



Daily Reflections

May 20, 2018

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

Today we celebrate the birth of the Church, the Feast of Pentecost. Jesus had instructed the disciples in Acts 1: 5-7 to wait in Jerusalem until the Promise would come upon them. The Holy Spirit descended upon them during the Jewish Feast of Pentecost and what an amazing sight it was. People from all over the world had gathered for the Feast but they could not understand one another. After the Holy Spirit descended upon them, all were able to understand one another and at that moment all of them began witnessing to Jesus. From that moment on the Gospel spread like wildfire "to the ends of the earth." May the Holy Spirit come upon the Church today to unite us and empower us to witness to Our Lord Jesus.

Food for your Journey

The Holy Spirit has been described in many ways.

He is like a breath that blows away the dust and makes everything clean.

He is like refreshing cool water to a parched throat.

He is like a cleansing brush fire that burns away all the thick undergrowth so that something new can rise out of the ashes.

He is like a potter who starts with an odd-shaped lump and molds and shapes it into something beautiful.

He is like a renovator who uses what is already there and strengthens, refreshes and revitalizes what's there.

He is like a loving spouse whispering reassurances of love and support.

He is like a parent guiding and helping a confused child.

He is like a tour guide who points us in the right direction to see things that we would otherwise have missed.

He is that gentle tap on the shoulder that makes us realize, "Hey, that's me that needs a new beginning and new direction."

He is that fierce shaking that wakes us up; reminds us that there is more to life than earning money, relentlessly pushing ourselves until we are tired, stressed and depressed.

That is what the Holy Spirit does -- he revitalizes, renews, refreshes, empowers, creates, he reminds, he guides, he comforts the church, those in the church and those whom he touches outside the church.

--Vince Gerhardy, "Come, Holy Spirit," gerhardy.id.au. May 19, 2002. Retrieved December 30, 2015.

Some years ago, I discovered and learned three favorite quotations from theologians of a generation ago (Brooks, Fosdick and Spurgeon), and these three quotations penetrate the heart of Pentecost.

The first quotation is this: "Nothing but fire kindles fire."

The second: "If you want to set someone on fire, you have to burn a little bit yourself."

The third: "A burning heart will soon find for itself a flaming tongue."

--Edward F. Markquart, "Nothing but fire kindles fire," sermonsfromseattle.com. Retrieved December 30, 2015.

A Prayer from the Heart

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.