

# SAID ED June 4, 2017

## Pentecost

**Pentecost** - a Greek word that means “fifty”, is a great day to talk about the abiding presence of God’s Spirit in our community. Pentecost was originally a Jewish feast at which people celebrated the giving of the Law to Moses on Sinai. Jews would come from all over the then-known world to be in Jerusalem to celebrate the festival. Our readings today talk about this event in which the spirit of God descends upon the apostles in tongues of fire.

Jesus assured us that he would be with us all days until the end of time. He said that his life-giving Spirit would remind us of everything he told us. As we face growing awareness of the effects of terrorism in our world, it’s quite important to remember that he told us: “Do not be afraid, I am with you always.” In fact, he said this more than 300 times in the Gospels. Sure, we have made prudent provision for our lives, but ultimately we must trust in the Lord.

This reflects the theology of our church that Christ is with us always and that we have been blessed with many gifts and talents for the building up of God’s reign upon the earth. The Lord expects us to use our gifts as best we can for the purpose of serving others and bringing God’s reign just a little bit closer in our world.

We all know the story of Pentecost. The disciples had gathered in Jerusalem to wait as Jesus had commanded them. Then with the wind roaring and tongues of fire flickering, “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.” (Acts, 2)

Luke’s Gospel and his Acts of the Apostles are two companion volumes; and a common theme runs through them both -- the Holy Spirit. In Luke’s Gospel, the Spirit descends on Jesus at his baptism, then leads him into the desert and his dramatic encounter with Satan. “Empowered by the Spirit”, Jesus began to preach and to heal. In his home town of Nazareth, he proclaimed: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.”

In the Acts of the Apostles, Luke shows that God’s Spirit was as active in the Christian community as it had been in the life of Christ. Indeed the Acts have been called “The Gospel of the Holy Spirit.”

The Spirit came to each of us in baptism, bearing gifts and the invitation to use them to reshape our world. Among these many gifts are those of “wisdom, knowledge and understanding.” They help us to know and understand what Jesus taught us. They give us the wisdom to see that in letting go of ourselves we will actually find our true selves!

The Spirit invites us to leave the lonely valley of our own egos and to enter the world of others through service and love. The Spirit reminds us of the example of our Lord who knelt to wash the feet of his disciples. What I have done for you, he said, you must do for others.

The Spirit prompts us to follow the example of Jesus by placing our talents at the service of others. These are the gifts that are uniquely ours: our energy and ingenuity, our kindness, patience, generosity and compassion. As we use them for others, we begin to discover that in forgiving we find forgiveness, in showing mercy we obtain it and in loving, we are loved,  
Come Holy Spirit!!

Have a great week!

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