

# Reflections on the Gospel



## THE SAVING WORD

MATTHEW

PENTECOST SUNDAY / A

31 MAY 2020

Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

### ■ The word of the Lord.

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia! / Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful / and kindle in them the fire of your love. / Alleluia!**

#### GOSPEL

In 20:19-23

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.**

*As the Father sent me, so I send you: Receive the Holy Spirit.*

In the evening of 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,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, '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.'

### ■ The Gospel of the Lord.

#### A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



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#### RECONCILING SPIRIT

Today's rich array of scriptural readings brings out the Church's sense of being a community equipped by the Spirit to take up the mission of Jesus.

The first reading, from the Acts of the Apostles, locates the imparting of the Spirit on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, a pilgrimage feast celebrated fifty days after Passover.

In biblical tradition, wind and fire signal the presence and power of God, as when Israel stood before God at Mount Sinai. What is described here seems to be a central fiery mass from which distinct 'tongues' ('as if of fire': not real fire!) separate off and come to rest on individuals.

The sense is that the Spirit, which rested solely upon Jesus during his own life, is now, as he promised (Luke 24:49), being distributed among those who are to carry on his mission – in first instance to Israel, eventually 'to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8).

The variety of people who hear and understand the testimony of the apostles in their own language foreshadows this worldwide mission. In many languages the Church will communicate the single message of God's reconciling love.

The Gospel (John 20:19-23) associates the gift of the Spirit more closely with the resurrection. On Easter Sunday evening the risen Lord breathes out upon his disciples the Spirit that will empower them to take up the mission that he has received from the Father. Central to this will be passing on the reconciliation ('whose sins you shall forgive ...') that he, as Lamb of God (1:29), has brought into the world.

**Brendan Byrne, SJ**

#### FIRST READING

Acts 2:1-11

**A reading from the Acts of the Apostles**

*They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak different languages.*

When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues 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 foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. 'Surely' they said 'all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome – Jews and proselytes alike – Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.'

### ■ The word of the Lord.

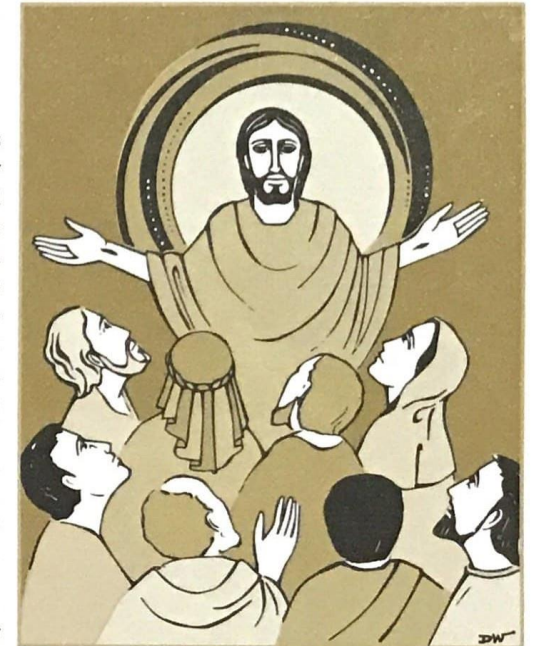
#### RESP PSALM

Ps 103:1, 24, 29-31, 34. R. v. 30

**R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth. (or Alleluia.)**

1. Bless the Lord, my soul! / Lord God, how great you are! / How many are your works,  
O Lord! / The earth is full of your riches. **R.**

2. You take back your spirit, they die, /  
returning to the dust from which they came. /  
You send forth your spirit, they are created; /  
and you renew the face of the earth. **R.**



3. May the glory of the Lord last for ever! /  
May the Lord rejoice in his works! / May my  
thoughts be pleasing to him. / I find my joy in  
the Lord. **R.**

#### SECOND READING

1 Cor 12:3-7, 12-13

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**

*In the one Spirit we were all baptised, making one body.*

No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord' unless he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose.



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Parish Office Hours: Mon-Fri: 10:00am-3:00pm

## Catholic Parish of St Kevin Eastwood



Weekend Masses: Vigil Sat 5:30pm,

Sun 7:30am, 9:00am, 10:30am, 12noon (Chinese) & 6:00pm

Weekday Masses: Mon – Thurs. 7:30am, Fri 5:00pm

Sacrament of Reconciliation: Sat 5:00-5:20pm

Our Lady of Miraculous Medal Rosary & Novena: Tue 7-7:30pm

Cenacle Marian Movement of Laity: Thurs 7:00pm

(Holy Family Chapel)

### Pentecost Sunday – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020



**Our Deceased:** Eric and Eileen Smith, Geoff Clarke, Young Hwan Ho, Yong Min Ho, Young Seok Seo, Soo Woog Jin, Maria Hur, Felix Beins, Cecile Beins, Jan Brayan, Mary Duck, Ces Regan, Roy & Bessie Landon and deceased members of Landon, Pigott, Stewart families, John & Bonnie Bowdern, Leslie & Isobel Johnson.

**Our Sick:** Robert Lauw, Tenille Moujalli, June Phelan and Anne McIntyre, Adhy Guna S., Daisy & Nur Gouw and Henry Rheinberger

**Upcoming Feast Day:** St Kevin 3<sup>rd</sup> June, St Marcellin Champagnat 6<sup>th</sup> June

#### Parish News:

- **The NSW Government has agreed to further ease the restrictions on churches & places of worship starting on June 1, allowing 50 people inside, at a time, for private prayer, Confessions, Masses, Eucharistic Adoration, etc.; Weddings will be permitted with 20 attendees. Click [here](#) for the directives for Churches & Liturgies from the Archdiocese.**
- **Following the easing of restrictions on public gatherings, our Church will be open for weekday Masses from Mon, 1<sup>st</sup> June. Usual Mass times will apply, Mon–Thu, 7.30am. Eucharistic Adoration will resume on Fri, 5<sup>th</sup> June from 4pm-5pm followed by a Mass. Weekend Masses will resume starting with the Vigil Mass on Sat 6<sup>th</sup> of June at 5:30pm. Usual Sunday Mass times will apply: 7:30am, 9am, 10:30am and 6pm. First 50 people are allowed in the church. Private prayer will continue, Mon-Fri from 8am-9am**
- **Please observe the guidelines that we have put in place when visiting the Church. These guidelines are posted on our church doors and on our [parish website](#).**
- **We will still be recording the weekend Mass and upload it on the [parish website](#), [YouTube channel](#) and [Facebook page](#) every Sunday at 7.30am for those who are still unable to visit the Church at this time.**
- **The Sacrament of Confirmation is indefinitely postponed. Other sacramental programs are still on hold. Parish Morning Tea, Exercise Class and Children's Liturgy, are still suspended until further notice.**
- **With strict limits on the re-opening of churches, Catholics across the country have also been asked to register their attendance via <https://www.massregister.com.au/> in line with the Federal Government's 3-step framework for easing COVID-19 restrictions.**
- **We thank all those who signed the Archbishop's petition to ease restrictions on churches and places of worship in NSW. Other parts of Australia have not yet achieved parity between churches and other venues, and so you might still like to [sign up to the revised petition at openourchurches.com.au](#).**
- **The parish office is currently unattended. The best way to reach us is by email: [parish@stkevinseastwood.org.au](mailto:parish@stkevinseastwood.org.au). For urgent matters ☎ Fr Martin at 0414 841 928.**

**Pentecost Sunday, John 20:19–23 (Gospel commentary provided by Liturgy Brisbane:**

**[www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/prepare/sunday-readings-and-family-prayer/](http://www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/prepare/sunday-readings-and-family-prayer/))**

The gospel for today consists in the first part of the gospel that we heard on the Second Sunday of Easter. This shorter passage describes the appearance of the risen Lord to the assembled disciples on the first Easter Day.

As already noted, in contrast to the account in Luke's gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, John presents Jesus' resurrection, his giving the Spirit and the commissioning of the disciples in a single unified sequence. This momentous ensemble of events is conveyed in just a few short verses; they must not be hurried through.

The text falls into two parts. First, Jesus appears to the fear-filled disciples and greets them with peace, not just once but twice. This two-fold greeting should be given strong emphasis. There is no reproach from Jesus, no word of condemnation for the disciples' capitulation to their fear. There is only the double greeting of peace, followed by a reassuring demonstration that he is indeed the crucified and risen One.

Second, Jesus commissions the disciples and breathes out his Spirit upon them. As they themselves have been forgiven, so are they sent out as missionaries of mercy.

This deceptively brief text serves to bring the Easter season to a close on a wonderfully affirmative note.



#### **GRACE- a new reflection!**

I well remember when I was a student for the priesthood in the early 1980's being taught; "that grace is the gift of the Holy Spirit." I thought to myself well, I won't dispute that, but the real challenge now is to make this term realistic for people away from an academic setting. Only recently I came across a statement that said, "grace is best seen as the first step for people who are trying to do God's will." Immediately I thought to myself yes, I think I can expand on this! The 1<sup>st</sup> reality is to remember that no-one is able to program a *graced moment* in life, it does not work like that. The 2<sup>nd</sup> reality is that *graced moments* can and do come to people in many ways that can't be anticipated.

Some examples of *graced moments* could well be when someone is finally able to move on and not be controlled by a long term and destructive toxic relationship. Another example is the self-confidence to stop being destructively influenced to an addiction that could well be to alcohol, drug usage or online pornography. A modern-day reality is that the choices of things for people to be addicted to are so much more than ever in history. The key to appreciating *graced moments* is making the effort to start and then nurture a relationship with God or as said in AA 'believing in a power beyond ourselves.' Fr Martin R Maunsell