

**January 16, 2022**

***To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.***

In today's second reading Saint Paul reflects upon the varied gifts which are bestowed upon humanity. These gifts, he says, are manifestations of God's Spirit and are given for a benefit. He says that it is "*one and the same Spirit producing all of these gifts, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.*" The benefit that we receive from these diverse gifts is a greater awareness of who God is. We are interdependent, and without these gifts manifested in others, we are deprived of some aspect of God's presence in our lives.

This week our nation honors the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the icon of the civil rights movement. During a speech delivered at The National Cathedral, Washington, D.C., on March 31, 1968, Dr. King stated

***"In a real sense all life is inter-related. All persons are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. And you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality."***

The breakdown in the practice of faith is a notable contributor to disunity. Societies that are devoid of any religious influence, atheism itself, and a morality based upon subjectivity rather than upon natural law, are fertile ground for divisiveness. One only needs to look to the history of atheistic dictatorships and the totalitarian systems of government of Communism, Fascism and Nazism, to see the results of an extreme lack of religious faith. It is, therefore, the role of we who are religious, and claim ourselves as disciples, to not subscribe to the attitudes and practices of self-centeredness and even nationalism (*very different from patriotism.*) We are called to live, therefore, as those who recognize the same Spirit in our brothers and sisters, and seek unity, not victory through division.

A second contributor to disunity is the power found in our ability to communicate in massive and devastating ways. Today a child no longer is faced with a "playground bully," but a bully that has the power to mass an army of hateful commentary through social media and other internet forums. Furthermore, that child is not even protected within the walls of his or her own home, but rather suffers the bombardment of evil coming at them through phones and other devices, often unbeknownst to parents. Those same behaviors are brought into adulthood and all kinds of media are used to vilify public figures, a neighbor, or an entire population. These powerful means of communication are being used in a way that no common bully could ever have imagined. Yet we know that we are called to be bearers of the Good News of Jesus Christ. We must therefore reject this power to communicate if we are using it to destroy, no matter how justified we may think we are.

As we honor the memory of Dr. King we pray for reconciliation and a healing of all division in our families, communities, nation, and the world. May we come to appreciate more fully the varied gifts God has bestowed on his people. And may our recognition of the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in others deepen.

**MARCH FOR LIFE** – Due to the current COVID-19 infection rate our plans to sponsor a bus to the March for Life event in Washington D.C. have been canceled. If you contributed to the special collection for the March and would like a refund, please contact the parish office. Otherwise, these funds will be used to defray the cost of those who have elected to travel to Washington on their own. Here in the parish, we will unite ourselves with the march participants with a Holy Hour for Life at 12:00 p.m. in the church on Friday, January 21st. Following the Holy Hour, if weather permits, we will stand in public witness and pray the rosary together on the Merrick Road sidewalk.

In addition, the Long Island Coalition for Life is sponsoring FACE the TRUTH Pro-Life Event on Saturday January 22<sup>nd</sup> from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. This peaceful public witness will be held on the sidewalk in front of Nassau University Medical Center (2201 Hempstead Tpke., E Meadow), a hospital that performs abortions. Signs will be provided. The event will take place rain, snow or shine. For more information call (631) 243-1435, or email [info@prolifeLI.org](mailto:info@prolifeLI.org)

Peace,

