

Reflection for Pentecost

June 5, 2022

First Reading: Acts 2:1-11

Psalm: 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34

Second Reading: 1Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

Sequence Veni, Sancte Spiritus

Gospel: John 20:19-23

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Come, Holy Spirit, Come!

The first reading is full of symbolisms- a strong wind reminding us of the breath of life or giving voice, and fire- calling to action. To what am I willing to give voice? Does the fire of Love kindle my actions? There is one other sign that speaks to us in today's world. As we read on, we find that all spoke and heard each other in spite of differing languages. We all speak different languages, since we see, hear, perceive and process differently. Am I called to listen differently to others? In years of ministry with marginalized populations, hearing the Spirit through each has been a gift and blessing.

In the psalm we pray, “. . . *if You take away their breath, they will perish.*” Do I allow the breath of the Spirit to speak through others, through me? Do I listen to the hurts behind sharp, even contentious words? Do I practice active listening?

The second reading reminds us “*to each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.*” In the God- picture we are all one, though gifted differently. How well do I accept the gifts of those I may perceive as different? Am I conscious of the common good in my actions?

In the sequence, we pray that the Spirit will fill, heal and restore us. What part am I willing to play in restoring our Earth and healing the wounded around me?

The Gospel, the good news, pulls it all together. Jesus stood in their midst and said, “*Peace be with you.*” It is like the calming, “*don't worry, I'm with you,*” that Jesus offers. Do I take the time to relax in the peace of Christ?

Then He shows His wounds. Can I see the wounds of Christ in the desecration of Earth and its people through abuse, exclusivity, racism, sexism? Do I work to make or change policies that will heal the woundedness in our world?

Then, having breathed the Spirit on them, He sent them forth-He gave them voice to speak and teach His Way. Do I acknowledge the strength of Spirit within me? Is the fire of Love kindling my actions? The words of Paul VI fit well with the message of Jesus, “*If you want peace, work for justice.*”

As we contemplate the woundedness around us, it can be overwhelming- almost leading us to paralysis. Finding our own passion and putting the fire of the Spirit into it is what Jesus accompanies us in doing. Helen Keller realized this in stating, “*I cannot do everything but I can do something. I must not fail to do the something I can do.*”

As we celebrate this Pentecost, may we each catch the Spirit, and inflamed by its fire, move lovingly in our world.