



DIOCESE OF ST. AUGUSTINE

Office of the Bishop

A Message from Bishop Felipe J. Estévez for the Celebration of Pentecost

On Sunday (May 31), we celebrated Pentecost and the conclusion of the liturgical season of Easter. Imagine for a minute what we have just celebrated – the very love of the Father and the Son, which sparked the proclamation of the Gospel that has been poured upon the church – upon each one of us. If we examine the scriptures, not only has that Spirit of love been poured upon us – it has been poured into our hearts.

Indeed, as we leave the Easter season, we embark on something new, and this year it is with a deeper awareness of the gifts of the Spirit that guides the church as promised by our Lord. And we embark on what lies ahead with great hope.

I have been so pleased to learn of the many efforts of our pastors and their parish teams to proceed with the “re-opening” of our churches in recent weeks. I am sure there have been some challenges, but the desire to celebrate the sacraments is so apparent. In many ways, we have all learned to understand what we may have taken for granted.

It was reported this week that more than 100,000 people have died from the coronavirus in our country. The United States has the highest fatality rate in the world. And the economic effects of this situation portend such a devastating impact on our communities and so many families with the unemployment levels exceeding well over those of the Great Depression.

But we have hope.

The Church's centuries-old liturgy, its traditions, and its practices have enabled our faith that was confirmed at that the first Pentecost to survive and prosper. The Spirit, first given to the baptized and fully given at confirmation enlivens us now. I hope it enlivens you.

We have a few significant feasts to celebrate before we return to Ordinary time – the feasts of the Holy Trinity (June 7) and Corpus Christi (June 14). May we all hear the word proclaimed and listen to the whisper of the Spirit given to each of us as we work our way through the days to come.

Be assured of my daily remembrance of you, your family, and your intentions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "+ r. r. Estévez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Felipe J. Estévez, S.T.D.
Bishop of St. Augustine