

31 May 2020 - Homily - Pentecost

Jn 20:19-23, Acts 2:1-11

BY: Fr. Paul Magyar

Pentecost, it means the 50th day of Easter; a wonderful time when the Holy Spirit is fully received by the disciples. In Hebraic tradition it is the Feast of Tabernacles and it attracted the most amount of various people representing many different nations. It was a harvest feast of first fruits and the day to remember how the Israelites were led out of Egypt.

In the gospel of John 20:19-23, Jesus appears to the disciples as they were gathered in the upper room. The doors were locked. Jesus appears to them in the body of his human life, however it was not subject to the ordinary conditions of human life. Jesus greets the disciples with "Peace be with you" which is the assurance of God's presence in their midst.

Jesus shows them his hands and side and tells them Peace be with you, again to indicate that when they become Apostles they are to deliver this peace to the rest of the world. Once Apostles they will be identified with Christ in His continued mediated work on earth. The Apostles are to declare to the world the fullness of the Father's love as witnesses to Christ's life and death. They are to declare forgiveness, love and peace to the world that hated Christ and them.

Then Jesus breathed on them the same way as in Genesis 2:7 God breathes into Adam life. Jesus gives the disciples new life through his breath. Called out of death into life. When someone is baptized by full immersion, as done in the ancient world, when they come out of the water they take in a new breath of life as a new Christian.

The disciples receive the gift of the Holy Spirit through Jesus' breath and are being prepared to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to come. The Holy Spirit came with a large sound from heaven like on Sinai followed by a great wind of a breath. This is what is meant by being moved by the spirit, because the wind is so strong. The wind rushed into the upper room where all the disciples were and it carried with them the aroma and smells of all the burnt offerings

that was done for the feast of tabernacles. The disciples were gathered in the upper in the morning commemorating the giving of the law to Moses by God on mount Sinai. They all noticed tongues of flames like lightning appearing for a moment on each head and then vanishing.

The disciples all felt the new intensity of life within them. Saint Luke the gospel writer and writer of Acts interpreted the phenomena of the various languages in two ways: 1) Either the disciples actually spoke in the various different languages all at once. OR, 2) The disciples were speaking in their own Galilean language, however their words came to the ears of those who listened as spoken in the language with which each was familiar.

Acts of the apostles seems to lean more toward the second interpretation because it would also allude to the future of the Church how the gospels and the entire bible will eventually be translated into all the languages of the world. People can hear the word of God in their own native language.

Happy Pentecost !

Praying for all of you

Fr. Paul Magyar