

Pentecost

This week we chanted these words from Psalm 104, “You send forth your Spirit, and they are created; and so you renew the face of the earth.”

Today is the Day of Pentecost, the day we commemorate the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church. The reality is that two writers, St. John and St. Luke, as seen in this week’s Gospel reading and from the Book of Acts, have differing understandings of how this occurred. St. John is of the opinion that the gift was given by Jesus to his disciples on Easter Sunday evening while Luke recalls it being received by a large number of persons weeks after Easter day.

It really makes no difference when this gift was actually received; the significance for us is that God has blessed us with this gift and it is this gift that the Psalmist speaks of when he wrote, “You send forth your Spirit, and they are created, and so you renew the face of the earth.” There is the sense that through this God-given gift of the Spirit, we now have the possibility of participating with God in God’s acts of creating and renewing life around us.

One of the attributes of the Spirit is the gift of discernment, the ability to look at life around us and discern ways we can be agents of renewal. We are called to be people of hope, people who look at situations from the perspective that what we see are really just glimpses of what could be and then seek ways to enhance life around us. It may entail mentoring a young child who, with just a little nudge, discovers the joy of books and wants to become a reader. It may be embracing a spouse in moments of frustration, a warming touch that strengthens his or her resolve. It may be saying to community leaders that we do not care enough about the issues around us, a caring that might lead to embolden and committed citizenship leading to renewed and enhanced community involvement. We are

people who been blessed by God's Spirit; it is a gift of kindling waiting to be ignited and in a sense God saying to us, go for it, dream it, allow a creative, renewing spirit to engulf and infuse your life in ways that nourish your soul and enhance the lives of those whom you touch.

We spirit-filled people are called to be strivers after truth. One of the things, when we are most open, that the Spirit helps us understand is that there is still much to learn and incorporate into our lives. There is always the danger that we are so sure of who God is and what God wants us to do and to be because we "have the spirit", that we in fact become closed to the Holy Spirit challenging us, our views and our behavior. We are strivers toward the truth. None of us, none of us, no matter how Spirit filled we may perceive ourselves to be, have all the truth. The reality is that we have only a modicum of the truth but if we can perceive life in that fashion, it is that glimpse of the truth that infuses our desire to become seekers of the truth.

God gives us the Holy Spirit that we might become creative, renewing people; that creativity and renewal, if it is to be of value to others, has to begin with us. May God infuse each of us with the fire of the Holy Spirit that as the people who strive still to truth unknown, we may unlock not only for ourselves but others the desire to be strivers after truth, igniting all of us to become God's agents of creativity and renewal.

Amen