

The Epistle of the Day: 1st Epistle of St Peter; Chapter 4, Verses 7 - 11

Today's Epistle can also be found in the following sources:

The 1928 Book of Common Prayer: Page 179

The People's Anglican Missal: Page C - 28

St. Joseph Continuous Sunday Missal (1958 ed.): Page. 586

EXPECTATION and PREPERATION

Jesus, before ascending back to His Father in Heaven, left His apostles with instructions to return to Jerusalem and there await the coming of the Holy Ghost. God usually demands a corresponding preparation, if He contemplates the giving of special graces for His own. It was such, with the wonderful raining down of Manna, when God told the Hebrews through Moses, to sanctify themselves for they shall behold the glory of the Lord that next morning.

The whole world had to be prepared for the advent of the Messiah for thousands of years, until God had deemed that the "*the fullness of time*" had come, and then sent His Son to be born in Bethlehem. Faith would increase through waiting and watching and the desire would become more intense. The Apostles were very much in need of an ardent desire for the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and in order to excite it in their hearts they were to prepare for His coming by fervent prayer. These good but simple men knew of their great need for divine assistance. Things may have looked rather hopeless for them as they departed the scene of Christ's Ascension and headed back for Jerusalem. They all remembered how cowardly they had been during their Master's Passion, and gripped by great fear and anxiety, they hid themselves behind bolted doors during the days after His arrest and crucifixion! These Apostles, so intimidated, and in many respects wholly ignorant, were to be sent out into the world as lambs among wolves to preach the Gospel not only to the Jews, but the whole world! Their insufficiency must have compelled these men to cry to heaven for supernatural assistance, courage, and strength. They believed in Christ, they believed in His Message . . . but they didn't believe in *themselves* as carriers of this Message. They surely must have recalled the words of their Master when He said to them: "*How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?*" (*St. Luke; Ch. 11, Vs. 13*).

St. Peter, in today's Epistle, addresses the anxieties of his readers. The Christians of Peter's day saw the Second Coming of our Lord as something that would occur within their lives. They lived in a state of constant expectation, and awareness. Living in such a state can, however, over time, produce anxiety, fear and even paranoia. Peter was aware of all of this, and addressed his fellow Christians on what they needed to do to prepare themselves for meeting Christ rather than fixating on when He would return to meet them! It's unlikely that Peter was informed during his own spiritual experience on Pentecost, about when Christ would return to earth, but Peter understood that all people would face the Lord upon their death. This called for preparation during the time of one's life. Peter gets their attention by saying: "*Dearly beloved : the end of all things is at hand*" but also alludes to the fact that all things *in this life* end at death, and a new journey begins. They must use the time in this journey to prepare themselves for the next, and

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not worry about matters they have no control of. God will impart the gifts and graces that are needed to every person. The Master assures: “*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*” (St. Luke; Ch. 11).

We, too, are sorely in need of divine grace, for we often lack courage, especially in times of suffering and temptation. We are so easily repulsed by the difficulties we meet while trying to live the ideals of Christ in our daily lives, especially amidst a hostile world that is moving further and further away from Christ’s message and calling.

Let us, like the Apostles remain in Jerusalem, that is to say; let us retire . . . close the doors of our hearts, lest the Enemy (*the devil*) hinder our preparation for the feast of Pentecost. The descent of the Holy Ghost is not just something that occurred on that Pentecost so long ago. God imparts the Holy Ghost to waiting hearts that call for its aid. Those hearts that so desire it, must however, prepare themselves for this Great Gift from above. They must sweep the temple of their hearts clean for this Heavenly Guest. This can only occur through retirement to a quiet place of prayerful preparation . . . just as the Apostles did.

We must ask ourselves: Am I convinced that the graces of Pentecost will be imparted to me in the measure of *my generosity in self-surrender* so He that sends this Holy Spirit?

Prayer for the day: I will not leave you comfortless (St. John; Ch. 14)



“The Apostles gather after their return to Jerusalem”
Martinus van Heemskerck – Dutch, c. 1600

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

*Hearken unto my voice, O Lord, when I cry unto Thee . . . my heart hath talked of Thee, Seek ye my face ; Thy face, Lord will I seek : O hide not thou Thy face from me, Alleluia, Alleluia.
The Lord is my light and my salvation : whom then shall I fear ? (Psalm 27)*

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Feasts, Fasts, and Other Things



Our learned brother Chip is away for the rest of the month giving college commencement addresses. Brothers Sylvester Squirrel and Raymond A. Crowe will be filling in during Chip's absence.

Maintenance for the Soul



By Br. Sylvester A. Squirrel, O.S.B.

Venial Sins get in the way of the work of the Holy Ghost!

I'll bet you didn't realize that . . . but it's true! Our venial sins, even if they are ever so slight, are an impedence to the wonderful operations of grace that the Holy Ghost dispenses to us. It's easy to be indifferent to the *venial* (minor) *sins* that we commit on a daily basis. Sometimes in the haste of the busy-ness of life, we may not realize we are committing them, or through indifference we brush them by as unimportant enough to consider them as a detriment to the overall health of our souls. How many times have we brushed off an unkind word we said or a thought we had, a vain thought, a gratification of some curiosity or sensuality, or a violation of charity towards our neighbor as matters of little importance? ***We are deceiving ourselves in doing so!!!*** Faith teaches us that God chastises *venial sins* with punishments which are of often longer duration and can be of more intensity than we realize or expect. A multitude of venial sins wrecks havoc in the soul. How so you may ask? Well, they obstruct the channels of divine graces and inspirations, and weaken the fervor and the courage necessary to repulse the attacks of the Evil One. Blindness, weakness, and relapses to the same sin sets in. Our hearts, in time, become insensitive and we hardly perceive the seriousness of our acts and sins. We run the greatest risk of being eternally lost if we take no steps to guard ourselves against venial sin, even though we may still practice acts of external charity; these acts become hollow. It's like a water pipe with all kinds of sharp bends in it. Water flows through it, but in time the turns cause sediments to pile up in the corners reducing the

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flow and pressure., This pipe, if not periodically flushed out, will one day plug up and there will be no flow of water. A good high-pressure flush of water serves to clear out the channel. It's the same idea with the soul, frequent *prayerful self-examination* and the *Sacrament of Confession*, keeps clear those channels in which the graces from the Holy Ghost can flow to our souls! We should, additionally exercise great caution to banish within our hearts whatever might contaminate the dwelling place of Holy Spirit within us. A regimen of *spiritual exercises* and a *regular prayer life* as well as *frequent reception* of the Sacraments of the *Eucharist* and *Penance* will keep the channels flowing along nicely, and we will echo the words of the Psalmist: "*Create a clean heart within me, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.*" (*Psalm 51*).

Br. Sylvester serves our community as "maintenance monk" caring for all aspects of yard care and "fixin' up". He's a busy little fellow who is often hard to find as he's always working on some project . . . or two, or is out and about on his tractor looking for mischief! He's happy to share observations and thoughts from his perspective, which can be very interesting at times! - Fr. k.l.l. +

CONGRATULATIONS

Special congratulations to **Brother Stephen Shanahan , O.C.S.O.** of St. Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, MA. Who made his solemn profession of vows on **May 9th, A.D. 2015.**

AD MULTOS ANNOS, FRATER STEPHANI !
Many years, Brother Stephen!

The Meditation is produced by the Benedictine Community of:

Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Priory
4 Shaw Road
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www.ourladyofsevensorrows.org and go to '*Meditation*' section of the site.

PLEASE NOTE: Sunday Public Mass at the Priory Chapel commences at 9:00 a.m. followed by the Monastic Office of Terce.

PLEASE NOTE ALSO: There are No public restrooms so please plan accordingly.

PRIORY KALENDAR

Week of May 17th to May 24th - A.D. 2015

In Ascensiontide

Sunday May 17th Ascension Sunday



Monday, May 18thin the Octave

Tuesday, May 19thSt. Dunstan; B. C. - 10th cent. England . . . comm. Octave of Ascension

Wednesday, May 20th . .St. Bernardino of Sienna; C. - 15th cent. Italy . . . comm. the Octave

Thursday, May 21st . . . Octave day of the Ascension

Friday, May 22ndferia

Saturday, May 23rd . . . Vigil of Pentecost

Sunday, May 24th Witsunday - Pentecost

KALENDAR KEY: Ab. = Abbot, Abs. = Abbess, Abp. = Archbishop, Anc. = Anchorite, Ancs. = Anchoress, Ap. = Apostle, Bl. = Blessed, Br. = Brother, Bp. = Bishop, Card. = Cardinal, C. or Conf. = Confessor, Comm. = Commemoration, Dcn. = Deacon, Doct. = Doctor of the Church, Ev. = Evangelist, H. = Hermit, LBr. = Laybrother, LSr. = Laysister, K. = King, M. = Monk, **M.M. = Month's Mind (requiem for the departed)**, Myr. = Martyr, N. = Nun, Obl. = Oblate, P. = Priest, P. or Po. = Pope, Pr. = Prior, Prs. = Prioress, R. = Recluse, Q. = Queen, Ven. = Venerable, Vir. = Virgin, W. = Widow,

RELIGIOUS ORDERS: C.O. = Congregation of the Oratory –Oratorians, C.P = Congregation of the Passion – Passionists, C.S.J. = Congregation of the Society of Jesus – Jesuits, Er. Cam. = Camaldolese Hermits, F.P.O. = Franciscans of the Primitive Observance, O. Car. = Carmelite Order, O. Cart. = Carthusian Order, O.C.D. = Order of Discalced Friars = Carmelites, O.F.A. = Augustinian Order, O.F.M. = Order of Friars Minor – Franciscans, O.F.M. Cap. = Capuchins, O.P. = Order of Preachers = Dominicans (Blackfriars), O. Praem. = Order of Canons Regular – Norbertines (White Monks), O.S.B. = Order of St. Benedict – Benedictines, O.S.U = Ursulines, O.C.O. = Order of the Cistercian Observance – Trappists, O.C.S.O. = Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance = Trappists

FASTING: **A = Abstinence, F = Fast, F & A = Fast and Abstinence**

Animal News

*“See the world in a grain of sand, and a Heaven in a wild flower,
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand, and eternity in an hour.”*

- William Blake 18th cent.



Reily enjoying a Spring time afternoon snooze

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Reily was born blind. His eyes have all of their parts but none of them connected, therefore, no sight. He lives in his own little world of shadows but one of his favorite things is to bask in the warmth of the sun on his hay bed. Jack, the new cat was just out of sight sunning himself on the granite ledge just in front of Reily. A good day for all.....We are once again getting low on funds and thank those of you who help us financially for giving animals like Reily such a happy life....You are truly animal angels!

The move continues! As of this writing, Fr. Kevin is still vacuuming up lady bugs from the chapel on a daily basis and re-locating them to the great outdoors where they are most happy to be!

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