

April 29, 2020

Readings from Scripture for this week's lesson : Acts: Ch. 1, v. 1 - 12
and Acts Ch. 2, v. 1 - 13

It's perhaps a little early in our liturgical year to speak of the feast of **Pentecost**, but our religious education year is nearing its end, so I thought it would be wise to mention it now before we part company. Pentecost, in the Old Testament, was not called Pentecost; it was referred to as the Feast (or Festival) of Weeks (or Harvest). It was essentially an early harvest festival God commanded His people to celebrate each year which marked the giving of the commandments by God to His people. The term Pentecost is from a Greek word which signifies the number fifty or the fiftieth day. This feast was celebrated about fifty days after the celebration of the Passover. Jews traveled to Jerusalem for this very important feast. For Christians, Pentecost takes on a new meaning; the day can be considered a celebration of the birthday of the Church, for it was on that first celebration of Pentecost after Jesus ascended into heaven that the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the followers of Jesus who had gathered together in Jerusalem for the festival. The people present experienced a rushing sound of wind and saw fire descend and come to rest above each of those gathered in the house where they were. This was the fulfillment of the promise by Jesus to his followers that he would not leave them completely alone, but would send them another helper or advocate, the Spirit of Truth – the Spirit that would enable them to proclaim the Good News, which is the very same mission of the Church, even until today.

It was by the power of the Holy Spirit on that very first Pentecost that the followers of Jesus were given the faith and courage to boldly proclaim the good news of salvation and to fearlessly confess that Jesus truly is the Son of God. This is the same Spirit that comes to dwell within each of us who believe that Jesus is Lord, who suffered and died for our sins and rose again to new life. When you receive the sacrament of Confirmation next year, you will be sealed with the Holy Spirit, thus confirming and strengthening within you the life and graces God poured out upon you at your Baptism.

Pentecost Sunday completes the Easter liturgical season in our church and it occurs on the seventh Sunday of Easter, or about fifty days after Easter, the day on which we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

Jesus was, and is, true to His promise : to be with us always, all the days of our lives. For His Spirit is ever present to us, an inexhaustible source of strength and grace.

There are some very common symbols that represent the Holy Spirit.
Unscramble the words that follow to reveal these symbols of the Holy Spirit

a r t e h b

r f e i

i w d n

v o d e

There are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Unscramble the following words to reveal these seven gifts

m s w o d i

r n d t n u g i s d a e n

l e d k e o g w n

n o l c e u s

t r d e f u o t i

y p e i t

e r f a f o e t h r l o d

Homework : Stephen was one of the early Christians, chosen by the Apostles to be a deacon. He was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke boldly to the Jewish leaders about Jesus. For his outspokenness he was put to death by stoning. He is considered the first among the early martyrs for the faith. Please read Acts Ch. 6 – Ch. 7, v. 1 – 60 Stephen's discourse, or speech, provides us with a summary of God's people from the time of Abraham up until the time of Solomon and the building of the Temple, much of what we studied in our class this year. May we all be as Spirit-led, faith-filled and courageous as Stephen, and such good students of salvation history!

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