



Sunday 31st May 2020

Pentecost

Whit Sunday

**The Beacon Parishes Mission Community of Ipplepen with Torbryan,
Denbury, Broadhempston and Woodland**

FIRST READING

Acts 2.1-21

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

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.'

Peter Addresses the Crowd

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."

PSALM

Psalm 104.26-36

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

These all look to you
to give them their food in due season;
when you give to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the ground.

May the glory of the LORD endure for ever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works—
who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke.
I will sing to the LORD as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the LORD.
Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.
Praise the LORD!

SECOND READING

I Corinthians 12.3b-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.

One Body with Many Members

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.

GOSPEL

John 20.19-23

Jesus Appears to the Disciples

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.'

A REFLECTION FOR PENTECOST BY TESSA AMIES

PENTECOST WHITSUN

Tongues of flame, a rushing mighty wind,
The coming of the Holy Spirit,
The breath of God,
A wonderful festival, a wonderful visual image.

Jesus had promised the disciples that he would send them something special to help them in their ministries, now here it was.

Today, 7 weeks after Easter, 10 days after Ascension Day, the Church celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit to the disciples in that upper room in Jerusalem. The last piece of the jig-saw puzzle; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

During 'Lockdown' many people have been making bread and baking. The supermarket shelves normally stocked with bags of flour are empty. Breadmaking can be very satisfying and good fun. Flour, yeast and a little sugar and water are mixed together then kneaded and left to rest while the yeast works its magic and the dough begins to rise. The yeast makes the dough rise, enlivens it enhances it; It's a bit like the Holy Spirit working in us, it too can enliven and enhance us.

Many moons ago I worked in a secondary school. Sometimes I led assemblies. This particular one was rather spectacular! I am not quite sure of the context or theme, it may well have been about the arrival of the Holy Spirit, but it involved yeast and bread-making. Before school began, I dutifully set up my table on the stage: big see-through bowl, warm water, sugar and yeast. Then covered it all with a big cloth, before going off to the morning staff meeting and registration before bringing my tutor-group back to the hall, along with the rest of the school for the assembly.

After a hymn I began my talky-bit. After a few words of explanation, it came to the time to reveal my visual aid. I peeled the cloth off the bowl on the table A sharp intake of breath went round the Hall, a wow and a giggle. The yeast had won the day, it had risen out of the bowl, down onto the table, down the leg of the table on the floor and off the stage, - a brown, bubbly mess. In different circumstances it would have made an excellent loaf of bread!

The yeast had done its stuff; it would enhance and enliven the dough and then the bread; just as the Holy Spirit can enhance and inspire us.

In normal times we say the Collect for Purity together at the beginning of the service:

'Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden;
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the INSPIRATION of your HOLY SPIRIT, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord, Amen.

We ask for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Marvellous words.

Let us now, to-day ask for this inspiration.

May the Holy Spirit enhance, enliven and inspire us now in Lockdown and in the weeks and month ahead.
Amen.

I see in our Intercessions this week, that we are asked to pray for our Rector and our PCC members. Please remember them in your prayers.

THE COLLECT FOR PENTECOST

Holy Spirit, sent by the Father,
Ignite in us your holy fire;
Strengthen your children with the gift of faith,
Revive your Church with the breath of love,
And renew the face of the earth,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

