

Acts 2.1-21

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

'In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.

And I will show portents in the heaven above
and signs on the earth below,
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

The sun shall be turned to darkness
and the moon to blood,
before the coming of the Lord's great and
glorious day.

Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord
shall be saved.'

Psalms 104

O LORD, how manifold are your works!

In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

Yonder is the sea, great and wide,
creeping things innumerable are there,
living things both small and great.

There go the ships,
and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it.

1 Corinthians 12.3-13

Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

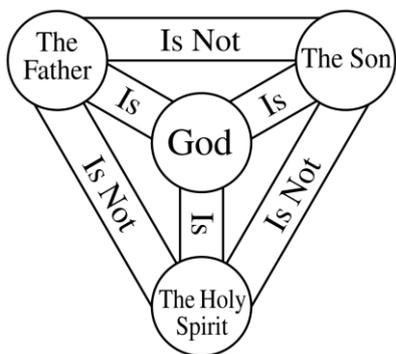
For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

John 20.19-23

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

The holy feast of Pentecost has been an opportunity for many Christians to reflect upon the Holy Spirit.

On the 5th of July we are hoping to reopen our Church for worship. What form that will take will remain to be seen and confirmation will be given should this be allowed to go ahead. When we do reopen I urge many of you to hunt for this famous symbol in our Church.



God’s Spirit has been spoken of in many ways in the Old Testament. It is often spoken of as ‘the Spirit of the Lord’.

For the Gospels, the Holy Spirit appears first in Luke’s Gospel when John the Baptist is described as being full of the Holy Spirit.

The next obvious account which is found in all the literature is the Baptism of Christ. Here we have our first image of the Spirit a dove. Many who have heard this account of the baptism would have in their minds the image of Noah who received a dove at his greatest hour of need. Noah had been aboard the Ark for many days and the length of time since the flood had waned. The dove returning with its branch in its beak was a sign that land has been found and his days of drifting and suffering are now at an end, hope is restored.

As it is in baptism, the Spirit descends and once again hails good news, or in this case *the* good news!

The Holy Spirit played a central role in Paul’s writings. In his letter to the Romans Paul talks of the Spirit taking the role of that which forms and shapes. He writes “To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For this reason the mind that is

set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God’s law—indeed it cannot, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you”.

Paul spoke most wonderfully of the gifts of the Spirit, gifts that we hope to cultivate in life, see Romans 12. Despite this emphasis placed upon the gifts of the Spirit, what those gifts are given for is to better enable us to be grafted into the likeness of Christ.

This is the task of the Christian and me with which we are tasked. This lockdown has proven to be a difficult moment for many of us, highlighting just how fragile we and our society truly are. We need everyone to be engaged in building up the common life and our attendance at Church is part of that edification of the whole. We need to learn to trust in the power of the Spirit, it was all the Saints relied upon and it had guided them into glorifying Christ. This seems to be another faculty of the Spirit to draw people out in the world to Christ. It is that which opens our hearts and minds to the reality of God’s love freely given to us in the Person of Jesus Christ.

That love will be yours forever, may the Spirit remind you of it and escort you to it.