

MAY 24, 2026 BISHOP ROBERT KASUN

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, today Saint John tells us that Jesus said, “He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

For those of us who are survivors of COVID-19, the image of Jesus breathing on the disciples might not be all that appealing. Nevertheless, if we can set aside those thoughts, we can appreciate the beauty of these words from John’s Gospel. “He breathed on them” is a way of saying that he gave to the disciples, and also to us, the gift of the Holy Spirit.

He gave the gift of life, even a spark of divine life. God is the Creator, and all that God created was good. The life of God was given to the early Church, as it is given to us now, to continue the work of Jesus on earth, including reconciliation and the forgiveness of sins. It is in that task that we are called to share.

This passage recalls Genesis chapter two, the story of the creation of Adam. You will recall that God formed Adam from the soil of the earth, shaping him from clay, and then breathed into him, and the man became alive.

How beautiful is that breath we celebrate today, the breath that gives life. It is the divine breath, the creative Spirit of God, the breath that gives life to us and to the world. Today, we too receive the breath of God, the gift of the Holy Spirit. It recreates us and gives us the power, through its gifts, to reconcile the world and to bring renewed life, peace, and harmony.

In short, we are called to continue the healing, reconciling, and renewing work of Jesus on earth. It is a privilege for us to share in that work.

Today, I invite each of us participating in this Mass to ask: in the circumstances of your life and mine, how can we continue to build the

world by following the example of Jesus in his healing, restoring, and reconciling work?