



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 9th June 2019 - Pentecost Sunday

1 Relax & Remember

Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2 Read

Taken from the Gospel for 9th June 2019 (John 14:15-16. 23-26): The Paraclete

Jesus said to his disciples, “If you love me you will keep my commandments. I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever. If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him. Those who do not love me do not keep my words. And my word is not my own; it is the word of the one who sent me. I have said these things to you while still with you; but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you.”



3 Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

In Jesus' final speech to his disciples after the Last Supper he is preparing them for life after the Resurrection. He several times mentions a mysterious figure called the 'Paraclete'. 'Paraclete' is Greek for 'advocate', that is someone who is called to your side to help, to guide you through a tricky patch. In Hebrew teaching about the Last Judgement there would be an Accuser and an Advocate on either side. In the gospel, Jesus asks the Father to send this Advocate to his followers to be his own presence when Jesus is no longer there and to guide the Church into all truth. That is the inspiring situation which Jesus speaks of: the Church and every one of her members will continue through the power of the Spirit to grow in understanding of the mysteries of God, as a people over the centuries and as individuals over the years of life. Before the Spirit was given, even the disciples who had been with Jesus throughout his ministry failed to understand his real significance, and certainly lacked courage to proclaim it. The coming of the Paraclete was the booster-rocket which set off the Church on its course and keeps it on course. Now it is the duty and privilege of each of the members of the Church to fulfil the prophetic office of the Church, understanding more deeply and declaring more clearly the truth about Christ in the world.

What does the Holy Spirit teach? What difference does the Spirit's presence and teaching make in our lives?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB

4 Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS †

Fr Henry's reflections on the first and second readings of Sunday 9th June 2019



First Reading: *The Birth of the Church*

Acts 2:1-11

When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech. Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. "Surely," they said, "all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome - Jews and proselytes alike - Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God."

The ministry of Jesus starts with the coming of the Spirit at his Baptism. In the same way, the ministry of the Church begins with the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost. There can be no witness to Jesus or to his message, no spreading of the Kingship of God, without the Spirit of Jesus. Another lesson from this parallel between Jesus' Baptism and Pentecost is that the task of the Church and the life of the Church are the same as those of Jesus himself: to bring God's kingship to its fulfilment by pouring out healing, love and joy through the message of the risen Christ. The rushing wind and the tongues of fire are an allusion to the Old Testament when God's Spirit descends upon Moses and the elders of the people. So the message of Pentecost is the fulfilment of the Old Testament, breaking out beyond the borders of Judaism to include all peoples of the world. The union of all these peoples (all understanding one language in their own way) is a deliberate contrast with the Old Testament scene of the Tower of Babel, when the LORD split up all the peoples of the world (as symbolised by their inability to understand one another's languages). The list of unpronounceable peoples is itself a witness to the universality of the Church!

How does the Church show forth the Spirit at work in the world today?

Second Reading: *The Spirit of Christ in Me*

Romans 8:8-17

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you. So then, my brothers, there is no necessity for us to obey our unspiritual selves or to live unspiritual lives. If you do live in that way, you are doomed to die; but if by the Spirit you put an end to the misdeeds of the body you will live. Everyone moved by the Spirit is a son of God. The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again; it is the spirit of sons, and it makes us cry out, 'Abba, Father!' The Spirit himself and our spirit bear united witness that we are children of God. And if we are children we are heirs as well: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, sharing his sufferings so as to share his glory.

Paul's letter to the Romans is all about the process of salvation. What difference did the death and resurrection of Jesus actually make to me and my condition in the world? This passage is the climax: it plants the flag on the summit and leaves us to live a full Christian life in peace, tranquillity and hope. There have been three stages in this process of salvation. First came the work of Christ: Jesus' loving, obedient death on the Cross undid, washed away, healed the disobedience of Adam, that is, the disobedience of the whole human race (Romans 5:12-21). What is that to me? So, stage two: by Baptism I express my faith in Christ. By myself I am helpless and hopeless, so I put all my trust in Christ. In Baptism I am plunged into Christ, plunged into Christ's death, and emerge from the waters soaked and dripping with Christ's risen life (Romans 6:1-11). Stage three: permeated with, or vivified with, this risen life of Christ, I am adopted into the sonship of God and can cry out 'Abba, Father' with the voice of Jesus himself. The inheritance of Jesus as Son of God is now my inheritance too. So Pentecost is the celebration of the Spirit of Jesus alive and active in every Christian.

Where and in whom have you found the Spirit of Jesus "alive and active"?

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alive and active in every Christian.”

The Wednesday Word: *Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God*
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