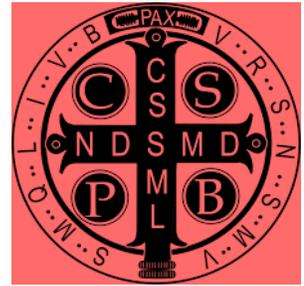




'ORA ET LABORA'



The Meditation

Whit Sunday / Pentecost - A.D. 2016
(May 15th)



Pentecost - (1505- 08)
By Jan Joest van Kalker (1455? – 1519)
Dutch religious painter

The Collect for Whit Sunday

O GOD, who as at this time didst teach the hearts of thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of thy Holy Spirit; Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.

Filled with the Holy Ghost

The Spirit communicating to mankind at Pentecost by the risen Jesus, was the greatest of all the Messiah's gifts to us. St. John the Baptist (the *Forerunner*) from the beginning, called Jesus "He who will baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (St. Matthew; Ch. 3, Vs. 11). The Holy Spirit can never be separated from the life and the work of our Redeemer. He was that boundless gift which led and inspired him during his mortal life, and who today continues to lead and inspire his Holy Church.

Christianity, born at Pentecost, is a continual outpouring of the Holy Ghost. There is an organic bond between the glorification of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, as St. John teaches us when he says: "for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (St. John; Ch. 7, Vs. 39). This is a question that must be properly understood.

The Spirit or Breath of God, in the Old Testament, is spoken of as the force by which he creates all things; "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (Gen; Ch. 1, Vs. 2). The Book of Wisdom contains these words: "For the Spirit of the Lord filleth the world" (Wisdom; Ch. 1, Vs. 7).

Mention is also made of men who were filled with the Holy Ghost and became new men. (ref. I Kings Ch. 10), These men were exceptions, singled out for a particular mission, and the Spirit remained with them for a certain period only.

The Spirit was not poured out to all mankind at that time, and had not appeared as the source of a new birth and a new life, although such an outpouring was prophesied by both Joel and Ezeckiel. The prophecy was only realized until after the glorification of Jesus, when the last remains of whatever was human, earthly, and corruptible in Him had been purged by His death and resurrection. It was then, the fullness of the Spirit which was in the God-Head streamed into the members, uniting them to Him in one common life.

It was good for the disciples, that Christ should leave them, and that their human relations should cease. Only then could He ask the Father to send them His Spirit, Whose presence and guidance, although invisible, were to give them even more than the visible presence that their Lord had brought to them.

The Holy Ghost does not, however, stand between us and our Redeemer as though He were a different power in our lives; *the two make but one*.

It may be that the third Person of the Trinity is still for some of us "the unknown God". That which Jesus said of the world is perhaps also true of us as well: "Even the Spirit of truth; whom

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the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him..." (St. John; Ch. 14, Vs. 17) . . . Who is the Spirit of truth and love.

Through his working in us, our life becomes deeper. We become more interior beings, and our intimacy with Jesus becomes more real. The Spirit is the way . . . the only way, to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. "*For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*" (I Cor. ; Ch. 2, Vs 11).

"*Filled with the Holy Ghost*" the Scriptures tell us. Pentecost is fullness. Let us take this word in its fullest meaning when we pray: "*Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of thy faithful*" – fill, or according to another Scriptural symbol, *baptize*, plunge us in thyself!

Jesus plunged us in the Spirit so that if we live by the Gift of God there will be nothing in us which will escape his influence, as strong as it is gentle. Love never says "It is enough," and the Holy Ghost is *love itself*. The Holy Ghost cannot be content with just part of our hearts: "*Do you think scripture means nothing when it tells you that the Spirit which dwells in you loves with a jealous love?*" (St. James; Ch. 4, Vs. 5 - *from the Latin Vulgate version for clarity*)

Our lives, animated by the same Spirit, take the same directions as that of Jesus. The death and resurrection of Christ are the work of the Holy Ghost. We learn everything from him, for it is written: "*no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.*" (I Cor.; Ch. 12, Vs 3). The Spirit gives himself to us with every gift and communicates himself to us as the Paraclete, our support, our Protector, our Comforter.

What strength, what security, what perfect guidance we find when our lives are filled with the Spirit to whom we surrender and who prays and works within us. Only then, are we true children of God, as the Apostle says: "*But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.*" (St. John: Ch. 1, Vs. 12). It is then that we become detached from this world; the Spirit and his love are all that we take with us when we leave it.

We are told in today's Epistle, "*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*". The spirit of Pentecost is a community spirit. It is never spoken of as a private possession in the New Testament. It is a Spirit for all, the spirit of Christ, the new Adam. That is why the Church appears to mankind at Whitsuntide, at the same time as the Holy Ghost; for she is his own abode. St. Augustine of Hippo wrote that *the Body of Christ lives by His Spirit*.

The Holy Ghost is not only given to all; he is also given *for all*, and this common dimension is to be found in every one of his gifts. Every grace that is given to each of us, is given to all, since it helps to build up the Body of Christ. We lose it if we try to keep it for ourselves only.

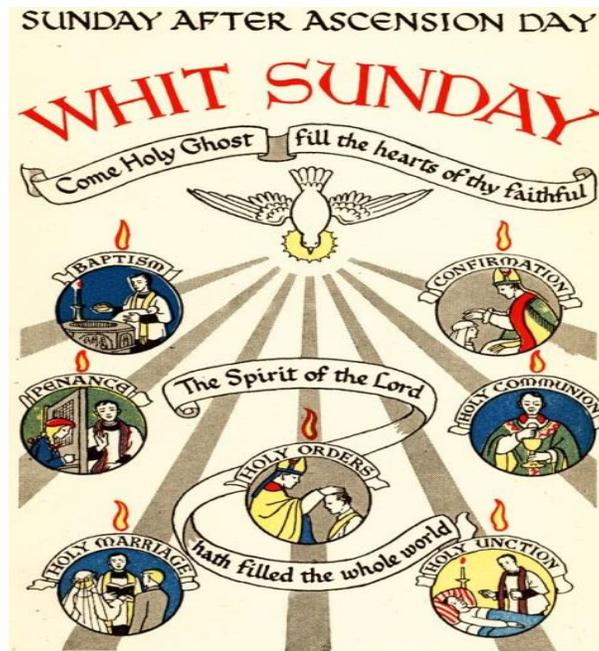
The Spirit of Pentecost is also a spirit of witness. "*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues.*" (Acts; Ch. 2., Vs. 4). The Apostles were given the gift of speaking in the many languages that were spoken within the Roman world.

The carefully bolted doors were then flung open; the Church began to carry Jesus Christ to all the world. "*But when the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father . . . he shall testify of me: And ye shall bear witness.*" (St. John; Ch. 15, Vss. 26 & 27". Now, as then, those who are filled with the Holy Spirit must give witness, not merely by words, but by our lives, that the new life of the risen Lord which we receive by the Holy Ghost is not of this world.

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Jesus said to the Samaritan woman: “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.” (St. John; Ch. 4, Vs. 10).

O Lord, give us the spirit of which the source is in your Heart, opened on Calvary, that we may no longer live, but that you may live in us!



From the Fathers of the Church

St. Cyril of Jerusalem
4th century Bishop and theologian

The Consoling Spirit

“God has given us therefore a most powerful protector and helper. He has placed at the head of His Church a wise teacher and a formidable defender. The devils are no longer to be feared, because this protector of souls overcomes them. Let us remain ever vigilant to open to him the doors of our hearts. He never tires of looking for those who are worthy of him and pours out on them his gifts.”

“ He is also called the Paraclete and Consoler, because he consoles us and encourages us in our weakness . . . When we have to suffer a thousand insults for Christ, or see ourselves in dishonor, then is suddenly heard the voice of the Holy Spirit, who encourages us, saying :

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Endure it for the Lord. It is only a little that you will have with which to fight the demons, to such an extent, that if you do not cast them away, but conserve the seal of your baptism, you will be inaccessible to Satan. . .

“If you believe, not only will you obtain pardon for your sins, but you will acquire superhuman strength . . . as much grace as you can hold will be poured out on you . . . and I may fall short of the truth, because the faith is like a vessel which cannot be measured. You will always be assisted by a consoler who will protect you as if you were a soldier, and will shelter you from your enemies. If you do not sadden him with your crimes he will grant you every kind of grace and gift, as it is written: “Do not distress God’s Holy Spirit, whose seal you bear until the day of your redemption comes.” (Ephesians: Ch. 4, Vs. 30).”

- An excerpt from St. Cyril of Jerusalem’s *Doctrine on the Holy Spirit*. PG. 33, 918 and 966-1012.

The Meditation is an online apostolate of Our **Lady of Seven Sorrows Priory** in Raymond, Maine. We are an Anglo-Catholic Benedictine contemplative community that follows the Holy Rule of St. Benedict, the Fifth-century Father of Western monasticism. We are affiliated within the Diocese of the Northeast (DNE), of the Anglican Church in America (ACA), a member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC).

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In respect to our contemplative vocation and the animals in our rescue and rehab center, we do not have guest facilities and do not receive visitors during the winter months.

Priory Kalender

For the week of

May 15th to May 21st - A.D. 2016

Whitsun-week

Sunday, May 15th Whit Sunday - Pentecost

Monday, May 16th Whit Monday

Tuesday, May 17th Tuesday in Whitsunweek

Wednesday, May 18th .. Ember Wednesday in Whitsunweek . . . *Fast and Abstinence*

Thursday, May 19th . . . Thursday in Whitsunweek.....*comm. St. Dunstan; Abp, OSB*

Friday, May 20th Ember Friday in Whitsunweek *Fast and Abstinence.*

Saturday, May 21st . . . Ember Saturday in Whitsunweek*Fast and Abstinence.*

Sunday, May 22nd Trinity Sunday

6.

Animal News from the Priory

Reily is our Shetland pony stallion. We celebrated Reily's birthday this week. He is now 17 years old. We brought him here in the back of a minivan at 6 months old and this is how he was weaned from his mother. He was going to be killed if we did not take him, as he was deemed useless as are most handicapped animals. He was born blind. All of his eye parts are present but never connected in the womb so he has only been able to see some shadows in just the right light out of one eye. This window of sight is closing as he gets older. Reily has been our official greeter all his life so you see there is a use for everyone! He calls the other horses in at the end of the day when the food is being served and always lets us know if something strange is in the barn. We have learned to work around each other so that all parties are safe, relaxed and comfortable. We thank those of you who have supported these animals so they can have a life which all living things are entitled to. Happy Birthday Reily!

Sr. Mary Francis, OSB



“When water comes down from the Heavens as rain, it is always the same in itself, yet, it produces different effects – one in a flower, another in a tree, and yet a third and a fourth in an animal or person. So the grace of the Holy Spirit, like water adapts itself to the needs of every creature that receives it. In the same way, the Holy Spirit, whose nature is always the same, simple, and indivisible, gives grace to each man as He wills.” - St. Cyril of Jerusalem



