



**A Message from our Pastor,
Fr Regulo Imperial:
May 17, 2020**

Dear People of God:

We are on the **6th Sunday of Easter**. So many weeks have gone by since we last celebrated the Eucharist as a community. I hope that by now, believers start to feel how hopeless they are, how limited they are in their fight against the Covid-19 virus. Now is the time to acknowledge that we cannot do it on our own effort - we need somebody stronger than us.

Today, more than ever, is the proper time to hear these words of Jesus in the Gospel: *"I will not leave you orphaned."* Jesus never intended to leave us totally. He promised them: *"And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate..."* Another advocate. Jesus had been an advocate when he was with them. He was an advocate for his disciples, for the poor, the sick and the outcasts, for prostitutes and sinners. He would send another like himself, the Holy Spirit, to be with us always.

An advocate or *paraclete*, as the Greek call it, is one who is called to assist. In the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit is the power that endowed the disciples with the gift of making the gospel intelligible to those who spoke in other languages; being bold and self-assured in their ministry; healing the sick. It was the Holy Spirit, who gave them strength and courage to face trial and persecutions.

A New Pentecost is what we badly need right now as a New Normal. The beginning of the Vibrant and Bold Church happened on the first Pentecost. I believe that this too will happen as we come out of this pandemic - a fearless, fresh, and vibrant church. Let this Holy Spirit be the driving force that prompted us to proclaim that we have to change our belief that we are in control of everything around us. But what is also true is that the Holy Spirit will teach us, unless we do not understand, that difficulties that come our way is not a punishment from God but a time to have some moment of silence to reflect on what is more important in life.

We believe, too, that it is the Holy Spirit who brings us together again in the celebration of the Eucharist. I hope that everyone realizes the importance of the Eucharist. As we always say: *Absence makes the heart grow fonder*. I hope that this is not true only to those who regularly attend the celebration of the Eucharist, but most especially to those who find life away from God not only tough, but meaningless and uncertain.

If now we are afraid, weary and in despair: Pray to the Holy Spirit.

If we are reluctant to share our possessions with the poor and the sick: Pray to the Holy Spirit.

If we are uncertain about our life after Covid-19: Pray to the Holy Spirit.

We are not orphans. We always have a companion, an advocate, a defense attorney, a witness, a prosecutor, a father and a mother. We have the best security in town.

A man fell into a dark pit. He tried to climb out, but he couldn't. Confucius came along. He saw the man in the pit, and said, *"Poor fellow, if you had listened to me, you never would have fallen into the pit."* And Confucius went on his way. Buddha came along. He saw the man in the pit, and said, *"Poor fellow, if he would just come up here, I'd help him."* And Buddha went on his way. Then Jesus came along. He saw the man and said, *"Poor fellow!"* and jumped into the pit and lifted him out.

Take care!

Fr. Regulo Imperial, Pastor