

## PENTECOST SUNDAY MAY 23,2010 CYCLE "C"

**TITLE: LISTEN, HEAR THE SPIRIT, DRINK THE NEW WINE.**

**READINGS: Acts 2:1-21, Ps. 104:24-34,35b, Rom.8:14-17, John 14:8-17[25-27]**

Imagine what it must have been like for the disciples who had huddled together in the upper room in trembling fear of being discovered as one of Jesus' followers. Then came Pentecost and suddenly the sound of rushing wind, tongues of fire and all at once they began to speak in other languages. Filled with strength and power, they lost their fear, threw open the doors of the house and began to proclaim the Good News of Jesus' resurrection to those below. The reaction of the Jews who witnessed these strange events was, "they have had too much wine!" They are not drunk, says Peter, but rather filled with the new wine of the Spirit. It is just what Joel prophesied many years ago, "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy." Acts 2:17. The disciples were filled with God the Holy Spirit. Filled with the new wine from heaven. The Holy Spirit promised by the Son had come for all to drink, for all to share.

On this anniversary of the Day of Pentecost, when the Christian Church was born, let us be deeply grateful that the power of the Holy Spirit has come to us. Without the Holy Spirit, Christian discipleship would be impossible. Without the Spirit of truth we would have no understanding, no Christian fellowship, no Christian witness. As a matter of fact, we would have no life without the life-giving Spirit. Our church without the Holy Spirit would be dead!

But we are not dead, we are very much alive because of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. It would be wonderful if we could hear the rushing of the wind and see the tongues of fire on the heads of those around us, but it is rather more like the "still small voice" experienced by Elijah. It was in that silence that he heard the Lord. We, too, need to listen to that still small voice in us and hear the Spirit of God. Just as it says in Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God." Remember it is not the lofty sails but the unseen, silent wind that moves the ship. So it is with the believer. We draw our power from an unseen presence. A good sermon or song, or Christian instruction is never accomplished without much silence, prayer, and inspiration from the Spirit. A young girl was watching her clergyman father preparing his sermon. "Daddy," she asked, "does God tell you what to say?" "Yes he does, dear," he replied, "Why?" "Well, I was wondering," she said, "why you cross so much of it out."

It was Peter, filled with the new wine of the Spirit who stepped before those thousands gathered in Jerusalem and proclaimed the Good News with the strength and power of the Spirit. "Everyone," he said, "who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts 2:21. What wonderfully consoling and assuring words for us to hear! And Luke shows us the results of the work of the Spirit when he writes, "So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about 3 thousand persons were added." Acts 2:41.

Today we too, have experienced the work of the Holy Spirit in a very visible way. For today Kier Hack, having been baptized into our Christian family, stepped before us and proclaimed his faith openly and boldly by reaffirming his baptism. We, in turn, God's instruments in this holy work at Bethany, welcomed him and through the silent imposition of our hands, conferred upon him the gift of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in the presence of God. And once and forever confirmed him in his baptism, strengthened him in his faith, and gave him the power to bring in love the Good News of Jesus Christ to his world. How tremendously awesome to be able to participate in the wonderful and sacred work of Pentecost!

Considering the very serious responsibility we share as God's chosen people we must ask ourselves if we are truly aware of the presence of the Spirit in our lives. Do we listen for that still small voice? Do we pray that the Spirit be present in our lives? Did we hear Paul's words in Romans today? "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God...you have received a spirit of adoption...heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." Rom.8:14,15,17. Those words of Paul need to become a reality in our lives. It is incumbent on us to live our lives empowered by the Spirit. A young philosopher lived a life of drunken disgrace and lust when the Spirit entered and he heard the words, "Take and read." The Spirit changed his life. He became the great theologian St. Augustine. Saul of Tarsus was smitten on the road to Damascus and became the great St. Paul. Filled with the Spirit they tirelessly witnessed the Savior. Peter stood to preach on that Day of Pentecost and under the power of the Holy Spirit brought 3000 to the Savior.

A family driving a large camper pulled up in front of a church just as the pastor started toward home. Desiring to be friendly, the pastor introduced himself and expressed his admiration for the camper. The man of the family told him rather proudly: "This camper sleeps eight people." Then he asked: "What is the capacity of your church, Pastor?" The pastor quite quickly replied, "Oh, it sleeps about ninety."

When you think about it, it is embarrassing how little the modern day church resembles the church of that first Pentecost. How do we resemble it? Does the Holy

Spirit make a difference in your life? If we truly want, we can be part of a new Pentecost in our time. Let us listen to the Spirit in our lives, let us drink deeply of that new wine. **Amen.**

**Pastor Barney**

**COME HOLY SPIRIT**

**FILL THE HEARTS OF YOUR FAITHFUL**

**WITH THE FIRE**

**OF YOUR LOVE !**