

Day of Pentecost: Whitsunday

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. (Acts 2:1-4)

Dear Friends:

To the Hebrews, Pentecost was an agricultural observance known as the Feast of Weeks. It symbolized the wheat harvest in the land of Israel, and it commemorated God's giving of the law on Mt. Sinai to Moses. For the early Christians, Pentecost became a celebration of thanksgiving for the birth and subsequent life of the Church through the Holy Spirit.

Today's lengthy passage from the Acts of the Apostles makes it clear that their first Pentecost was not a private affair shared only with Jesus' immediate followers. There was a considerable and diverse crowd of people present, and the divine manifestation in the releasing of the Spirit of God "rested on each of them."

Recall the confusion of languages arising from human sinfulness that impacted the building of the Tower of Babel in Gen 11:1-9. By contrast, the understanding of multiple languages on the occasion of this first Christian Pentecost foreshadows the ministry of the evolving Church to all nations of the world.

The euphoria of Pentecost, however, is lost on some as detractors in the crowd mock the believers. Peter stands and defends the event as a fulfilment of Joel's prophecy. New life in the Spirit will infuse the Church, made possible by the redeeming work and sacrifice of Jesus.

Faithfully,
Fr. Reed+ (904)472-4119 cell

The Collect of the Day

O God, who on this day taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Collect for Relief from the Virus Contagion

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, graciously comfort your people amid the uncertainty facing us in the Coronavirus contagion: Mercifully attend to those who are sick, bless those who seek a vaccine and cure, bless our Church and civic leaders as they seek to guide us, and fill our hearts with confidence that, though at times we may be afraid, we may still put our trust in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Concluding Collect: For the Election of a Rector

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of Shanna, Dana, Jim, Walter, Kari, Middi, Brandon and Ted, those who shall choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

First Reading—Acts 1:6-14

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya

belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.” But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, “Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord’s great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

Psalm 104:25-35, 37b *Benedic, anima mea*

- 25 O Lord, how manifold are your works! *
in wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
- 26 Yonder is the great and wide sea
with its living things too many to number, *
creatures both small and great.
- 27 There move the ships,
and there is that Leviathan, *
which you have made for the sport of it.
- 28 All of them look to you *
to give them their food in due season.
- 29 You give it to them; they gather it; *
you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.
- 30 You hide your face, and they are terrified; *
you take away their breath,
and they die and return to their dust.
- 31 You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; *
and so you renew the face of the earth.
- 32 May the glory of the Lord endure for ever; *
may the Lord rejoice in all his works.

33 He looks at the earth and it trembles; *
 he touches the mountains and they smoke.
34 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; *
 I will praise my God while I have my being.
35 May these words of mine please him; *
 I will rejoice in the Lord.
37 Bless the Lord, O my soul. *
 Hallelujah!

Second Reading—1 Corinthians 12:3b-13

No one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses. For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-- Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-- and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Holy Gospel—John 20:19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then 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.” When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”