

The of **SPIRIT** PENTECOST

Daily Reflections

June 4, 2017

Scripture

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."

Our Scripture Reflection

Jesus had commanded His disciples before He returned to His Heavenly Father to stay put in Jerusalem until the "promise" was sent to them. After receiving the promise, they were to be His witnesses "to the ends of the earth."

That promise, the Holy Spirit, came on the Jewish feast of Pentecost. Filled with the Spirit, they became unified and empowered to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord of all. Pentecost is the Birthday of Jesus' holy Church.

Food for your Journey

I remember sitting in a little rural church on a Sunday night. It was a summer meeting, so it was hot, and the window was open beside my pew. The minister was preaching on his favorite text, "Be not the first by whom the new is tried, because a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, and it's better to be safe than sorry, because fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

I was listening to him drone away when a man came by the church building and stopped by the window and said, "Psst, psst."

I said, "What is it? I'm listening to the sermon."

He said, "Come with me."

I said, "Where are you going?"

He said, "I know where there is a pearl of great price that's more valuable than all the other pearls in the world."

I said, "There's no such thing."

He said, "In fact, where I'm going, there is treasure buried in a field." I said, "You're kidding!"

He said, "Where I'm going, bums are invited to sit down at the king's table."

I said, "That's ridiculous."

He said, "In fact, they give great big parties for prodigals who come home."

I said, "That's stupid." Well, I listened to the rest of the sermon and after it was over, I told the preacher about how I was disturbed and that I hoped it didn't upset him during the sermon.

He said, "Who was that?"

I said, "I don't know. Telling me all this fancy stuff."

He said, "Well, was he getting anybody?"

And I said, "Well, none of our crowd went, but I noticed he had about 12 with him."

—Fred Craddock, *Craddock Stories* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001), 36.

The 12th-century mystic, Hildegard of Bingen, once told a little parable:

"Listen, there was once a king sitting on his throne. Around him stood great and wonderfully beautiful columns ornamented with ivory, bearing the banners of the king with great honor. Then it pleased the king to raise a small feather from the ground and he commanded it to fly. The feather flew, not because of anything in itself but because the air bore it along. Thus, I am a feather on the breath of God."

A Prayer from the Heart

Come Holy Ghost, Creator Blest,

And in our hearts take up Thy rest;

Come with Thy grace and heav'nly aid,

To fill the hearts which Thou has made,

Amen.