



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON

THE CATHOLIC CENTER

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

3 June 2017

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

As we celebrate the great culmination of the Easter Season with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, the Church fervently sings the words of Psalm 104, "Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth." We know that our Church and our world are constantly in need of renewal, of being inspired once again by the breath of the Risen Christ, His life-giving Spirit. We recognize that we began this great celebration of the Paschal Mystery some 90 days ago when we were marked with ashes, and now we celebrate the invitation to transcend our mortality and follow where the Risen Christ leads. "If you take away their breath, they perish and return to the dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth."

The entirety of Psalm 104 is a celebration of God as Creator, enthusiastic in its marvel at God's incredibly beautiful handiwork which God has entrusted to His children for their sustenance and for their flourishing. "How varied are your works, Lord! In wisdom you have wrought them all; the earth is full of your creatures." In glorious poetry, the artistry and providence of the Creator are celebrated as awe-inspiring.

May this beautiful psalm remind each of us of our responsibility for the care of creation. May it inspire us to full appreciation of the beauty that surrounds us in the Bluegrass and in the mountains of our beautiful land. May it call forth from us a greater commitment to work and advocate for the preservation of our common home. Pope Francis has called us to the necessary conversion that this commitment will require: changes of lifestyle, production and consumption. (Laudato Si, 23.) "Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades." (Laudato Si, 25.)

The announced departure of the United States from the Paris Climate Accords is irresponsible and regrettable for a nation that has long been a leader in global affairs and working for the good of all humanity. This departure in no way diminishes the need for people of faith to be conscious of our responsibilities as global citizens and to promote care for the earth.

In our Sequence in the Liturgy for Pentecost, we describe the Holy Spirit as "grateful coolness in the heat" and "solace in the midst of woe" and we pray "on our dryness pour your dew". Let us continue to pray this Pentecost for the renewal of hearts and minds which will allow us to bond together and work for the good of all humanity and of all life on this planet.

Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Peace and all good,

Bishop John Stowe, OFM Conv.
Bishop of Lexington