

# *St Teresa & St John Southworth Churches, Cleveleys*

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## **Pentecost Sunday**

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## **Gospel**

### **John 20:19-23**

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, "Peace be with you.

"As the Father sent me,  
So am I sending you."

After saying this he breathed on them and said:

"Receive the Holy Spirit.

For those whose sins you forgive,  
they are forgiven;  
for those whose sins you retain,  
they are retained."

## **Reflection:**

### **Pentecost - The Farming of Ideas and Resources**

Christians adopted today's Feast to commemorate the coming of the Holy Spirit after the Resurrection of Jesus. Originally Pentecost was a celebration of the harvesting of wheat, but before Jesus it also became the Jewish celebration, fifty days after Passover, for the giving of the Commandments on Mount Sinai. Our Pentecost, fifty days after Easter, celebrates the new Commandment, the new Era, of love, as shown in the way Jesus loved others.

Of course we are used to praying at our own harvest-time. I remember someone once saying to me that when the community prays for farmers it should also pray for the whole agricultural community. Farming, they pointed out, does not live in isolation, but is dependant on the services and support of many others, and not just vets.

In our own pandemic situation right now, even though we have our gadgets and technology, we surely recognise that no-one can really survive in isolation. Recognising that has led to new hope, especially through the care and support shown by so many. Life - community life, parish life, daily human life - is a complex web of services and support being brought together. Today we invite the Holy Spirit into our lives anew remembering that the gifts given to each of us are for the common good of all. And if we are not now going to clap on Thursday evenings for NHS workers and carers in general, why not at least once give ourselves a clap for all that has been achieved so far!!

## **Notices**

Whilst we remember with sadness that at the moment we are living in an area with the largest number of deaths due to the Corona Virus, a fact which should alert us to continuing vigilance and sensible behaviour, we remember two people who have died recently - Yvoni Robinson whose Funeral is this week, and Roy White (Kay Donnellon's father) whose Funeral is the week after. We pray for them and their families, and all those whose anniversaries are at this time, including Bunty Bradley whose first anniversary is on 6th June. May they all rest in God's peace.

## **Reflections for the Coming Week**

### **Monday (Cardinal Newman)**

The condescension of the blessed Spirit is as incomprehensible as that of the Son. He has ever been the secret presence of God within creation and the voice of truth in the hearts of all rational beings, tuning them into harmony with the intimation of God's law. He is especially called the "life giving" Spirit, being the inward light of the patriarchs and prophets, the grace abiding in the Christian soul, and Lord and ruler of the Church. Therefore, let us ever praise the Father Almighty, who is the first source of all perfection, in and together with his co-equal Son and Spirit.

### **Scripture (Acts 2:1-8)**

*When Pentecost day came around, they had all met together, when suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of a violent wind, which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and there appeared to them tongues as of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak different languages as the Spirit gave them power to express themselves. Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled and each one was bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. 'Surely', they said, 'All these men speaking are Galileans?'*

### **Tuesday (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)**

We, too, are being driven back to first principles. Atonement and redemption, regeneration, the Holy Spirit, the love of our enemies, the cross and resurrection, life in Christ and Christian discipleship—all these things have become so problematic and so remote that we hardly dare speak of them. The day will come when people will be called again to utter the word of God with such power as will change and renew the world. It will be a new language which will horrify people, and yet overwhelm them with its power.

### **Scripture (Isaiah 61:1-2)**

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the news to the afflicted, to soothe the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, release to those in prison.*

### **Wednesday (Fr. Richard Rohr)**

When you no longer expect something from life, you are for all practical purposes an atheist. When you are no longer open to do something new, you might as well hang it up. The experience of the Spirit is an undeserved, unmerited becoming, a new whole greater than the sum of all the parts. It draws us out and beyond ourselves. It is radical grace. To walk in the Spirit is to allow yourself to be grabbed by God and taken into a much larger world of meaning.

### **Scripture (2 Timothy 1:6-7,13-14)**

*That is why I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift of God that you possess. God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but the spirit of power and love and self-control. Keep as your pattern the sound teaching you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. With the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, look after that thing given in trust.*

### **Thursday (St. Teresa of Avila)**

The prayer of quiet, then, is a little spark of the true love of Himself, which our Lord begins to enkindle in the soul; and his will is that the soul should understand what this love is by the joy it brings. This spark given of God, however slight it may be, causes a great crackling; it is the beginning of a great fire, which sends forth the flames of the most vehement love of God. What the soul has to do is nothing more than to be gentle and without noise. By noise I mean striving with the understanding in search of words and reflections whereby to give thanks for his grace, and gathering up the sins and imperfections to show that it does not deserve it.

### **Scripture (Titus 3:4-7)**

*When the kindness and love of God our Saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because of anything we had done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own faithful love that he saved us through the washing by which the Holy Spirit gives us new birth and new life. For God abundantly poured out the Holy Spirit on us through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that by his grace we might be made right with God and come into possession of the eternal life we hope for.*

### **Friday (Evelyn Underhill)**

From the first to the last, the emphasis is to be on God and not on ourselves. Admiring delight, not cadging demands. Faithful and childlike dependence – a clinging to the Invisible, as the most real of all realities, in all the vicissitudes of life – not mere self-expression and self-fulfilment. Disinterested collaboration in the Whole, in God's vast plan and purpose, not concentration on our own small affairs. Three kinds of generosity. Three kinds of self-forgetfulness. A confident reliance on the immense fact of His Presence, everywhere and at all times, pressing on the soul and the world by all sorts of paths and in all sorts of ways, pouring out on it His undivided love, and demanding undivided loyalty. We stand in a world completely penetrated by the living God. We are citizens of that world now; and our whole life is or should be and acknowledgement of this.

### **Scripture (Ephesians 4:2-7)**

*With all humility and gentleness and with patience, support each other in love. Take care to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together. There is one body, one Spirit just as one hope is the goal of your calling by God. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, over all and within all. On each one of us God's favour has been bestowed in whatever way Christ allotted it.*

**Martin Bennett**