

## Pentecost

24 5 15

God, who at this time  
taught the hearts of your faithful people  
by sending them the light of your Holy Spirit:  
grant us by the same Spirit  
to have a right judgement in all things  
and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort.

Our text may be found in today's reading from Acts chapter 2 and verse 17 and is Peter quoting from the prophet Joel:

**'I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh'.**

Last week, we left the disciples full of joy for they had seen Jesus ascending into heaven and though he had, in one sense, left them, they were buoyant with the promise that Jesus would still be with them always.

Today is Whit Sunday, Whitsun, the Day of Pentecost, when we remember the coming of the Holy Spirit empowering the disciples to be apostles of the gospel, communicators of the good news that Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, has risen from the dead and ascended into heaven and through belief in him all can be saved.

There is a paradox in the assertion that someone who has left us is nevertheless still with us. In one sense, we do have our memories of those we once knew in the flesh and still hold dear in our heart. Each night, before I go to bed, if I have failed to wash up, then it is as if I hear the voice of my mum urging me to leave the sink clear for a fresh start in the morning. So the disciples do have their memories of Jesus' presence with them: what he taught them; what he showed them; what he shared with them. But there is more. And that more is made clear in the account we've just heard of the first Day of Pentecost.

Sat praying in the Upper Room, the disciples hear the sound of a rushing wind and see tongues of fire resting on each of them. They are empowered to rush out into the street where, with the gift of tongues, each is able to communicate with some of the foreign Jews present in Jerusalem for the pilgrim festival of Shavuot. Sadly, however, some who hear them simply think they're just babblingly drunk !

It is the presence of the Holy Spirit with them, with us, that means that none of us is necessarily alone even if Jesus has ascended into heaven. The second person of the Trinity is with us in the presence of the third person of the Trinity - Jesus is with us because the Holy Spirit is with us. Let me simply highlight four verbs to reinforce the point: inform - inspire - encourage - enthuse.

Inform. The Holy Spirit can, with out co-operation, shape the people we are, the people we grow to become. He can teach us and mould us to be who we're truly meant to be.

Inspire. The Holy Spirit can, with our co-operation, challenge us to meet the challenges of being an active Christian today and he can give us the energy to do so.

Encourage. The Holy Spirit can, if we are open to his presence with us, give us the heart, the determination, to do what has to be done. With him, our hearts can be on fire with the love of God.

Enthuse. The Holy Spirit can, if we truly wish, connect us with the presence of God: he can give us a sense of being in touch with the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

So let me, for the second week running, leave you with the thought that we are not alone, that the promise that Jesus is with us always is as true for us now as it was for his disciples then. But let me say again, there is always a choice. For some on the street in Jerusalem on that first Day of Pentecost, those disciples speaking Greek or Arabic, Latin or Parsee, were just dead drunk – talking nonsense – gobbledegook ! So what do you think ?

I have spoken in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

*Preached at the Eucharist*

*St Bartholomew's, Dinard*

*24<sup>th</sup> May, 2015*

