple power He reaches into all things” (STh Ia, q. 112, a. 1). Bottom line: our longing to be with Jesus is not totally frustrated by our inability to access the sacraments easily and go to Mass. Lift up your hearts to him, where he always is, waiting to embrace us through sacramental means but also invisibly and in our neighbor.