Sixth Sunday of Easter

May 5, 2013

In today’s Gospel from John, Jesus offers these words: “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.” In just a moment Archbishop Sartain will share with us that the most important way for living and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ is through our sharing faith, celebrating sacraments, and serving the poor. All of which the church does in Western Washington and here at Christ Our Hope. Please listen to Archbishop Sartain.

Our goal at Christ Our Hope for the Archdiocese is $20,000. We have met that goal and have already received pledges of $40,000 toward our $100,000 goal. We want to refurbish the Totem Fireplace in our new Archbishop Brunett Pastoral Center and perhaps place other pieces of art inside and outside our building. Everything above goal is coming back to us here at our parish.

One of our parishioners asked: “Since Christ Our Hope has already met and surpassed the Archdiocesan goal, why would we make a pledge and donate through ACA? Doesn’t it make more sense that we just donate the amount directly to Christ Our Hope and designate it for art enhancement in our parish center and worship space? And won’t it be the case that the more we donate to ACA the higher our goal will be next year?”

I answered the question in this way: “First, I believe we all have a responsibility to the larger church – to assist in the mission that no one person or parish can do alone. A contribution to ACA accomplishes that first and important purpose. Second, all parishes are encouraged to fund a project that will encourage parishioners to meet and surpass their parish goal (a free fund-raising technique if you will). So, everything above our $20,000 goal comes back to the parish. History shows it works. Parishes with projects meet and surpass their ACA goal, supporting both the Archdiocese and parish projects. Finally, the ACA goal is a percentage of our ordinary Sunday collection (it has nothing to do with how much money we raise in the ACA).”

So, let’s step back and remember our first reading from the Acts of the Apostles. Ultimately the response of the apostles and presbyters in Jerusalem rests upon references to lives dedicated to Jesus Christ and the decision of the Holy Spirit. The promise of the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, stands before us as both invitation and challenge. The Spirit cannot be contained. The Spirit moves and becomes our force for love of God and neighbor at Christ Our Hope Catholic Church in downtown Seattle.

Paul A. Magnano

Pastor