

Feast of Pentecost, 19/5/2013, Holy Trinity
Acts:2:1-21

When I was a boy, we were taught that Whitsunday (now more commonly known as Pentecost) was the birthday of the Church.

So, happy birthday!

This is, also, a reminder of starting something new and the new thing is the Church of the New Testament.

It is, also, about the Holy Spirit and we pray that this Holy Spirit may enlighten the heart and soul of the faithful to-day as the Spirit did to the first disciples and the three thousand who were converted on that first day.

The apostles and followers of Jesus were locked in a room, frightened and confused, but waiting for something that had been promised to them.

Then the Holy Spirit came as tongues of fire – indicating light and energy – that caused all of them to see IN the light and TO BE the light in so many ways.

The Spirit came, also, blowing as a mighty wind – the breath of God entering their very being, enabling them to speak in Jesus' name of the things that Jesus had taught them.

The frightened followers were energized and were given gifts to be able to go out and preach the message of God's love and forgiveness for all people.

Pentecost, then, is the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit energizing the church and sending its members out to live and preach the good news of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit is God, the third person of the Trinity, who comes to us in baptism and confirmation energizing us to live as God would have us to live and to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sin to all who will listen to the good news of Jesus.

On this day, then, we are reminded of our mission to do this.

The Holy Spirit is with us now as a parish and as individuals.

How, then, can we apply this outpouring of God the Holy Spirit to our lives?

I suggest that it applies in three ways.

First, the Spirit enables us to do things above and beyond that of which we think we are capable.

The Spirit empowers us to live our vocation as members of the Body of Christ, if we have faith and generosity and this applies to all of us.

Think and act above and beyond in the power and strength of the Spirit within us.

Secondly, the Spirit constantly nudges us to do good and to do better.

In order to feel the constant nudge of the Spirit we need as a parish and as individuals a rich prayer life including periods of quiet in which we are open and listening to the promptings of God.

How much time do we allocate to prayer each day and how much of the day is spent in quiet?

A life buffeted by the sound of the media from morning to night can stifle the voice of God in our hearts.

Thirdly, the Spirit moves us to unity in Christ.

This applies to the church as a whole, to this diocese and parish and to us as individuals.

Beware of a spirituality that allows us to sit comfortably in our room and ignore the plight of those around us.

Thus in the Pentecost story to-day there are a number of things for us to remember:

The Holy Spirit is God's gift to us, is with us to help us grow, to go above and beyond what we think initially we can do, to guide us, to help us to become better persons, to help us make right decisions and to give us strength when we are down or bad things happen to us and so much more and to live in unity within in the church, the world and ourselves.

So to-day we have time to celebrate those gifts, that the loving God has given us and to become more aware of the power that we have through the Spirit.

In everything we do we have the Spirit with us and we rejoice and give thanks in that knowledge of the Spirit with us.