

Pentecost 2015

Today is Pentecost, the fiftieth day of Easter. For fifty days we have been celebrating the Lord's resurrection. For fifty days we have prayed and meditated upon the meaning of the Lord's resurrection. For fifty days we have celebrated our new life in Christ. And so today, on this fiftieth day of Easter we rejoice in the gift of the Spirit that the risen Lord bestows upon us.

Because the risen Lord has given us the gift of the Spirit, we now live in what St. Paul calls "newness of life," the life that comes from the resurrection of Christ, the life that comes from the power of God's Spirit. The newness of life that we enjoy is the gift of God's Spirit that fills us, even now, with the resurrection life of Christ.

Without the Spirit, there is no Christian life. Without the Spirit, there is no life in Christ. Without the Spirit there is no church. It is the Spirit that makes us followers of Christ. It is the Spirit that unites with Christ. It is the Spirit that empowers us to proclaim and live the gospel.

The Spirit works in us in many and diverse ways: some that we see, and others that we do not. The Spirit is at work in the many ministries that make us the church. It is at work in those who teach and proclaim the gospel. It is at work in those who heal and console. It is at work in those who give powerful witness to the

gospel by their words, and especially by their deeds. It is at work in us this morning as we worship and pray.

But the Spirit is also at work in us in quiet and silent ways of which we are not always aware. It is the Spirit that helps us to discern between what is good and bad, between what is good and better, and between what is better and best. It is the Spirit, living within us, that empowers us to do what is right and what is good, what is generous and what is heroic. It is the Spirit that enables us to proclaim that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior, the Son of God. Without this Spirit we cannot believe; without this Spirit we cannot hope; without this Spirit we lose the power to love. But with the Spirit all things are possible.

All of us received the gift of the Spirit at our baptism and confirmation. But we also receive the Spirit every time we receive the Eucharist. Every time we eat the bread and drink from the cup, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, is poured into our heart. Every when we receive the gift of the Spirit, we enter into the newness of life that is life in the Spirit. Every time we receive the Spirit, we receive the seed of life that will blossom into eternal life.

On this Pentecost Sunday our celebration of Easter comes to its climax and conclusion, and we return to what the church calls her ordinary time. But for us that ordinary time will always be an extraordinary time because we live our lives in and with the Spirit of God.