

[Prayer] This Pentecost I want to begin my homily by reading Genesis 12:1-4. “The Lord said to Abram, ‘Go forth from the land of your kinfolk and from your father’s house to a land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you.’ Abram went as the Lord directed him . . . Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran.”

Back when our Fr. Steve was a twelve year old boy in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, he was called in by his parish Pastor and told to leave his family and travel to the far distant land of Ohio to a seminary named the Josephinum to study for the priesthood. Perhaps surprisingly to us today, his parents agreed – and Steve agreed – not sure what he was getting into, or even where he was really going – but trusting, like Abram, that, if God wanted it, he would be protected and made fruitful wherever the journey took him.

That happened in 1941 and may seem to be from another time. But we're all meant to imitate Abram and take such a risky journey. As we end Rerouting, some of you have asked, "What is the parish going to do next?" But the real question is, "What are we each ourselves going to do as a result of Rerouting?" Where is God calling me to go? What does my own journey look like? What will I do with that title-deed to my life? What will giving it to God mean for ME?

This Pentecost homily is the last homily of the Rerouting mission, but it's not the end of the journey. In fact, it's more like the beginning. I have been thinking and praying about what's next for the parish. And there will be some new opportunities the parish will offer. But I want you all to think about that as well. The Holy Spirit is not sent just to priests. How do you personally feel called to respond to the Spirit's nudge to move forward in the journey to God? For Holy Family parish to take the next step as a parish, all of us who have been touched by

God must step into the unknown in our personal spiritual lives and as volunteers, depending on the Holy Spirit's gifts given to you.

In our second reading from I Corinthians Paul reminds us, "There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord, there are different works, but the same God, who produces them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the spirit is given for some benefit."

God asked Abram to get up and journey to a new land. Abram was asked to cross the border of the familiar places he'd lived in and set out into the unknown – at age 75! That's even harder than leaving home at age 12. But our redemption flows from Abram's obedient departure. It's no different with our own spiritual journeys. When we give God permission to send us, and use us, it will mean new ways and experiences. This is that moment. As the Rerouting mission ends we've reached the border. Why should we cross it into the unknown? After

all, we're citizens and comfortable where we're at. But all the saints crossed the border because they desired their true homeland.

There will be struggles on the journey. God teaches us to walk, knowing we'll fall, but hoping we'll learn to run to Him. We might be afraid to take the next step. There are many voices telling us not to go farther. But God says, "Go across the border of this worldly life and you'll learn how to love better." Trusting in Him will give us peace. The adventure on the other side is endless. We won't care any more what people think of us. The lie "you're not good enough" will fall away if we get up and follow God's call.

Next week Fr. Steve celebrates 65 years as priest. It's been a long and interesting road from Johnstown, Pennsylvania. But, as with Abram, God has certainly kept his promise. Fr. Steve's life has been fruitful in ways he never could have guessed all those years ago as he followed where the Spirit blew. It will be the same for each of us if we

answer the call and sign the card. We are not all called to be priests.

But we are all called to follow where the Spirit leads.

At his first mass as Pope, Benedict XVI said, “If we let Christ into our lives we lose nothing . . . absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful, and great. No! Only in this friendship are the doors of life opened wide . . . Do not be afraid of Christ.” If you have not yet made the decision to give Jesus the title-deed to your life there is still time – up until Wednesday night. You are all invited to come this Wednesday at 7:00 when we offer them, our commitment cards, to God, together.

It’s Pentecost. This is the day the first disciples were blown out into the world by the Holy Spirit – and started doing courageous things. That same Holy Spirit is still alive in this same Church and at work among us now in our parish. Let us trust in Him. None of us have it all together, but we’re all called, in our weakness, to go somewhere new. We’re all weak in ourselves, but we’re strong in Christ and in travelling

together towards Him, because we are always at home wherever Jesus is. He is who we are, why we are, and where we're going.