

2021 May 23

Pentecost Sunday

Reading:

First: Acts 2.1-11, "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit" (4a)

The Psalm: 104, "When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth" (30)

Second: 1 Corinthians 12.3b-7, 12-13, "For in the one Spirit we are all baptized into one body." (13a)

The Gospel: John 20.19-23, "Jesus said to them again, Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." (21)

The Spirit is in charge

Pentecost was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all gathered, after the Apostles were anointed by him by appearing in the shape of tongues of fire. This was also the fulfillment of the most important promise of Jesus to his disciples. "Stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24.49), repeating his promise that he would send the Paraclete, the Consoler to accompany them always. By Ascension Jesus disappeared from the disciples in his physical body. However, it was his parting promise that he would be with them, with us, till the end of ages. (Matthew 28.20) He is true to his promise to this day.

The Spirit he sent from the Father on the day of Pentecost in a powerful and manifest way is at work in building up and expanding the kingdom Jesus established through his life, death and resurrection. Pentecost was the official beginning of the Church, his mystical body headed by Christ himself. The Spirit is the builder, working in and through us the members of the Church. The Spirit is the mover, the rouser, the stirrer, and the firebrand who executes God's will, that is, Christ's agenda, on earth. In fact, the Spirit was active from the very beginning of the universe. It was the Spirit that spoke through all the leaders throughout the salvation history beginning with Adam and Eve. It was the Spirit that moved Abraham, Moses, and all the Prophets.

The Spirit was instrumental in Mary to bring forth Jesus onto earth. The Spirit moved and guided Jesus in all his actions on earth. It led Jesus to the wilderness to fast and pray for forty days and brought him back to open and begin his mission. All through his life and mission Jesus had the Spirit with him, sent by the Father. Jesus sent the same Spirit to the Church to be with her as long as she remains in the world, that is till the end of time. The work of the Spirit is to unite the whole world, the whole creation, in Christ, making it one body and one spirit in Christ. It lives, moves, and works in, through, and with the Church and with us her children to establish and expand the Church and to assist in her mission to be the witness of the resurrection of Christ and to proclaim his kingdom.

We the living members of the Church, being the Body of Christ, must turn to the Spirit and recognize its stirring in us, prodding us to action for the building up of the body of Christ. We need to turn to this Spirit to get inspired, to get courage, strength and the right direction in our mission for Christ. When we have feelings of emptiness in us, lack of direction, feeling ourselves to be in the dark, confused about our faith, confronted with a sinful world, with our own temptations and sinfulness, and even the sinfulness in the holy Church, we must turn to the Spirit and we will be certainly enlightened, strengthened, and brought back on track by the Spirit. "Come Holy Spirit, and fill the face of the earth, Alleluia!"

(The readings of the day are given at the beginning. The numbers in parentheses refer to the quotes from them. Good to go through the readings beforehand to properly understand the Reflections)

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