

FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



The Monday after Pentecost will be different this year. That is because the Catholic Church will be celebrating a new memorial of the Blessed Virgin Mary on that day.

Pope Francis has decreed that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, under the title 'Mother of the Church', be included in the Roman Calendar. That is, a new Feast Day has been instituted for the whole Church.

The liturgical celebration, *Beata Mariae Virginis, Ecclesiae Matris*, will be celebrated annually as a Memorial on the day after Pentecost.

This means that we as a parish now have our own liturgical feast day! How wonderful.

The word 'Pentecost' literally means 'fifty'. Fifty days after Easter, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples and the Virgin Mary, who were gathered in prayer in the Upper Room.

It is fifty years since our parish, founded under the title Our Lady Mother of the Church, was established. How fitting that we now have occasion, together with the Universal Church, to celebrate the life and presence of the Virgin Mary under this singular title.

The Decree states:

'As a caring guide to the emerging Church Mary had already begun her mission in the Upper Room, praying with the Apostles while awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 1:14). In this sense, in the course of the centuries, Christian piety has honored Mary with various titles, in many ways equivalent, such as Mother of Disciples, of the Faithful, of Believers, of all those who are reborn in Christ; and also, as "Mother of the Church" as is used in the texts of spiritual authors as well as in the Magisterium of Popes Benedict XIV and Leo XIII.

Thus, the foundation is clearly established by which Blessed Paul VI, on 21 November 1964, at the conclusion of the Third Session of the Second Vatican Council, declared the Blessed Virgin Mary as "Mother of the Church, that is to say of all Christian people, the faithful as well as the pastors, who call her the most loving Mother" and established that "the Mother of God should be further honored and invoked by the entire Christian people by this tenderest of titles".

All are invited to celebrate, for the very first time, this Feast Day with a special celebration of the Mass at 8:00pm on Monday May 21st. We will join the Universal Church in honoring the Virgin Mary, Our Lady Mother of the Church.

Fr. Sean