

May 28, 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Welcome to Pentecost Sunday!

All masses will be held indoors with modifications. You can also participate when you are parked at the church while inside your car and listen to 87.9 FM (**please park in the rear parking lot behind the church hall**). A Eucharistic Minister will distribute holy communion to you while you remain inside your car.

I invite you to celebrate the Word of God by taking time to read and reflect on the message of the Holy Spirit for you during this celebration.

FIRST PART - SCRIPTURE READINGS

Reading 1 [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."

Responsorial Psalm [PS 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34](#)

R. 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.

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.

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.

Reading 2 [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.

Sequence

Veni, Sancte Spiritus

Come, Holy Spirit, come!
And from your celestial home
Shed a ray of light divine!
Come, Father of the poor!
Come, source of all our store!
Come, within our bosoms shine.
You, of comforters the best;
You, the soul's most welcome guest;
Sweet refreshment here below;
In our labor, rest most sweet;
Grateful coolness in the heat;
Solace in the midst of woe.
O most blessed Light divine,
Shine within these hearts of yours,
And our inmost being fill!
Where you are not, we have naught,
Nothing good in deed or thought,
Nothing free from taint of ill.
Heal our wounds, our strength renew;
On our dryness pour your 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.
On the faithful, who adore

And confess you, evermore
In your sevenfold gift descend;
Give them virtue's sure reward;
Give them your salvation, Lord;
Give them joys that never end. Amen. Alleluia.

Alleluia

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

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

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel [JN 20:19-23](#)

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

SECOND PART - REFLECTIONS/APPLICATIONS

First Reading

Old Feast To New Feast

On this day, the Jewish people were celebrating the Harvest Festival in accordance with the law. (Ex 23 and 24, Lv 16, Num 28, Dt 16) There were several feasts being celebrated before the Harvest Festival. One of the feasts was the Feast of First Fruits immediately followed by the feast of Harvest Festival after fifty days. The early Festival Harvest normally occurs around mid-May or early June. Thus, many people were coming from different surrounding nations near and far from Jerusalem. Today the Apostles were gathering in one place when the Holy Spirit descended on each one of them enabling them to speak "in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Act 2:1-4)

There were devout Jews dwelling in Jerusalem who immediately gathered when they heard the sound. They were all amazed and wondered about what they heard and saw because they could understand how the Apostles were speaking in their own native tongues. (Act 2:6-12) However, not all believed what was spoken, and others mocked them by saying that they were filled with wine. (Act 2:13)

During this Feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit showcased the gift of utterance to mark the beginning of a new era of evangelization. By the outpouring of the Holy Spirit into the Apostles, the Church is born in a joint mission with the Holy Spirit. This fiftieth day is no longer in reference to the Feast of First Fruits of the old law. By observing the same number of days to mark the day of celebration, the Church draws a significant connection to the feast of the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Easter Feast. Therefore, Christians celebrate this feast as a fulfillment of the Passover of our Lord “in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, manifested, given and communicated as a divine person: of his fullness, Christ, the Lord, pours out the Spirit in abundance.” (CCC 731)

Second Reading

Fullness of Communion Through Our Lord Jesus Christ

A lasting impression of Paul’s contribution to the understanding of the church is by constantly pointing out the truth of the Mystical Body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Although he does not actually use this phrase in his letters, early Church Fathers and Pope Pius XII (*Mystici Corporis Christi*, 1943) used it based on the same understanding. You may have noticed during the peak of COVID-19 many of us have suffered greatly from the effects of isolation. The obvious effect was physical separation but subtly it inflicted more damage to our spiritual life. This explains the reason why many of us experienced spiritual hunger during the time of isolation. Nonetheless our Church was never remiss of its duty to take care of our spiritual needs by providing us the opportunity to be in communion with our Lord through Spiritual Communion. In retrospect, our experiences of receiving our Lord through Spiritual Communion made us realize and appreciate the importance of receiving full communion with the Mystical Body of Our Lord. Full communion includes both spiritual and physical aspects of our union with Our Lord and of his Mystical Body the Church. This is the same principle properly understood between body and soul. Neither one can ignore the suffering or happiness of the other. Paul’s letter to the Corinthians gave us detailed accounts of the many advantages and benefits of being in full communion with the Mystical Body of Our Lord. (1 Cor 12:4-11) The sharing of the gifts and enjoyments of the fruits of the Holy Spirit will never be complete during isolation. Whereas he recognizes the ideal condition of a complete communion, there are circumstances when we are called to offer our sufferings during unfavorable situations when through our circumstances these gifts are not available. (CCC 1508)

Gospel Reading

First To Minister

On the Feast of Pentecost, the Church celebrates the outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as promised by our Lord Jesus Christ. (CCC 731) The Church in its fullness is fully equipped to respond to the different needs according to circumstances. Ministries come to evolve as the church responds to its own needs within and outside of the Mystical body. The baseline of this evolution was first observed by our Lord himself as he first ministered to the Apostles who became estranged to him when they themselves could not believe after Mary Magdalene told them of his resurrection. (Mk 16:11) Frightened by fears and doubts they were gathered inside

closed doors when the Lord appeared to them. (Jn 20:29) Immediately our Lord recognizes their fears and doubts. By offering them peace and allowing Thomas to touch both of his sides they first experienced the divine mercy through our Lord. Thereafter, he breathed into them the Holy Spirit giving them power to dispense the grace of forgiveness. (Jn 20:22-23) This event is the institution of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance by our Lord as he charged the Apostles to continue his mission in spreading his kingdom through baptism. (Mt. 28:19) (CCC 730)

APPLICATIONS/REFLECTIONS

The literal meaning of Pentecost is “fiftieth”. This number fifty refers to the number of days from the Feast of First Fruits to the Feast of Harvest Festival. For the Jewish people, this day is the biggest celebration which culminates the series of yearly observances that the old law required them to fulfill. (Ex 23 and 24, Lv 16, Num 28, Dt 16) On the same day Jesus fulfills his promise to send the Holy Spirit to his Apostles. Thus, Pentecost becomes the fulfillment of the Old Covenant memorialized in the great Feast of the Harvest. Furthermore, this fulfillment is a continuing action of our Lord fifty days after his resurrection. Therefore, Pentecost is fifty days after Easter.

On this day, the church formally closed the Easter season and opened a new phase of life. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit marks the fulfillment of our Lord’s Passover and at the same time fully revealed the Trinity. This revelation introduces the “last days” wherein the Church now fully commissioned by our Lord and the Holy Spirit continues to carry out the mission. (CCC 731, 732, 737)

Let us now examine ourselves with the following questions in order to deepen our understanding of the message of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Paul is a staunch preacher of the Mystical body of our Lord after realizing that the Christians he was trying to persecute is Christ himself. (Acts 9:4-5) Such realization was the turning point of his conversion. Am I sensitive to the sufferings of others? Do I respond to an opportunity to connect with others during this time of need?
2. The outpouring by our Lord of the gifts of the Holy Spirit marks the beginning of “the last days” phase of the economy of salvation. Do I feel the urgency of God’s time in these “last days”? How do I spend my life on a daily basis with such awareness of urgency?
3. As a member of the Mystical Body of our Lord Jesus Christ through my own baptism, I am one in body and one spirit in Christ. (Eph 4:4-6) Do I feel responsible to promote unity by doing my part? Do I celebrate the gifts that I receive from the Mystical Body of our Lord by sharing them with others?

Fraternally yours in our Lord Jesus Christ,

Fr. Roy
Pastor