



CHURCH OF SAINT MARY

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Dear Parish Family,

February 6, 2011

Last week was Catholic Schools Week, and although the weather gave us two school snow days, our students took part in a special Mass in Mt. Pleasant with Bishop Cistone. Our students read the Prayers of the Faithful at the Mass; and I am very proud of their prayerful participation in the Sacred Liturgy. With only one day left in the week, we crammed all of the other events onto Friday!

Also on Tuesday evening, Bishop Cistone conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation upon seven of our young people: David Apple, Jenna Fletcher, Cade Frillici, Paul Gadde, Victoria Gotaas, George Harrington, and Andrew Shafley. May they each receive countless blessings and graces as they continue to grow in the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit.

This Friday, February 11 at 7:00 pm at St. Mary, the World Apostolate of Fatima will be showing the movie "The 13th Day." It is about the miraculous events that occurred in Portugal in 1917 when Our Lady appeared once a month for six months to three shepherd children. Admission is free.

This Saturday, February 12 at 6:00 pm our annual St. Mary School Auction will be at the Comfortable Inn. Come and enjoy the Mardi Gras excitement. Advance tickets are available at a discount, or buy your tickets at the door.

On Saturday, February 26, join us for a Youth and Family Night at a Central Michigan University basketball game. The ticket price is \$6.00 ... as an extra discount, any parish or school volunteers or staff can get 1/2 off that price. To show our appreciation for their ministry, altar servers go for FREE. You need to pre-register to receive the extra discount. Contact the parish office to register.

The video series *Boundaries* continues on Wednesdays at 6:45 pm in St. Mary Parish Center through March 2. Please join the lively discussion! Pray for each other,

Fr. David

The Saints Speak

WHY GO TO DAILY MASS?

"The Mass is the most perfect form of prayer." (Pope Paul VI)

For each Mass we hear with devotion, Our Lord sends a saint to comfort us at death. (revelation of Christ to St. Gertrude the great).

Saint Pio of Pietrelcina said, the world could exist more easily without the sun than without the Mass.

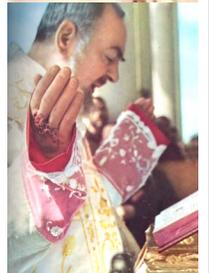
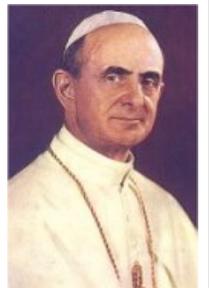
The Cure'd'Ars, St. John Vianney said, if we knew the value of the Mass we would die of joy.

A great doctor of the Church, St. Anselm, declares that a single Mass offered for oneself during life may be worth more than a thousand celebrated for the same intention after death.

St. Leonard of Port Maurice supports this statement by saying that one Mass before death may be more profitable than many after it.

"The Holy Mass would be of greater profit if people had it offered in their lifetime, rather than having it celebrated for the relief of their souls after death." (Pope Benedict XV).

Once, St. Teresa was overwhelmed with God's Goodness and asked Jesus, "How can I thank you?" Our Lord replied, "Attend one Mass."



Why ‘and with your spirit’ is right

Perhaps one of the most difficult of the changes which people will be asked to make when the new translation of the *Roman Missal* comes into use will be [the change] from “And also with you” to “And with your spirit”. People have got used to the former. Why change it?

‘And with your spirit’ is a very ancient liturgical greeting used only by Christians and it was translated not only into Latin but also into Syriac and Arabic.

“And with your spirit” is the literal translation of *et cum spiritu tuo*, which itself is a literal translation from the Greek. This phrase, whether in Greek or in Latin, was quite strange to the ancient world. It appears only in Christian writings. It already forms part of greetings at the end of some of the Pauline Epistles: “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit brethren. Amen” (Gal 6:18; cf Phil 4:23; Philemon 25); “The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you” (2 Tim 4:22).

It may be that St Paul was echoing here a liturgical formula that was already familiar to the recipients of his letters. The work known as The Apostolic Tradition, sometimes attributed to Hippolytus, in a passage which dates from the third or early fourth century, shows that the liturgical use of the phrase is by that time well established. Before the prayer of thanksgiving over the bread and wine the bishop greets the assembly with the words “The Lord be with you” and all reply “And with your spirit”. The same exchange accompanies the kiss given by the bishop to each of the newly baptized when he has laid hands on them and signed their foreheads with chrism.

So we are dealing with a very ancient liturgical greeting used only by Christians. In ancient times it was translated not only into Latin but also into Syriac Armenian, Georgian, Slavonic and Arabic. The Anglican Book of Common Prayer and many Protestant liturgies preserve it in literal translation. When the Roman Liturgy was being translated into modern European languages in the 1960s Italy France, Spain and Germany all retained the literal translation. Only those responsible for the English translation decided to abandon this ancient form of Christian greeting.

Most of the Pauline letters end with the wish that the grace of Christ may be with those to whom he has written: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Cor 13:13) or “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you” (1 Cor 16:23; 1 Thess 5:28; 2 Thess 3:18) or simply “Grace be with you” (Col 4:18; 1 Tim. 6:21; Titus 3:15; cf Eph 6:13). Why then, in the four Epistles mentioned above, does he express the wish that the grace of Christ may be with their spirit. What, if anything, does this add to his greeting?

It would seem that St Paul always regards the human spirit as a God-given spirit. For the Christian it is a new thing, which, though a created part of the Christian’s nature, is received from God, set in the believer by God: “For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry “Abba! Father!” it is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Rm 8:15-16; cf 1 Thess 5:23). Fundamentally there is for St Paul only one Spirit of God imparted severally to individuals (cf Rm 1:9; 2 Cor 11:4). It would seem then that in the four cases in which St

Paul changes the “with you” of his final greeting to “with your spirit” he wants to do two things: he wants to remind his readers of the special human participation in the Spirit of God which they have received, and because he speaks of “your (plural) spirit” he seems to be referring to something that exists in, or has been received in common by, the whole church to which he is writing.

In the church of Antioch and Syria preachers like St John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia were saying that the word “spirit” in the response referred to the charism or grace of the priesthood which the bishop or presbyter had received.

“In saying ‘and with your spirit’,” says Theodore, “they do not refer to his soul, but to the grace of the Holy Spirit by which his people believe that he is called to the priesthood” (Baptismal Homilies, 15, 37). In the Syriac liturgy of the fifth century the greeting is translated “with you and with your spirit”. By translating it in this way these Semitic people, who spoke a language very close to that spoken by Our Lord and his disciples, made it clear that they thought it meant more than a simple “and with you”.

[St John Chrysostom] says in [a] homily ... “It is in this sense that the phrase ‘And with your spirit’ is addressed to the priest by the congregation according to the regulations found in the Church from the beginning. The reason for it being that when the conduct of the priest is good it is a gain for the whole body of the Church, and when the conduct of the priest is unholy it is a loss to all. All of them pray that through peace the grace of the Holy Spirit may be accorded to him, so that he may strive to perform his service to the public suitably.”

And ... in a homily on Pentecost [Chrysostom] says: “If there was no Holy Spirit there would be no shepherds or teachers in the Church, for these also come through the Spirit. As St Paul says: ‘In which [flock] the Holy Spirit has established you shepherds and bishops’ (Acts 20:28). Do you not see how this also comes about through the Spirit? For if the Holy Spirit was not in the common father and teacher when just now he went up into the sanctuary and gave all of you the peace, you would not all have answered: ‘And with your Spirit.’”

This Syrian interpretation of “And with your spirit” is by no means the only one to be found in the various commentators on the liturgy, both eastern and western. But the fact that from the end of the fourth century this reply was only made to those in major orders confirms that it was a very widespread understanding.

So to conclude, when we begin again to say “And with your Spirit” instead of the banal “And also with you”, we should understand that we are not referring to the soul of the priest as distinct from his bodily existence. We are making reference to the awe-inspiring mystery of our common redemption and healing through the Holy Spirit whom the resurrected Jesus has sent into our hearts. In particular we are referring to the special grace gift of the Spirit by which men are made priests, praying that that grace will continue to enable them to perform all their duties in holiness in the service of the priestly people of God, and reminding ourselves that, as St John Chrysostom puts it, the minister at the altar “does nothing, and that the right offering of the gifts is not a work of human nature, but that the mystic sacrifice is brought about by the grace of the Holy Spirit and his hovering over all.”

Excerpted from an article by Fr Austin J. Milner OP