

# ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

Office of the Archbishop



Post Office Box 1979  
Chicago, Illinois 60690-1979

Pentecost 2006

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

The Church rejoices always in the gift of the Holy Spirit. The original outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost gave the Church her unity and gave life to her mission. Those who heard St. Peter in Jerusalem proclaim two thousand years ago that Jesus had risen from the dead were given one faith and began to live with one Spirit. One can recite the Creed; but without the Spirit, the words of Scripture and liturgy are dead. One can call oneself a Catholic; but without zeal to introduce others to Jesus, the apostolic mission languishes.

Pentecost is a feast of conversion. Our minds are converted to Christ in faith; and our hearts are converted to his mission in charity. Faith and charity are given with the coming of the Holy Spirit. Everything in the Church is a gift.

In this local Church which is the Archdiocese of Chicago, I hold each of you in my heart as I share with each of you the Catholic faith "which comes to us from the apostles." (Roman Canon) Each of us is on a path of continuous conversion to the Lord in his Body, the Church. Because the soul of the Church is the Holy Spirit, we are one. Because we are one, the actions of each affect the lives of all. One person's growth in holiness makes the path to holiness easier for all; another person's descent into sin diminishes all of us spiritually.

We celebrate Pentecost this year while still suffering from the sins of sexual abuse by some priests. Through your parishes and in other forms, I will continue to keep you informed about what the Archdiocese is doing to meet this scandal. With this note, I want only to express my hope that meeting the scandal's consequences will not absorb all our energies and co-opt the Church's mission. I hope as well that the unity that is the gift of the Holy Spirit will not be weakened and our spiritual fervor not diminished.

I have reason for hope in the reports from many parishes that participation in the life of the Church is deeper and generosity to the mission of the Church is greater. I thank all those who contributed to the great success of the Annual Catholic Appeal this year, without which not only the ministry but the very mission of the Church would suffer.

All of you are in my prayers, that the Holy Spirit may preserve us in unity and let us together taste the joy that is the sign of God's presence to his people. Happy Pentecost!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Francis Cardinal George".

Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I.  
Archbishop of Chicago