

Pentecost – June 9, 2019

Acts of the Apostles 2: 1-11 1 Corinthians 12: 3b-7, 12-13
John 20: 19-23

It may be a bit confusing to hear different accounts about the handing over of the Holy Spirit such as we did today. On the one hand there was the very descriptive, and even colorful recollection of Saint Luke in the Acts of the Apostles: he writes of wind and fire and being understood in different languages. On the other had, there is the Gospel account in which Jesus is said to breathe upon the Apostles and tells them to “Receive the Holy Spirit.”

There is no real contradiction. Rather, the different writers of Scripture emphasize different experiences which took place to assist those who read or listen to their words in understanding that the Spirit of God embraces us and is known to the world through us.



The desire of God to be known and to be recognized in the world is the main purpose of the work and ministry of Jesus Christ. This is also an on-going and continuous process. God is not apart from us. God is not separated from us. God seeks to be united with us. Because through the declaration of Christ the Spirit of God is present with and in us, the revelation of the

goodness of God is to be found with us. This is our task. This is our opportunity as believers who are filled with the presence of God, the Holy Spirit. It is incumbent on us that the Spirit of the Lord be made evident now just as much as in the days of the early Church.

In the life and the history of the Church, the greatest sign of the presence of the Spirit has been viewed as the simple survival of the Church over the centuries. It has survived despite the human frailty and sinfulness present with it from the highest leadership all the way down. It has survived, as well, despite persecution and many different efforts to destroy the Church that continue even to the present day. That survival only confirms that the Spirit of God is present.

The real presence of the Spirit of God in us individually and in us as the body of believers we are as Church is not simply survival in the midst of failure and opposition. That presence is also found in the manner in which each of us and all of us reflect and reveal God. So, how is this presence to be known?

In the tradition of the Church, as derived from the sacred writings of Scripture, the presence of the Spirit is known in a variety of ways. These ways are referred to as gifts of the Holy Spirit,. We are to exhibit the wisdom that is the deep appreciation of the complexity and beauty we are as creations of God. We are to show that understanding that is an insight into the mystery of life and love. We experience the counsel that gives direction to our choices. We are strong in the fortitude of living out our full potential. Our knowledge is a constant process of learning about God, about ourselves, about all of creation. Our piety is evident in our respect for ourselves, for others and for God. In all of this, the fear of

the Lord is the awe present in our lives as we observe the wonder of all that is and all that we are.

Through the gift of Christ we are endowed with these signs of the Divine Spirit with us. It is this Divine Spirit, the Holy Spirit, that leads us and guides us to reveal in every aspect of our lives a true reflection of our good and gracious God.