

## Pentecost

May 31, 2020

Acts 2:1-4 1Cor 12:1-13

The first reading from St. Luke's book of Acts describes the events on the actual day of Pentecost. In those four verses are the fulfillment of prophecies from the Old and New Testaments. Pentecost is a revelation and a theophany of the Holy Spirit. In the past we have seen it recorded as a dove. Now we see it as tongues of fire that we cannot explain with our rational minds. No longer is it something external and outside, now it resides within us. We are personally parts of this Jesus Christ experience and ministry.

The Hebrews had a Feast of the Weeks in the Old Testament. We are told about it in Leviticus 23-16. This feast happens fifty days after Passover. It is a celebration of the first fruits of the harvest. Christians have looked at this and compared it to Jesus and His ministry. We see Jesus as our Passover or Paska. The first fruits of His ministry was the sending of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples fifty days after His resurrection.

The phenomenon of the tongues of fire fulfills the prophesy of John the Baptist. John said that the One coming after him would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. Luke 3-16, "John answered saying to all, " I indeed baptize you with water, but one mightier than I is coming whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire". Mathew 3-11 says almost the same thing. The common denominator is the baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire.

The tongues of fire are a manifestation of the uncreated energy and power of God. There seems to be no source of something burning that is producing the tongues of fire. They are just there burning above the heads of the disciples. There is nothing burning to create the flames of the tongues of fire. The tongues of fire are an uncreated source of energy. Now we are going Big Bang Theory and where is Sheldon. The tongues of fire express the power and energy of God. They defy human understanding or logic to describe how it is happening. God works outside of our understanding or logic. This reminds us that God too is an uncreated source of energy and power. Yet this energy comes to dwell in us because of Pentecost and our Christian experience. This is the same energy of the Spirit that will birth the church and spread it throughout the known world.

In the second reading, Paul describes how the church will grow and spread. This will be done through the energy of the Holy Spirit and the gifts it imparts to certain people. These gifts are to be used in the service of God and not for the glory or ego gratification of the individual that has it. Paul has a veiled warning in verse two about not getting carried away or led into error with your gift. Having an amazing gift comes with greater responsibility. Paul warns that not all gifts are from the Holy Spirit. If we have a gift we must discern wisely where it comes from.

When discerning we should remember that every true gift and ministry in the church will manifest the Holy Trinity. Verse four talks about the Spirit, "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." Verse five talks about the Son, "There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord." Finally verse six addresses God, "And there are diversities of activities, but it is the God who works all in all." The purpose of these gifts are for the growth of the church. They are for the benefit of others. These gifts are Trinitarian in nature.

For us today we have experienced the Holy Spirit's presence and movement during these difficult times. The church is still inspired by the Holy Spirit working in others and has moved in ways we never imagined. I would not have comprehended sending out sermons by e-mail, let alone posting messages on the church web page. The Holy Spirit continues to move and inspire people to move the church forward in new and innovative ways. The Spirit in me moved me beyond myself. The Holy Spirit is inspiring many to prophesize, evangelise and re-evangelise in new ways and to speak in electronic tongue. To be church in new ways where we come together by staying physically apart. That makes no sense at all and neither does the tongues of fire.

All I can tell you is that God is still at work and in charge. The Holy Spirit is continuing to guide the church. Continue to remain faithful and watch God's plan unfold before our eyes. We are experiencing a bit of a Pentecost moment and the church will immerge from it stronger and better off. The Bride of Christ is a living entity and is always evolving as it is guided by the Holy Spirit. God Bless and take care we will see each other soon, Pastor D