

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost The Self-Authenticating Spirit of God

Pentecost is the name given to an event that empowered the Apostles and the wider group of disciples, numbering one hundred twenty people, including the mother of Jesus. She would probably have been with the women in another room. But she may well have come through to witness Peter, and James and John and the others, praising God . They may have danced around with their hands uplifted, trying to reach beyond the roof to touch God who had come to them in Person.

Our experience of the Spirit of God only becomes real when we can identify something about it that touches our everyday experience. If the Spirit of God is not real to us then God is not real to us. If God is not real to us, then we may not be able to open the door to the Spirit of God. Pentecost reminds us of one of the most distinctive aspects of our Christian beliefs.

The Nicene Creed opens with words that go back to the opening words of Genesis: We believe in God the Father Almighty 'maker of Heaven and earth.' Pentecost also fulfils the promises of Christ about the Spirit of God coming after his death to refresh his memory for the disciples.

We cannot think about the Holy Spirit without thinking about Jesus because his life and ministry were taken into God through the Holy Spirit at his Resurrection and Exaltation. It was the Holy Spirit of God who fashioned the heart of his divinized humanity within his mother Mary before he was born. Something was melded into his person and being that would make him stand out on the world stage during and after his lifetime. His impact was like that of a number of people in our life. During their lifetime they may or may not have been significant to us. But they sought eternal perspectives and love in their life that continue to sprout and bloom after they are gone. Pentecost reminds us that nothing is ever lost in the world that is sown by those who have opened the door to the softening, loving, insightful entering of the Spirit of God into their heart, mind and soul.

We can see this from what happened in the Upper Room of the Pentecost. The core group, the band around Jesus had walked with him in Galilee, soaked up his teachings and marvelled at his miracles. Now the vast gap left by his death was being filled by his presence amongst them once more. We may speculate that when Mary came through to the main room at Pentecost she may have seen from the doorway the figure of her son dancing in the room at Pentecost. This is only speculation, but it is an example of the work of the Spirit in the believer's life. He had sung and danced with the disciples while he was alive. We rightly sing a hymn called 'Lord of the Dance'. The

Bread and Wine that we receive as Holy Communion does not become a vehicle of his person just because we say the words from the Last Supper that he instructed us to use. They become vehicles of his presence and his continuing love for us because of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. We honour God, and then Christ honours us.

The early Christians cried out to God, 'Marana tha', 'O Lord, come!' This was not only for the setting apart of Bread and Wine in the Eucharist, but for every aspect of the Christian life from conversion onwards. The waters of Baptism are just water unless "the word is in the water" (Martin Luther). That word is surely the word of Scripture and the Word himself, Jesus our Lord. That word comes to us in our Baptism and in our daily Christian life through the touch and presence of the Holy Spirit. As Jerome said, "the Scriptures remain cold until touched by the Spirit of God". But once touched by the Holy Spirit they become hot and burn into our memories, into our souls, into our life's journey. We may object that we have not felt this warmth of the Spirit. Indeed, sometimes the starry skies look empty and we feel alone and what the contemplatives call 'Spiritual dryness' makes our souls feel arid and the universe empty. But the Holy Spirit as the bearer of love comes at surprising moments. When we lose someone, grief comes at surprising moments to torment us. When we have lost the presence of God or may have not even found it, then suddenly in an unexpected way we are overcome with peace and presence.

We salute the great day of Pentecost. We Christians are known for our trust in the Spirit of Christ In the conduct of our lives and in the teachings of our church. We do not always live up to it, but when we do, or rather when we are lifted into the Spirit of God to facilitate our deeds and words, then we are happy and free for precious moments. We remember them because God remembers us through the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Arthur Jones

TO PLAN:

May 20, Monday.

- Finance Meeting, 5:30pm, Parish Office.
- Vestry Meeting, 6:30pm, Rectory.

May 22, Wednesday.

- Bible study, 10am.
- Group discussion about Christian Meditation on the Scriptures, 7:30pm, Parish office. **Booklet: When God Speaks** (by Henry & Richard Blackaby)

May 23, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am, Chapel.

May 25, Saturday.

- Dinner Dance, 7pm, Savannah Moon, Libis, Quezon City.

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NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Isaiah 6:1-8

Psalm 29

Revelation 4:1-11

John 16:12-15