



Feast of the Ascension

This weekend, we mark the Feast of the Ascension. While it is an in-between feast, between Easter and Pentecost, it is important. It reminds us that God is not distant from us or the world. God became human in Jesus, sharing our humanity. Now he has gone back to God and gives us hope that we will one day share heaven with God and our loved ones. Jesus reminds us of his presence at the end of today's gospel, "I am with you always, to the end of time".

- We prepare for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as we prepare for Pentecost next Sunday:
The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. **Galatians 5:22-23** All these qualities are very much alive and active in ourselves, and in society, in this time of pandemic.
- We pray the popular hymn at this time, '**Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me**'.
- We can also take part in the **Novena to the Holy Spirit** available on the website and in the churches.

The Bishop informed us during the week that discussions are ongoing with the Government and HSE regarding the safe return to celebrating Mass in our churches on **July 20th**. It will be a different experience from before, taking safe capacity, safe distancing, hand hygiene, sanitation between services (among other issues) into account. We will be looking for volunteers to help, later on in the Summer.

We think again of families living with the loss of a loved one at this time. The restrictions are an added loss, and thanks go to all who are using technology of various kinds to support people at this time.

Ascension Day is also **Catholic Communications Day** and we have a new appreciation of all media in staying in touch and celebrating our faith by tv or webcam.

We think too of the boys and girls from Stackallen NS who were to receive their 1st Communion today. They have to wait a while longer and a prayer service was sent home to them, so that they could mark the day with their families. All kinds of celebrations, birthdays, anniversaries, baptisms, are being affected, postponed or cancelled. We think of Leaving Cert students and important decisions to be made. . . . **'Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on us'**

Generosity is one of the fruits of the Spirit, and daily we see and hear of great fundraising being done. Thanks to all who contributed to **St Vincent de Paul**, via the Late Late Show on Friday night. Funds raised locally will be used locally. There are plans to take up the

Trocaire

collection soon. Money can be sent to Trocaire, Maynooth, Co Kildare, or contact trocaire.org to make an online donation. You can return your box, or envelope to the Parochial House, if convenient.

Lough Derg is running an online retreat today, Sunday, 24th May, and on Wednesday 27th May, 10.30am until 3pm; definitely the easiest way to do the pilgrimage. Other pilgrimage sites, Lourdes, Knock etc., have online offerings also.

Mass is on **RTÉ NEWS NOW** at 2pm, today Sunday.

Fr Gerry