

God calls us to new growth

Yesterday, the 6th Sunday of Easter, we welcomed to the 5 o'clock Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral many in our diocese who were baptized or received into the full communion of our church at the Easter Vigil.

There was a good turnout for this joyful event, which joined the new members of our diocesan family with the regular weekly assembly at our cathedral church. All of us appreciated the enthusiasm and peace of friends so new to our community. And I know that we all savored the liturgy, which was especially festive, made so by the participation of the assembly and the support of our Diocesan Festival Choir.

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) strongly encourages the bishop to invite our new members (often referred to as neophytes in the language of the RCIA) to such a liturgy during the Easter season. That's most fitting because these sisters and brothers devote themselves during the days of Easter to reflecting on their relationship with the Risen Christ, their new bonds with the body of believers, and the church who shares their faith.

along the way



By BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

I took delight in the experience from the engagement of the whole assembly, but especially from the freshness and openness of our new members. They look upon our community with kind eyes.

They know that we are always in pilgrimage, that we have our faults and failings but their presence also says that, through it all, they see and love the Spirit of Christ that is evident in our faith tradition and in their sisters and brothers who honestly try to live their faith every day.

I am also grateful for the presence of the neophytes because they remind us all to be alert to the gift and call of the Easter life

we share. In concrete terms, their lively presence draws me to remember Easters past and how the Lord has so patiently and compassionately led me through the years. For that reason no Easter is exactly the same as the last one. God never stops working in us, shaping and molding us more and more into the image of Christ. We change, the world around us changes. So does our church. That happens because we are alive; growth and change are a part of life. The constant through it all is the gift of the Holy Spirit who guides and strengthens us for life today.

The Easter season provides a wonderful opportunity to remember the sustaining power of the Spirit of Christ all through our lives, and especially in times that test our strength and spirit.

As we continue our affectionate Easter prayer for the new members of our faith community, I hope that we can also pray for one another. God calls every one of us to new growth during this holy season. Prayer opens our hearts to that. Prayer strengthens us to respond with generosity.

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June 12

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