

Sweet Holy Spirit fall fresh on me

On April 24, I again witnessed the power of God within the 22, 263 days or so I have been alive on earth. I served at the confirmation service at St. Bernardine Church. I was in awe because the church was packed and we had 28 people, young and old, who were to be confirmed by Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien. The readings for the weekend were powerful and challenging, not only for those to be confirmed, but to everyone in attendance.

As I stood next to the Archbishop, I could feel the energy that many of those confirmed radiated. The people were filled with so much joy that only God could render. They were excited and happy, with a smile on their faces that no matter what happened next, it would not dampen their spirits.

As a reflection of their joy, I felt overwhelmed with joy and felt that nothing could separate me from this love that was aglow in the church. How I wish that every day was Pentecost. I didn't feel tired or in a hurry; let the service go on and on. Once the service was over, I interacted with some of the newly-confirmed. They were still glowing and it seemed contagious, spreading to sponsor and family members.

I flashed back to the first Pentecost and experienced what it must have been like when they first received the Holy Spirit. How they became bold and grateful for such a loving God who just loves them for no other reason. If they appeared intoxicated, so were the members that evening. On that day, 3,000 joined the new church, and we had in the Archdiocese of Baltimore over 1,000 join or return to the church during the Easter Vigil.

What a testimony about the power of a loving God. The next day some of the confirmed returned to church with a new posture and you could see the change in them. They were happy, joyful and not shy about how they felt about our Lord and Risen Savior, because they let the Holy Spirit have its way with them.

This would be a better world if we let the Holy Spirit have its way with us. I plan to attend as many confirmations as I can, because I can use all the Spirit I can get.

I do not recall that my confirmation felt as powerful as watching and taking part in

this one. How do you remember your confirmation? Do you need a booster shot? If so, let's prepare our hearts and souls to receive a double portion of the Holy Spirit this Pentecost Sunday. Let us rejoice and remember that we are never alone and that there is a sweet, Holy Spirit among us and God's spirit is moving, yes, moving all over this place. May it fall afresh on us!

Deacon Wardell Paul Barksdale ministers at St. Bernardine Parish in Baltimore.