

Pentecost Sunday – May 23, 2010 – Good Shepherd Parish

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:1-11

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God."

Psalm: Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34

R. (cf. 30) Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Bless the LORD, O my soul!
O LORD, my God, you are great indeed!
How manifold are your works, O LORD!
the earth is full of your creatures;

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

If you take away their breath, they perish
and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD be glad in his works!
Pleasing to him be my theme;
I will be glad in the LORD.

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13

Brothers and sisters: No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

Gospel: John 14:15-16, 23b-26

Jesus said to his disciples: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always. "Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. Those who do not love me do not keep my words; yet the word you hear is not mine but that of the Father who sent me.

"I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you."



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INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God.

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud.

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

I would like to give you some “points,” just as a retreat director would do during a retreat. Your job is not so much to “understand” them, but to pray from them, asking to be introduced to the Holy Spirit. Use as many as you want for prayer and disregard the rest. Before you start, remind yourself that you will be praying in the presence of God, the one who watches over you and loves you by name. Then sit quietly, with as much patience as you have available. Please start with this question: “What does the Holy Spirit mean to me?” To some people it is the one who causes them to be “slain in the Spirit.” Others know it as somehow connected with the Trinity. Others have no idea. Locate your own.

—pause—

Point One: In the [Gospel](#), Jesus says the Father is going to send “the Advocate, the Holy Spirit” to us, in his name. The English word advocate is derived from the Latin *ad plus voco*, and it means “to speak for.” The Holy Spirit speaks for us, on our behalf. “Advocate” is only one translation of the Greek word, which is also rendered as “Paraclete,” “intercessor,” “teacher,” “helper,” and “comforter.” All these English words refer to someone who is called upon to aid another person and to defend them. So begin your prayer knowing that the Holy Spirit does this. “The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words.” ([Romans 8:26](#)). Ponder what it is like for the Holy Spirit of God to pray within you. Consider what it is like for the Spirit to comfort you and help you when you call out. Remember.

—pause—

Point Two: Think of yourself as part of the dynamic story in the First Reading. You are gathered with the disciples in a house. Suddenly a huge noise “like a strong driving wind” drowns everything out. A tongue of flame appears and hovers in the air. Before you can think, it splits into many flames, each of which hovers over each person in the room. Then picture yourself preaching to the people, who have 15 different languages represented among them. But they all understand. Consider. What if you received this Spirit-flame? Is there a way everyone could understand each other—in depth, in God’s love and truth?

—pause—

Point Three: There is an immensely comforting statement by Jesus in the Gospel. Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him. (Women, please substitute “her.”) Take time with each line. (Remember that “keeping Jesus’ word” means loving one another, not just keeping the law.) Consider the Father’s love for you. Let down your guard for a moment or two in order to be a home for Jesus and his “Abba.” Let the Holy Spirit pray within you.

—pause—

When you are finished with your prayer, call out to God and tell him where your heart is. Maybe God will give you a sense of who the Holy Spirit is in your personal daily life, in your progress from day to day. This is the Holy Spirit’s holiday.

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

1. How were the disciples different after the Spirit’s arrival? In your own life do you tend to see the Holy Spirit as dynamic and constant or only occasional? Rate your awareness on a scale of 1 to 10 of your belief in the Holy Spirit as your constant companion. Are you different when you are confident that the Spirit is with you? Explain.
2. How do the gifts of the Spirit (knowledge, wisdom, understanding, reverence, courage, right judgment, awe and wonder in the presence of God) create unity in the Church? Think about one of the worst problems in the world today. What has the Spirit given to help eradicate that problem?
3. Compare God breathing life into Adam, and Jesus breathing on the disciples when he gave them the Holy Spirit. What is the significance for you? The disciples’ first task after receiving the Holy Spirit was to forgive sins. What impact does forgiveness of sin have on peace?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

God our Father, let the Spirit you sent on your Church to begin the teaching of the gospel continue to work in the world through the hearts of all who believe. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen