



Bringing Home the Word

Pentecost (A)
May 28, 2023

Look What Blew into Town

By Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

Did it really happen the way the story is told? Who would not give anything to have been there? But maybe we have been there. Maybe we have met people who were so open to the mysterious power of the Spirit of God that they were able to accomplish things they never thought they could. Maybe at times even we, too, have been so moved by that mysterious Spirit. Is it possible that we are mistaken about what is truly mysterious or Spirit-driven? Is it possible that we fail to see the mystery of God in everyday life?

This is not to say that nothing extraordinary happened on that Pentecost day. It certainly did! People who kept a low profile out of fear of facing the same deadly fate as their leader seemed to rush out onto the street and proclaim that leader's mighty acts. What has happened to them? How is such a reversal of behavior to be described? It happens that when something wondrous occurs we often use exaggerated images and superlative language in an attempt to capture the astounding character of the event. To embellish language does not mean that the event was not amazing. It means that it was so amazing that we are at a loss to describe or explain it. We are, after all, talking about the dynamic Spirit of God that can completely change people. This is the same Spirit we received at baptism. Are we open to have it change us? †

Sunday Readings

Acts 2:1-11

Suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and...Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire.

1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.

John 20:19-23

[Jesus] breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

Do we fail to see the mystery of God in everyday life?



A Word from Pope Francis

We can say that the Holy Spirit... knows how to bridge distances; he teaches us how to overcome them. It is he who connects the teaching of Jesus with every time and every person. With him Christ's words are not a memory, no: Christ's words, by virtue of the Holy Spirit, come alive today!

REGINA CAELI, ROME, JUNE 5, 2022



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What if I look upon every person I encounter as someone introduced to me by Jesus himself?
- Have I missed knowing a wonderful person? If so, who?

Community in the Spirit

By Paige Byrne Shortal

Today is the last Sunday of the Easter Season, or Pentecost, a Greek word meaning fiftieth day. Pentecost has been called the birthday of the church. (I remember once, back in the experimental seventies, actually singing “Happy Birthday” as part of the opening hymn. Hmmm.)

Today’s first reading describes a gathering of “devout Jews from every nation.” They were celebrating Pentecost, the fiftieth day after Passover and a day on which tradition held that the law was given to Moses. Suddenly there is wind and tongues of fire and people speaking in different languages and understanding each other. After all this occurred, Peter stood up to explain and, at the end of his preaching, about three thousand professed their faith in Jesus Christ and were baptized.

It is the Spirit’s work to make community out of individuals. And not just individuals from the same family or the same neighborhood or even the same race, class, or language. We’re talking strange people! We’re talking people we wouldn’t give a second glance. The Holy Spirit creates community out of those who are unlike us; people we don’t want to be lumped with.

Our church community is not always



what we want it to be. We may be too slow to respond or too quick to change. Our leaders may be too conservative, too liberal, too worldly or too out-of-touch. Our gatherings may be too much about all that fellowship stuff or too cold and inhospitable.

Here’s the thing: nowhere in the gospels is there a suggestion that the Christian life is something we can do alone. Nowhere does it suggest that the church is a comfortable club of likeminded people. The church is messy and annoying and absolutely necessary to the Christian life.

That being said, a community formed by the Holy Spirit is an amazing experience. Usually we seek out like-minded people, folks who look like us,

talk like us, think like us. Even for the most gregarious and open-minded folks, a few hours in the company of people whose ways are foreign to us is a strain, leaving us with fixed smiles and blank stares and a desire for solitude. At least that’s what it does for me.

But there’s an experience of community in the Spirit when you want to come back for more. I find it among the women of different congregations in Church Women United. I find it in a group we call Neighbors United—Undoing Racism. I find it in my parish choir, where folks of every economic and educational background meet and sing and pray and find themselves commiserating about their children, bringing meals when someone is sick, and laughing about...nothing. Just laughing because it is precious to be together and know this is what is meant by “community.” Community in the Spirit will keep you young, give you courage when you are afraid, companionship when you are lonely, and help you find God in all things. †



So that we may know what is good, speak about the good, and do what is good, we pray, Come, Holy Spirit! Amen! Alleluia!

The Redemptorists

Participating in a Church community is good for all individuals.

WEEKDAY READINGS

May 29—June 3

Monday, Blessed Virgin Mary:

Gn 3:9–15, 20 or Acts 1:12–14 / Jn 19:25–34

Tuesday, Weekday:

Sir 35:1–12 / Mk 10:28–31

Wednesday, Visitation of Blessed Virgin:

Zep 3:14–18a or Rom 12:9–16 / Lk 1:39–56

Thursday, St. Justin Martyr:

Sir 42:15–25 / Mk 10:46–52

Friday, Weekday:

Sir 44:1, 9–13 / Mk 11:11–26

Saturday, St. Charles Lwanga

and Companions: Sir 51:12cd–20 / Mk 11:27–33

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