

Pentecost 2014

I Believe in the Holy Spirit

Fifty days ago we celebrated Easter, and ever since we have been proclaiming the Lord's resurrection. Today, Pentecost, the fiftieth day of Easter, we celebrate the climax of the Easter Mystery; for it was on this day that the risen Christ sent his Spirit upon his disciples. It was on this day that the powerful Spirit of God renewed the face of the earth. It was on this day that the Spirit of Christ created the church.

Without the Spirit, there would be no church. Without the Spirit our efforts would be in vain. Without the Spirit, the community of the church would be a dry and barren wasteland.

It is the Spirit of God that fills us with God's life. It is the Spirit of the risen Christ that empowers us to live the Christian life. It is the Spirit that gives life to the church. This why we profess, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life."

But Pentecost is not simply an event of the past. It is not merely something that happened long ago. Pentecost must happen again and again in every generation if the church is to be born anew. The Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, must come upon each one of us if we are to be renewed and transformed. For it is only when we are empowered by God's Spirit that we can proclaim the Gospel in a

powerful and effective way. It is only when we are empowered by God's Spirit that we can live in a way pleasing to God.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the giver of life, because this Spirit has changed and transformed my life. It is this Spirit that helps me to live a morally good life. It is this Spirit that guides me to make right judgments. It is this Spirit that empowers me to do what I thought I could not do. It is this Spirit that gives me life.

I believe in the Holy Spirit the giver of life because I see this Spirit alive and at work in our parish every day. I see this Spirit empowering people to lead lives of extraordinary goodness and generosity. I see this Spirit alive in parishioners who are constantly showing me, through their lives, how to live the Christian life. I see this Spirit in the ministry of those who proclaim the Word of God and distribute communion, in those who serve at the altar and proclaim God's praise in song. I see this Spirit in the numerous people who make this parish work every day by the work they do in the Parish Council, the Finance Council, the School Board and countless other committees and organizations.

Finally, I believe in the Holy Spirit the Giver of Life because it was through the power of this Spirit that God raised Jesus from the dead. And so I hope and believe that God will raise me to new life through the power of that same Spirit. On this Pentecost Sunday, the fiftieth day of Easter, I pray that this Spirit, the giver of life, will continue to give each one of us newness of life in Jesus Christ.