



Kyo.Prot.N. 38/2021

2021 Pentecost Message from Bishop Otsuka to the Faithful of the Kyoto Diocese

Dear Sisters and Brothers in the Kyoto Diocese,

We once again welcome the Solemnity of Pentecost as the COVID-19 pandemic continues.

The government has declared a third state of emergency that affects Kyoto, Nara, Shiga and Mie, the Kyoto diocese. The celebration of Mass continues to be suspended. Even so, having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, let us rejoice even in this time of trial. Let us pray that the Holy Spirit will strengthen us in our anxiety about our health and our livelihood.

Let us especially pray that the Holy Spirit will give us hope. As St. Paul says, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” (Romans 15:13).

In my 2021 New Year’s message, *Living Faith in the Corona Era*, I called upon us all to think about the virtue of hope.

“Only by having hope in the future can a person perceive the present time as meaningful and live with enthusiasm. By believing in tomorrow, we can live today. Even in this situation where we cannot see the complete end of the corona plague, we must remember the virtue of hope, believing in God's plan. We cannot immediately grasp the meaning of suffering. The person who suffers even while calling upon God needs time to discover the significance of suffering. The hope of Christians comes from the belief that whether at the beginning of our suffering or even during it God will give us comfort and the power to endure. And each time we overcome suffering our Christian faith grows stronger.”

The descent of the Holy Spirit is the birth of the Church. Let us pray to St. Joseph, patron of the Church. Even as the suspension of Masses continues, may all of us followers of Christ in the Diocese of Kyoto receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and prayerfully protect the bonds and unity of our community in our lives. And may the Holy Spirit, the defender and comforter, be close to, encourage, and support those who are in need, rejected, poor, and suffering.

✠ Paul Yoshinao Otsuka

Bishop of Kyoto

Solemnity of Pentecost May 23, 2021