

Reflection for Pentecost Sunday

Sunday, 31st May 2020

If you do not have a copy of the missalette, you can find today's readings at www.universalis.com

Some of you may wish to celebrate the vigil of Pentecost, which involves a number of readings from the Old Testament. These readings can be found in your Sunday Missal or at www.universalis.com

Perhaps we can identify with the first reading today, the account in Acts of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. Like them we have been confined to our homes for some time and like them we have been spending extra time in prayer. For them, the coming of the Holy Spirit was marked with a burst of spiritual energy. They sensed the Spirit through the wind that they heard and the tongues of flame that they were able to see. However, inside they knew that they were changed people. They burst out of their home, spilling out onto the streets, and preaching in a way that everyone was able to understand them.

However, the coming of the Spirit is not always so dramatic. In the resurrection story in today's gospel, the disciples receive the Spirit in a more subdued manner. There is still a physical manifestation of the Spirit's presence. Jesus breathes on them. They can feel the warmth of his breath on their faces. Here the Spirit is given them by Jesus so that they can forgive sins.

In both of these incidents the disciples receive the Spirit, and through this action, they become aware of the inner workings of God. In both of these situations they become actors in a divine drama.

On Pentecost Sunday the time is right to begin the mission of the church. Jesus had lived for 33 years upon this earth. He had gathered an inner circle of witnesses. He had taught the people. He had demonstrated the power of his Father through miraculous action. He had witnessed to God's love by shedding his blood. He had witnessed to God's justice by rising from the dead. He had ascended into heaven to resume his rightful place at the Father's side. Now it was time for the disciples to carry on his work.

It was up to these 11 to make known the message of God to people living even in the furthest corners of the world. Pentecost was the Jewish feast that marked 7 whole weeks since the Passover (in fact, the word "pentecost" literally means 50 days). The gathering of Jews in Jerusalem from all the places in which they had taken refuge represented a cross section of the global population. The disciples needed to seize the day and proclaim to these people the truth about God revealed by Jesus Christ. The Spirit gave them the gift of communicating in foreign languages to facilitate the spreading of this message.

Today marks the birthday of the Church. The Church exists for mission, and her mission began on this day. The disciples, through their actions, betray what God wants for us. He wants us to know the Son, he wants us to be reconciled to the Father, he wants us to experience the workings of the Spirit. About 3,000 people became "followers of the way" on this day. "Project Church" had begun.

As we see in the Gospel, the working of the Spirit is not always so dramatic. Take the example of the prophet Elijah. He was the last of the prophets of God in Israel, yet there were 50 prophets of Baal. He challenged them to a sacrificial face-off. Both prepared sacrifices, but it was the sacrifice of Elijah which was accepted by being consumed by fire. At that moment, God showed Elijah that he was a God of power.

Shortly afterwards, Elijah was taking refuge in a cave. A procession of physical powers passed in front of him: a mighty wind, an earthquake and a raging fire. These were followed by a gentle breeze. Elijah found the Spirit of God not in the violence of nature, but in the sheer silence of this sacred moment.

So we come to the gospel. Jesus breathing on the disciples and giving them a gentle power. The power to forgive sins. A vital building block to the construction of the Kingdom is the communication to others that, even though they don't deserve it, even though they have done nothing to earn it, they stand before a merciful God forgiven. God is the one who forgives but he has chosen us to be the agents to communicate his forgiveness. We know that the Spirit is at work when we are incorporated into the inner workings of God. We become missionary disciples. Happy Birthday everyone!

St Peter's/St Joseph's Bidding Prayers

30th / 31st May 2020

Priest:

Today is the feast of Pentecost. We pray that the Holy Spirit will fill our church with the gifts she needs to fulfil her mission.

Reader:

We pray for all church leaders: May they be filled with Wisdom and Counsel as they guide our church in these challenging times.

Lord in your mercy.

We pray for those hungry for sacraments: Through the gifts of wonder and awe may they have their fill of God's grace.

Lord in your mercy.

We pray for those who are suffering: May we, led by the gift of piety, be ready to come to their assistance.

Lord in your mercy.

We pray for those seeking God's will: May the gift of knowledge help them to see the world from God's perspective and make good decisions.

Lord in your mercy.

We commend to the loving mercy of God those who have died recently and those whose anniversaries occur at about this time: May the Spirit lead them to the complete truth.

Lord in your mercy.

As the Spirit makes its home in each one of us, may we share with God our deepest aspirations and desires.

[After a pause]

Lord in your mercy.

Mary must have been overjoyed on Pentecost Sunday to see the disciples so animated.. Let us ask her to pray for us too.

Hail Mary....

Priest:

The Spirit has come, giving us gifts. We present our prayers to the Father, in the name of the Son, and moved by the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

ST PETER'S CHURCH

(with St Joseph's, Hurst Green)

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Salford Roman Catholic Diocese Trustees Registered Charity No 2500374

31st May 2020

THE NEWSLETTER

Pentecost Sunday (Year A)

Mass Schedule for this week

Fr Tim will offer a private Mass each day for the following intentions

Date	Time	Fr Tim's Private Mass Intention	Feast
Sa 30 th		Jack & Margaret Shuttleworth A	Vigil of Pentecost Sunday (Yr A)
Su 31 st		For the parish	Pentecost Sunday (Yr A)
M 1 st June		Private Intention	Mary, Mother of the Church
T 2 nd		Mary Farmer L	Weekday in ordinary time (week 9)
W 3 rd		Sally Walker-Cousins L	Charles Lwanga and comps Mm
Th 4 th		For SMH	Our Lord Jesus Christ, High Priest
F 5 th		Ann Cramer L	St Boniface

(No Holy Hour or Benediction until further notice.)

L = Lately Dead, A = Anniversary of Death, R = Remembrance M = Martyr, V = Virgin, B = Bishop, Pp = Pope
P = Personal Intention, S = Sick, B = Birthday F = Founders Mass D = Doctor, P = Priest, R = Religious

Please pray for the following, the anniversary of whose deaths occur at this time: Mary Bolton. Mary Jones, Thomas Eccles, Jimmy Grindrod and Josephine Dargan. *May they rest in peace.*

Readings at Mass

	Pentecost Sunday (Year A)	Trinity Sunday
First	Acts 2; 1 - 11	Exod 34; 4-6, 8-9
Second	I Cor 12; 3 - 7, 12 - 13	II Cor 13; 11 - 13
Gospel	John 20; 19 - 23	John 3; 16 - 18

Diocesan Website:

<http://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk>

for information on our Diocese and what is happening.

Praying with the Pope in June 2020

We pray that those who suffer may find their way in life, allowing themselves to be touched by the heart of Jesus.

Look at www.ThePopeVideo.org for more information



Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love...

We shall continue to send out the newsletter until we are able to gather again in church. Together with other resources, it is also available on line on the parish website and in the parish resources box by the Cenotaph.

Fr Tim's availability

Each day Fr Tim will be in the Parish Office from 9am to 10am and available on the parish number (01254 826268). At other times, leave a message on the parish answer machine, which will be responded as soon as possible.

A daily prayer sheet is now available on-line and in the box by the cenotaph in the village.

Today

Is Pentecost Sunday, where we remember the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles. Fr Tim will celebrate the Vigil Mass of Pentecost in St Peter's at 5.30pm on Saturday and Mass at 9.30am on Sunday in St Joseph's. We pray that the Spirit of God will guide us through these testing times as we come out of lockdown.

Ordinary Time

After 6 weeks of Lent and 7 weeks of Easter time, Monday begins ordinary time once more. Unless it is a feast day, Fr Tim will be using green vestments for his private Masses. The readings are taken from week 9 of Ordinary Time (Year 2).

Return to School

Some of the pupils from St Joseph's and SMH will return to school soon. St Joseph's was preparing to take some children from Monday, but the advice from Lancaster County Council is that schools do not open just yet. Stonyhurst pupils will continue to learn via *Stonyhurst Anywhere*. We keep the pupils, their families and their teachers very much in our prayers.

New feasts this week

Pope Francis is encouraging us to celebrate 2 new feasts this week. On Monday we honour Mary as Mother of the Church, appropriate as we have just completed her month of May. On Thursday we honour Jesus Christ as High Priest and mediator between God and man.

Next Sunday

Is Trinity Sunday. We rejoice in the knowledge of the fullness of God's revelation.

Box by the Cenotaph

This blew away with the high winds last weekend. A big thank you to those who rescued the box and its contents. It's now functioning again with a large stone to anchor it to the ground! This week there are copies of the June *Day by Day* and *Messenger Magazine*.

Statistics

Last week we delivered 120 copies of the newsletter and it had 127 hits on line. 25 people accessed the daily reflections on line and 8 took copies from the box. A big thank you to Peter Nicholson for keeping the website up to date.

Book of remembrance and prayer

Many people have sent in names for the book of remembrance and prayer for those connected with the parish and the Stonyhurst/SMH community who are sick or who have passed away. If you would like some names to be added to this book, let Fr Tim know. They will be remembered at Mass every day.

Preparing for the reopening of churches

It looks like churches will not be open for Mass until July. If permission is granted, St Peter's will be open for private prayer, but with a Covid-19 risk assessment in place. It will not be possible to open the church all day, every day, so we will publish a schedule indicating when it will be open for prayer. The Diocese of Salford intends to open churches gradually, with one or two churches per deanery open for prayer. It is essential that this does not contribute to a second spike so social distancing and cleaning measures will be in place. Watch this space!

Cards from the piety stall

While the repository is closed, there is a small selection of cards available in the parish box by the cenotaph.

Donating to the parish on line

The Diocese of Salford has put a donate button on their website, so that you can donate to individual parishes. Click on the link, and type "Stonyhurst" in the parish box, and your donation will end up in our parish bank account. Go to <https://www.dioceseofsalford.org.uk/>