

Pentecost Sunday -- May 31, 2020

Make the Sign of the Cross +

Introduction

Today we celebrate the wonderful birthday of our Church.

This is the feast when we recall the Holy Spirit being given to the disciples, enabling them to speak the word without fear.

In the quiet of your hearts ask for forgiveness if you have committed any sins.....

Recite the Gloria

Today's Readings

First Reading Acts 2:1-11

All people heard their own language being spoken by the disciples from Galilee.

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 12:3-7. 12-13

There are many different spiritual gifts but always the same Spirit.

Gospel John 20:19-23

The Lord says to the disciples twice, "Peace be with you," then he says, "Receive the Holy Spirit" and gives them authority.

HOMILY

"As the Father sent me, so am I sending you."

At an ordination recently the bishop said to the young man he was ordaining, "Who do you think you are? What on earth gives you the cheek to stand before all of us and ask for the gift and the grace of ordination?" Many people in the congregation were horrified and looked shocked. Fortunately, the man had been told beforehand by the bishop that this was what he was going to say, so he sat there smiling, quite calm as the bishop was seemingly belittling him.

The bishop went on to say, "I know who you are and I, and those involved with your formation, know that you have been called personally and deeply by our Lord and God. Moreover, you know that, and are convinced by it." The bishop then went on to say, "Be not afraid." Sage advice for every one of us. Be not afraid, because you know that you have been called personally and deeply by our Lord and God. The Lord has a special mission for each of us. What is it exactly? God knows what it is. As St John Henry Newman said, "I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next." Be not afraid.

Often, we seem to lose our focus on our religious and spiritual lives. It seems to us that if things are not going well for us that God has lost interest and cares little or not at all for us. Today's feast is a reminder to us of what it is all about: The Lord gives the gift of peace and the gift of the Holy Spirit to his disciples. It is good to notice that in today's Gospel Jesus says, "Peace be with you" twice. Is it possible or conceivable that they would not have heard this message the first time Jesus spoke, as this was the first time, he appeared to them after having risen from the dead? He says it again to make sure that they will get the message and the wonderful gift of the Lord's peace.

After they know that peace is truly theirs, Jesus goes on to gift them with the Holy Spirit. He breathes on them and simply says, "Receive the Holy Spirit." This gift is given, then

instructions follow; Jesus further gifts the disciples, but this time with authority. The Lord entrusts them with the power to either forgive or withhold forgiveness over sin.

While all this is going on it ought to be recognised that they are looking at the wounds in Jesus' hands and side. They are delighted to know that it is the Lord and they are sure of this because they can see his hands and his side. The man who is giving them peace, giving them the Holy Spirit, giving them authority, is Jesus who was tortured and crucified and died on the cross. This is not a fairy tale, but a real story with a powerful ending, an ending that involves all of us here today. We are here today because this story has been passed down through the generations, gifted by the same Spirit that the disciples received on this feast.

This birthday celebration of ours, that is the Church's, is a time for us to realise that exactly the same gifts are given to us. The peace of the Lord is ours today and the Holy Spirit is poured afresh on us. Each one of us needs to know the peace of Jesus, needs to feel the consolation of Jesus, and needs to know the serenity of Jesus. With this knowledge comes the ability to be able to cope with whatever life has to throw at us, knowing that we do not stand alone, but with Jesus always by our side.

The Holy Spirit is at the same time our guiding force that encourages us forward in proclaiming the risen Lord. The Holy Spirit is the power that drives away our fears and empowers us to do what we never thought we would be capable of doing. The Holy Spirit is our joy that enables us to be real people of Jesus Christ, unafraid, much like the first disciples, to go and announce the good news in all the corners of our world.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Leader of the Family

Let us bring our prayers to God our Father,
asking him to fill us afresh with the Holy Spirit
to encourage and inspire us as we journey along the way,
as we respond, 'Lord, hear our prayer'.

A Member of the Family

For Holy Father, Pope Francis, our Bishop William
and all to the priests and deacons of the Diocese of Calgary:
may they serve the people of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.
We pray to the Lord...

For politicians and all who lead our civic society:
that they will always ensure they put the needs
of those who are poor and vulnerable first.
We pray to the Lord...

For the people of our parish:
may they be powerful proclaimers of the message of Christ.
We pray to the Lord...

For those who those suffer from sickness of any form:
that the Holy Spirit may touch their lives and assure them they are not alone.
We pray to the Lord...

In thanksgiving as we slowly and safely return to celebrated mass.
We pray to the Lord...

Leader of the Family

God our Father, in all our prayers,
those spoken aloud and those whispered in silence,
may we be given your peace, through Christ our Lord. Amen!!!

Recite the Our Father

A few moments of quiet prayer as you thank God for all your blessings!!!

Final Blessing - make the Sign of the Cross+