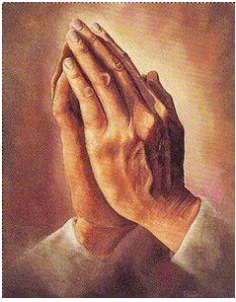


Reflection and Prayers for Sixth Sunday of Easter



We see in today's first reading grounds for a neat distinction between baptism (in Jesus' name) and confirmation (the giving of the Holy Spirit by the apostles' laying on of hands).

This is confounded by other accounts of the freewheeling activity of the Spirit in the early church and by the later complex history of confirmation.

What is clear, however, is today's urgent need for us, the people of God, to realise how gifted we are in word and spirit. Living this boldly will make for a messy church but that's exactly what Pope Francis welcomes.

God our Father sent the Paraclete to us as Jesus promised. United in the Spirit of Truth, let us pray for the needs of all our sisters and brothers.

We pray for the world-wide church, our local diocese and our parish. May the church at every level be a vibrant community of the Holy Spirit.

(pray in silence)

We pray for all who looked forward to being baptised at the Easter Vigil this year. May they await their full initiation with patience, faith and hope.

(pray in silence)

We pray for leaders guiding their nations through the coronavirus crisis. May they chart the way forward with wisdom, justice and courage.

(pray in silence)

We renew our thanks for the dedicated workers and volunteers maintaining essential community services. May they enjoy our full and lasting appreciation. (pray in silence)

We pray for the needy and vulnerable in our midst unable to claim government support. May welfare agencies and the whole community come to their aid. (pray in silence)

We pray for teachers and support staff throughout the school system. May they meet the challenge of re-opening with enterprise and zeal.

(pray in silence)

We pray for the recently deceased, farewelled by so few, . . . and for those whose anniversary of death occurs around this time. May they see the face of God and live.

(pray in silence)

God of all goodness and truth, keep us on the way that leads to you. We ask this through Christ, our risen Lord. Amen