

PENTECOST SUNDAY

MAY 31, 2020

HOMILY

Today, Pentecost Sunday, is the birthday of the Church, and also the end of the Easter season. We hear from the Acts of The Apostles, in the the first reading, that the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles and Mary came in the form of the “...*sound of the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting*”; **not** only a violent wind accompanies the Holy Spirit but “*divided tongues, as of fire, appears among them and a tongue rested on each of them*”. On this first Pentecost Sunday the Holy Spirit forms a new People: the Church.

The rush of a violent wind and fire accompanied the first birthday of the Church! Sometimes we think that we, the Church, has lost this energy of the Holy Spirit that was so marvellously present on that day.

Not so! Not so!

Since that first day of the Church’s existence, it is this third person of the Holy Trinity, God the Holy Spirit, who has sustained the Church. It is the Holy Spirit that gathers us together in the Church every Sunday; that inspires us to profess the same creed, the same belief; it is the Holy Spirit that gives us life in Baptism and Confirmation; it is the Holy Spirit, through Confession, that renews our life when it is damaged; restores our faith when it is weakened in sickness through the Anointing; in matrimony the Holy Spirit makes us faithful to our spouse and our responsibility to our family; and it is the Holy Spirit who sanctifies us through the priesthood. In **all** the sacraments it is the one and only Holy Spirit that makes Jesus present! When we call on the name of “Jesus” for deliverance in temptation our plea is the gift of the Holy Spirit; when we tell Jesus we love him it is at the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; when we praise Jesus, adore Jesus, worship Jesus, thank Jesus, intercede in Jesus’ name it is the Holy Spirit praying in us.

Above all, when we encounter Jesus in the Holy Eucharist it is the Holy Spirit that makes him present in the bread and wine; and it is the Holy Spirit that convinces us that it is Him, Jesus Christ, Risen from the dead, who is present in the Eucharist.

Nothing in our Christian life is without God, the Holy Spirit.

Today’s Gospel reveals the Holy Spirit creating in the disciples a new heart. As Pope Francis has previously said, “*Here we see the beginning of the Church, the glue that holds us together, the cement that binds the bricks of the house: forgiveness*”. It is the Holy Spirit that brings us God’s forgiveness, God’s mercy. Mercy is something that is not deserved but freely given. Mercy replaces justice. Justice demands punishment for sin but mercy obliterates justice. In the Gospel, Jesus breathed on the Apostles on that first Easter Sunday and said, “*Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them...*”. The breath of Jesus on that first Easter Sunday, is the same wind that brought the Holy Spirit to the Apostles and Mary on this Pentecost Sunday. Not a violent wind as in today’s coming of the Holy Spirit but a gentle wind. That’s God’s mercy. A gentle thing. In our Gospel before Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, he twice said to them, “*Peace be with you.*” What is the effect of this peace? Pope Francis tells us again, “*Because forgiveness is gift to the highest degree; it is the greatest love of*

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all. It preserves unity despite everything, prevents collapse, and consolidates and strengthens. Forgiveness sets our hearts free and enables us to start afresh. Forgiveness gives hope; without forgiveness, the Church is not built up". And the Holy Father concludes with this prayer,

"Spirit of God, Lord, who dwell in my heart and in the heart of the Church, guiding and shaping her in diversity, come! Like water, we need you to live. Come down upon us anew, teach us unity, renew our hearts and teach us to love as you love us, to forgive as you forgive us. Amen".

There can be no peace without forgiveness, and no forgiveness without peace.

The Holy Spirit is the agent of all peace and forgiveness.

"Peace be with you" —Jesus



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Prayer of the Faithful—Pentecost Sunday—May 31, 2020

Leader:

Under the influence of the Holy Spirit
we are able to acknowledge that Jesus is Lord,
and so pray through him to the Father.

LECTOR: Come Holy Spirit, And Renew Us

Grant that your Holy Spirit will sanctify, guide, and console our
bishops and priests at all times in faith:

We pray...

Give to our government your Wisdom to guide us towards reopening
of society:

We pray...

Bless Christians everywhere, that they may be united in one Church
through the action of the Holy Spirit:

We pray...

Look after our parish of StJXXIII that, while isolated physically from each other,
we may, in the Spirit, use our gifts in the service of the community:

We pray...

Christ, our Lord, visit the sick with healing power and new hope:
(especially) Candelabra Ferolino; Munchie Reyes; Aisha Miranda;
Rodolfo Macapagal; Marie James; Alijo Dumrique; Fr Gerard Pilon;
Gemma Pinieazeck; Terry (Julie Cruz); _____

We pray...

Bless all who have died in your Christ (especially): those who have died
from the virus; and also, Fr Massey Lombardi; Fr Richard Colgan;
Elizabeth (Betty) Cleland; Dennis Edquiban; _____

We pray...

In our silence now, let the light of your presence shine in us (PAUSE):

We Pray...

Leader:

Father,
pour into our hearts
the consolation, life and light
of the Holy Spirit,
so that we may remain ever faithful to Jesus Christ,
your Son, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.

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Sunday Readings

First reading

Acts 2:1-11 ©

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak

When Pentecost day came round, they had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. 'Surely' they said 'all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome – Jews and proselytes alike – Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.'

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 103(104):1,24,29-31,34

Second reading

1 Corinthians 12:3-7,12-13 ©

In the one Spirit we were all baptised

No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord' unless he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose.

Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

Sequence

Veni, sancte Spiritus
Holy Spirit, Lord of Light,
From the clear celestial height
Thy pure beaming radiance give.
Come, thou Father of the poor,
Come with treasures which endure
Come, thou light of all that live!

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Thou, of all consolers best,
Thou, the soul's delightful guest,
Dost refreshing peace bestow
Thou in toil art comfort sweet
Pleasant coolness in the heat
Solace in the midst of woe.
Light immortal, light divine,
Visit thou these hearts of thine,
And our inmost being fill:
If thou take thy grace away,
Nothing pure in man will stay
All his good is turned to ill.
Heal our wounds, our strength renew
On our dryness pour thy dew
Wash the stains of guilt away:
Bend the stubborn heart and will
Melt the frozen, warm the chill
Guide the steps that go astray.
Thou, on us who evermore
Thee confess and thee adore,
With thy sevenfold gifts descend:
Give us comfort when we die
Give us life with thee on high
Give us joys that never end.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful
and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Alleluia!

Gospel

John 20:19-23 ©

As the Father sent me, so am I sending you: receive the Holy Spirit

In the evening of the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you', and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.

'As the Father sent me,
so am I sending you.'

After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit.

For those whose sins you forgive,
they are forgiven;
for those whose sins you retain,
they are retained.'