

## Pentecost 2016

For the past seven weeks—for fifty days—we have been celebrating the Lord's Resurrection. To be sure, we celebrated the resurrection with great joy on Easter Sunday, but that one day was not enough for us to enter into the full mystery of the Lord's resurrection. And so we have been celebrating the resurrection for the past fifty days in order to enter more deeply into the new life of the risen Christ. Today, Pentecost, we come to the climax of our celebration. The risen Lord pours out his life-giving Spirit upon us so that we can share in his resurrection life.

Consider what this great mystery means for us, and for the life of our parish. *By pouring out the Spirit upon us*, the risen Christ shares his life with us. *By pouring out the Spirit upon the church*, the risen Christ gives us the gifts of Spirit so that we can build up his body, the church. *By pouring out the Spirit upon us*, the risen Christ assures us that just as God raised him from the dead through the power of the Spirit, so God will raise us from the dead by the power of the same Spirit.

*First, by Spirit the risen Christ shares his resurrection life with us.* The risen Christ lives forever because he lives by the power of God's Spirit. The crucified Jesus has become the risen Christ through the power of God's Spirit. This is the new life that Jesus shares with us who have been baptized into his name. Christ's life is our life. Our life is life in the Holy Spirit. And so, through the Spirit, already enjoy a foretaste of eternal life.

*Second, by pouring out the Spirit upon us, the risen Lord has given us the gifts of the Holy Spirit to build up and strengthen the church.* Each of us, without exception, has received such gifts, even if we don't know what they are. But when we discover them, they change and transform our lives because they build up the body of Christ, the church. The risen Lord has given me the gifts of teaching and preaching, the gifts of administration and of service. What gifts has he given you?

*Third, by pouring out the Spirit upon us, the risen Lord has given us the first fruits of eternal life, the assurance that God will raise us from the dead.* St. Paul is quite clear about this when he writes in Romans, "If the Spirit of God who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the very God who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through the Spirit that dwells in you." What greater hope, what greater assurance of eternal life could we have? Our hope and assurance is the Spirit that lives in us and prays and intercedes for us. For if the Spirit of the living God lives in us, then God will raise us from the dead.

It has been fifty days since Easter, and we have entered ever more deeply into the mystery of the Lord's resurrection. We have entered into the newness of life that comes from the Spirit. May this powerful Spirit of the living God transform our life and the life of the world! May this Holy Spirit renew the face of the earth!