



ST PETER THE FISHERMAN

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

ST. MICHAEL - HOLY NAME OF JESUS - SACRED HEART - ST. TIMOTHY
CHERRYFIELD MACHIAS LUBEC CAMPOBELLO ISLAND

PENTECOST SUNDAY



"Pentecost," painted by Jean Restout, is an oil on canvas painted in 1732. Jean Restout came from a family of painters and did many religious and mythological pictures. He also worked for a time for Frederick the Great. This enormous canvas, a masterpiece of 18th-century religious painting, once adorned the refectory (dining room) of the Abbey of Saint-Denis outside Paris. With its exaggerated view from below and the extreme perspective of the rows of columns to the left and right, the work is reminiscent of Baroque ceiling paintings.

Acts 2:1-11

Psalm 103

1 Corinthians 12: 3-13

John 20: 19-23

Today is Pentecost Sunday which occurs fifty days after the Resurrection of Jesus and marks the end of the Easter Season. While for us it may be the end of the Easter Season, for the Apostles and disciples gathered together on this day, it was the beginning of something new, something grand.

We read in the first reading that a sound like a powerful wind from heaven filled the house they were in, and it was as if tongues of fire came to rest on each of them. At this moment they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages which they all understood in their own tongue. The many individuals gathered in the room suddenly were unified by the power of the Holy Spirit as they all heard each other preaching in their own languages about the marvels of God. What a stark contrast to the story about the Tower of Babel, when after proclaiming the marvels of their own deeds, the men who were building the tower were struck dumb with different languages whom no one could understand. Unification, the making of one mind and one heart, is that toward which the Spirit moves us.

As the Church began to grow, it began to grow exponentially after the day of Pentecost. Jesus had promised the Apostles that it was good and necessary for Him to return to the Father because once He did, He would send us the Advocate, the Spirit. After Jesus came

and taught them the Good News, and after He gave them the great commission at the Ascension to go out into all the world to preach this Good News, it would be His Spirit that would animate their faith and give them the strength to overcome any obstacle that stood in their way in order to build the Church. What He knew foremost was that sometimes the greatest obstacle they would have to overcome would be themselves, and the same stands true for us today.

We are all members of the Body of Christ, and we all have a particular job to do. Being members of one body, however, means that our particular jobs must work toward a unified goal, and that unified goal is to accomplish the will of God. The Spirit of God is that which holds the Body of Christ together. He gives it strength to endure under the weight of the world. What, then, do we do when sometimes we find ourselves in that proverbial battle between self and God, in the struggle between giving up my own will to do the will of God? In those moments we should turn to the Holy Spirit in prayer.

We receive the Holy Spirit at our baptism, and along with His presence, we receive the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are: Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of the Lord. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are: charity, gentleness, kindness, peace, joy, goodness, generosity, modesty, chastity, patience, faithfulness, and self-control. When we are aware of what the Spirit offers us in gift and fruit, our hearts can more easily open to them, and once we desire them and allow them in, we will notice our disposition of heart begin to change. Those who practice the gifts of the Holy Spirit are bound to live the

fruits. When this happens, the battle between self and God, between wanting to do my will over God's will begins to fade. What is fading, though, is not simply my will, but my self. When my self fades and gives way to the presence of God, then I am becoming one in mind and heart with God and with the Body of Christ. This should be our goal in the battle so never give up.

The Feast of Pentecost is a great feast day to be leading us into a return of the public celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Over the past two months many of us within the Body of Christ have lost the wind in our sails, perhaps not so much spiritually as physically and emotionally. Social distancing, face coverings, stay-at-home orders, self-quarantines, and everything else associated with this pandemic has wreaked havoc on our community and society at large. This opportunity to gather at the Eucharist is what we need to put the wind back in our sails, if indeed we are gathering for the right reason.

Our primary purpose for coming to Mass is to worship God and to give Him thanks for the very many blessings we have and continue to receive. Jesus is the source of our strength, and while He cannot be with us personally – outside the Eucharist – He is always with us in His Spirit. As the coming days approach for our first public Masses, spend some time asking yourself if you are ready to move on from the fourteenth station? What have you learned over these past months of isolation? Did you find yourself isolated from God? Did you need to watch a Mass online or on TV to find the intimacy with Jesus that we need to sustain us? As the Psalm says, are our hearts yearning for God like a deer for flowing streams? Today let us rise and hear the words

of Jesus to the Apostles in today's Gospel ringing in our ears, "As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you. Receive the Holy Spirit."

With prayers for your health and God's abundant blessings,

Fr. Philip