

## *Easter 7A 2015*

### *Waiting for a New Pentecost*

This weekend we find ourselves between two feasts: the Ascension, which we celebrated on Thursday, and Pentecost, which we will celebrate next week. On Ascension Thursday we commemorated that moment when the risen Christ returned to his Father to be enthroned at God's right hand as Lord and Messiah. Next week, we will commemorate that moment when the ascended Lord sent the gift of God's Spirit upon his disciples and created the church.

And so today we are in a time between what has happened and what has not happened. We are waiting in hope and expectation for a new Pentecost, for a powerful coming of the Spirit that will renew the church and the face of the earth.

We are in great need of such a renewal, a new coming of the Spirit upon the church that will change and transform us into powerful witnesses of the gospel. We are in need of a new Pentecost that will strengthen our faith so that each one of us, without exception, will become a powerful witness to what Pope Francis calls "the joy of the gospel." We are in need of a renewal that will make us witnesses to the resurrection once more.

We are living in time that desperately needs the very gospel it rejects. We are living in culture that longer sees beyond what it can feel, hear, and touch, a culture that is absorbed with itself because it has forgotten the One who gave us

life. It is not easy to live our faith in such a culture when people ask us “why do you still believe?” It is difficult to believe in a culture when faith is seen as the cause rather than the solution to the problem. It is difficult to live as a people of faith in a secular culture that no longer sees a need for God.

But the hostile situation we face is no different from what Jesus and his disciples faced. It is no different from the situation countless other believers have faced and overcome. This is why Jesus prays in today’s gospel. “I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth.”

You see, while we are in the world, we can never belong completely to the world because belong completely to Christ. This is why there will always be a struggle between what we believe and what the world believes. This is why we pray for a new Pentecost that will strengthen and renew us once more.

Such a coming of the Spirit will empower us to reflect the joy and peace of the gospel to world. Such a Pentecost will make us a powerful witness to the world that Jesus Christ is risen and alive. Such a coming of the Spirit is the only way that the church and world will be renewed. And so we pray, “Come Holy Spirit. Renew the hearts of your faithful and renew the face of the earth.