

## **Pastoral Reflection:**

### **Pentecost Sunday 2023**

The Gospel for Pentecost from John says: "THE DOORS WERE LOCKED". Yet in burst Jesus! He was oblivious to all barriers. Not only were the doors locked but the hearts of the apostles were locked. They thought it was all over between them and Jesus. Their conduct had been less than sterling these last few days: denials, betrayals, flight, leaving Jesus alone to die alone. The only thing they had left was their embarrassment and guilty consciences. Truly, the bunch of failures needed to be behind locked doors. But Jesus sought them out. He burst through their locked hearts and sent the Spirit of the Second Chance. That Spirit of love was greater than their shame. The doors were broken open and these wounded, forgiven healers were sent out to share the Good News of the greatest love ever. And that folks is what Pentecost is all about! We are never beyond his reach nor beyond his love.

This is very important news for this weekend as Archbishop Rozanski announces the final configurations for All Things New. Doors will be locked; hearts will be broken; angst will be palpable; fears will gush forth. There will be over 150 new priest assignments. Guys will be on the move; parish configurations will be significantly altered. There will be much soul-searching and sadly much anger and blame. I have been through this before. In 2005 I lost three of the parishes that I grew up in (and one in which I was ordained) - no fun. But the test of true faith is how one handles change. Will it be a time of new and different grace or a time of bitterness and crippling stress. Will it be a time for winners and losers or a time for the Pentecostal Spirit, a Spirit that shakes the foundations!

Pray for our Archdiocese. Pray that the true Spirit will blow through our Archdiocese and fire up our hearts. Pray for our Archbishop. He did not come here to alter our Archdiocese in such a humongous way. It was the Priests Council that asked him to begin this process. He is taking "hits" he doesn't deserve. Pray for him. Pray for those who will malign him. And most of all remember Genesis 1 i.e. "God creates out of chaos!"

God bless and may the Spirit rest gently on each of you,

*Fr. Jack (he/him)*