

TRINITY NEWS

WEEK 22.
May 28, 2023

A Reading from *The Go-Between God*

by John V. Taylor

The Church exists by mission as fire exists by burning. 'It is not by chance that Emil Brunner chose that great biblical metaphor of the Spirit and his mission. Jewish teachers had taken the burning bush to be a symbol of the ideal Israel on fire with God's purpose and action in the world, yet unconsumed. The true Church also exists by being the inexhaustible fuel of the Holy Spirit's mission in the world. While they burn together the branches and twigs are the fire, yet they do not in themselves constitute the fire. The fire, rather, contains them, living around them in the interstices, and if a twig drops to the ground the fire that seemed to be in it soon vanishes. Only in their togetherness can Christians remain alight with the fire of the Spirit. That is the sole purpose of our visible fellowship - to be the fuel upon which the fire is kindled in the earth. The Church must be shaped to carry out that purpose or it will be as frustrating as a badly laid fire. The question we have continually to put to the organization and structure of the Church is this: does it bring Christian face with Christian in that communion which is the sphere of the Holy Spirit's presence?

Our theology would improve if we thought more of the Church being given to the Spirit than of the Spirit given to the Church. For if we phrase it in the second way, although it is the New Testament way, we are in danger of perpetuating the irreverence of picturing God's Spirit as a grant of superhuman power or guidance, like a fairy sword or magic mirror to equip us for our adventures. The promised power from on high is not of that kind at all. The primary effect of the Pentecostal experience was to fuse the individuals of that company into a fellowship which in the same moment was caught up into the life of the risen Lord. In a new awareness of him and of one another they burst into praise, and the world came running for an explanation. In other words, the gift of the Holy Spirit in the fellowship of the Church first enables Christians to be, and only as a consequence of that sends them to do and to speak. The Holy Spirit is given to enable 'the two or three gathered together' to embody Jesus Christ in the world.

SAINTS OF THE WEEK:

Apolo Kivebulaya, Evangelist in Central Africa, 30 May. Apolo Kivebulaya's first contact with Christian teaching was in 1884 and he was baptised the following year, becoming a teacher in the Church of Uganda. He went as an evangelist and catechist to Boga in the Belgian Congo and was ordained priest in 1903. He built many churches and prepared countless catechumens for baptism. He spent the rest of his life at Boga, training teachers, supervising the school and evangelising the people of the forest. After his death on this day in 1933, the Church Missionary Society sent British missionaries to carry on his work.

Justin, Martyr at Rome, 1 June. Justin was born of a pagan family at the beginning of the second century in Palestine. As a young man he explored many different philosophies before at the age of thirty embracing Christianity. He continued to wear the distinctive dress of a professional philosopher, and taught Christianity as a philosophy first at Ephesus, and later at Rome. He became an outstanding apologist for the Christian faith, and is honoured as the first Christian thinker to enter into serious dialogue with the other intellectual disciplines of his day, including Judaism. Justin always sought to reconcile the claims of faith and reason. It was at Rome in about 165 that he and some of his disciples were denounced as Christians, and beheaded. The authentic record of their martyrdom based on an official court report has survived. Traditionally, Justin is often surnamed 'Martyr' because of his two-fold witness to Christ, through his apologetic writings and his manner of death.

**REMINDER FOR NEXT WEEK:
JUNE 4, TRINITY SUNDAY.**

**JOINT SERVICE @8:30 A.M.
POTLUCK FOLLOWS.**

**PLEASE BRING A DISH TO
SHARE.**

