



God's Spirit Poured Out

Day of Pentecost Endowment Sunday

Acts 2:1-21

When the day of Pentecost came . . . They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

May 15, 2016

Thought for the Week

Scriptures: Acts 2: 1-11 • 1 Corinthians 12 3-7 • John 20: 19-23

It has often occurred to me that everything in this blessed and beautiful universe where we dwell is a mystery. It might even be better said that we humans simply do not understand the mystery of the universe, including the mystery of ourselves. Despite the fact that we seem to be at the top of the list of all creatures in terms of intelligence we still have difficulty explaining whom we are, how we got here and ultimately where we are destined.

Despite all the research and exploration humankind has done in its long presence on this planet we still cannot explain how all the planetary objects came to be, how long they have been where they are and where *they* are destined. In short everything is a mystery.

For those of us who make the world our home, it is also a great mystery to tell how human institutions initially get their start: science, philosophy, knowledge, government and yes even religious traditions. How, for instance did the many religions of the world have their beginnings? It is often said that they had their beginnings when spirit or the Spirit came upon a certain person who began to ask questions about the present situation in the world and then to imagine a way of life that could have deeper meaning, greater coherence, a more moral character than was imaginable heretofore.

This is the way I see Jesus' profound insight to preach the kingdom of God. The gospels tell us that while John was baptizing Jesus in the Jordan River, he felt God's Spirit descend upon him, calling him into the desert where he began to reflect on how life could truly be different here on planet earth. On his return he gathered around him a certain number of disciples (learners) whom he taught and sent out into the world to continue the Spirit's work.



And so we are told that fifty days after the Jewish barley harvest (Pentecost) these disciples were gathered together in one place when suddenly they experienced the Spirit's presence in symbols of fire and wind. From frightened individuals they suddenly became courageous men who immediately began to engage the Jewish scholars with the teachings of Jesus.

So, this then is the way Christianity had its beginnings: God's Spirit inspired Jesus to preach good news; his disciples, in turn, carried on this work that has lasted until the very day that we once again celebrate Pentecost. Obviously, this is not simply a Community of Christ event that we celebrate once each year. On this day we are being challenged to carry on the very same work that Jesus handed on to the disciples. The life of the Church understandably is not limited to one moment of history, nor to one age or culture. God's Spirit witnessed at Pentecost engages all of us all the time.

So, we all need to ask ourselves whether and how we hear the Spirit's call for the good of the world and the Christian Churches of the World. We may not hear a tornado-like wind nor feel a flaming fire, but, for sure, we will feel the Spirit's call to a new Pentecost for our day and place.

Prayer Thought – Tanzania

Lord of all space, we thank you for knowing us. We thank you for family, friends, the earth and all its bounty. For your love and your creation; O God, we offer our praise.

For all who are affected by our choices, for the selflessness to admit our wrongs, for courage to forgive others as you forgive us; O God, may we be ministers of reconciliation and peace.

We pray today for all members of the human family remembering the people of Tanzania. So many of Your children around the world struggle to find acceptance and love. Guide us as we work to find ways to make peace with our brothers and sisters around the world. Show us how we may make a global family where all needs are met, where all are comforted and all may know peace.

Guide us as we strive for peace in our homes. Help us look beyond our own needs to provide ways to healing and resources that support thriving, healthy families throughout the world.

Beloved Creator, you have watched generations come and go throughout the stretches of time. We are reaping the harvest they planted. And we plant for those who follow after us. Grace our harvesting and our planting. We want to do our part in the creation of a universe at peace with itself. We pray in and through Jesus Christ, Amen

Stewardship Thought

"The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you." John 14:26

The materialism of our society lures us to concentrate more on what we want than on what God wants for us. The relativism of our world tells us that we should be tolerant of all things, that there is no absolute truth. Pray to the Holy Spirit to put the right words in our mouths when challenged about our faith.

Quotes of Peace for the Week

World Peace Day (9/21/16) is envisioned to become a moment of global unity - it is up to each and every one of us to make this a reality.

Jeremy Gilley

*I think it's naive to pray for **world peace** if we're not going to change the form in which we live.*

Godfrey Reggio

*If it came to a magic genie, I would ask him for two extra wishes. One would be that no one would have to live with the muscular dystrophy disease or any disease. And the second one would be **world peace**, that we just stop fighting, talk about things, and we could live in harmony once again, like God intended us to do.*

Mattie Stepanek