BIBLE STUDY
May 13, 2024

<u>PENTECOST SUNDAY</u>
Acts 2: 1-11
John 20: 19-23
1 Corinthians 12: 3b-7, 12-13

1. **Acts 2: 1-11**
    - The root of the word Pentecost is "fifty." Pentecost Sunday takes place 50 days after Easter and is the culmination of the Easter season. There is also a Jewish feast of Pentecost that celebrated the giving of the law through Moses. The Chrisitan Pentecost contrasts with the Jewish feast in that we no longer live by the law but by the Spirit that enables us to acknowledge Jesus as Lord. Jesus told the apostles at his Ascension to stay in Jerusalem and pray for the coming of the Holy Spirit. They prayed for nine days, which is the origin of our novena, nine days of prayer for a special intention.
    - V. 1: The apostles are in the Upper Room with Mary when it was time for the Spirit to be given to them.
    - V. 2: The driving wind reminds us on John 3: 8 when Jesus says to Nicodemus, "the wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone born of the Spirit. We are also reminded of Genesis 1: 2, "and a mighty wind was sweeping over the waters." The Hebrew word for wind and spirit is the same: ruah.
    - V. 3: There also appeared tongues of fire. Exodus 19: 18 says, "Now Mount Sinai was completely enveloped in smoke, because the Lord had come down on it in fire." Fire signifies the presence of God.
    - V. 4: They all received the gift of the Spirit that enabled them to speak in different tongues. In the NT, there are two kinds of tongues. One is to be understood in a different language and the other is to speak in a language only understood by God.
    - V. 5: There was a variety of people in Jerusalem.
    - V. 6: Everyone in the crowd heard the apostles speaking in their own language as the apostles spoke in their language. The Spirit brings harmony to the diversity of the world. In the story of the Tower of Babel, God confused the languages of the people so that they could not conspire against him by building a tower to protect themselves and not let themselves be scattered around the world. The confusion of languages is now undone by the coming of the Spirit. The Spirit is the harmonizer of the diversity of the world.
    - V. 7: The crowd expresses its amazement at the understanding that is taking place.
    - V. 8: How is this possible?

- V. 9-11: A listing of all the nations represented to show how remarkable this is. It also previews the universal mission of the church to preach to all nations.
- V. 12: There is wonder and awe and the activity of the Spirit.
- V. 13: Some do not belief and make light of what is happening.

2. **John 20: 19-23**
    - John situates the coming of the Spirit on the evening of the first Easter Sunday. His story has Jesus' ascending to the Father during the day of Easter after he had appeared to Mary Magdelene. Luke describes the Spirit coming 50 days after the Resurrection. There is no problem in this discrepancy. The chronological order is not important. The Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost is one great event called the Paschal Mystery. We divide it up to meditate on each of its parts.
    - V. 19: The disciples are paralyzed by fear and are locked in the upper room, Jesus enters through the locked doors. He is no longer bound by space, and he enters and leaves freely. He wishes them, "Peace!" which is Shalom, a total well being of body, mind, and spirit. It signifies that his death and resurrection has brought about a healing and restoration of their relationship with God. The greeting also signals that despite their abandoning him in his passion, he is at peace with them.
    - V. 20: He shows them his wounds to leave no doubt that he is the same one who died on the cross. He is not a ghost, a spirit, or a product of their imagination. He has a glorified body—a body, nonetheless. He has a unique existence. The sight of the Lord brings joy to the disciples. Remember Jesus said at the Last Supper, "But I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you." (Jn 16: 22
    - V. 21: After wishing them Peace again, he commissions them. As the Father sent him, he sends them.
    - V. 22: He breathed on them. His breathe is a sign of the spirit: the Hebrew word ruah means wind, breath, spirit. This is a new creation.
    - V. 23: Connected to the Spirit is the power of healing and forgiveness of sin. This refers both to Baptism and Reconciliation (Confession). The Lord shares the power of forgiveness with his church.
3. **1 Corinthians 12: 3b-7, 12-13**
    - To challenge the divisions and factions in the Corinthian church, Paul teaches how the Spirit bestows different gifts and harmonizes them.
    - V. 3: The unifying force in the community is that we all acknowledge Jesus as Lord.
    - V. 4-6: There are a variety of gifts, ways of service, and different jobs but all are one in the Spirit.
    - V. 7: The Spirit gives different gifts for a special purpose to build up the whole body.
    - V. 8-10: Paul lists the various gifts that are given by the Spirit: the expression of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, mighty deeds, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues.

- V. 11: But it is one and the same Spirit who organizes it and harmonizes it.
- V. 12: Paul uses the analogy of the body that has many parts but functions as one body.
- V. 13: All people whether they are Jew or Greek, slave or free, are all baptized with one baptism and are given one Spirit.