

**THE FEAST OF PENTECOST / WHITSUNDAY**

Text: St. John 14:23-31

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE ✠ SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

*“Whoever calls on the Name of the LORD shall be saved.”* So speaks the HOLY SPIRIT through Saint Peter as he stood and preached to his fellow Jews on the first day of Pentecost in the infant Christian Church. The SPIRIT of God comes not to glorify Himself. He speaks only the Words given to Him by the FATHER, the same Words fulfilled in the Words and work of the SON, the very Word of God incarnate. Therefore, the HOLY SPIRIT speaks these Words of salvation, *“Whoever calls on the Name of the LORD shall be saved.”*

What is this Name? It is the very Name God placed upon you when a humble pastor poured the waters of Holy Baptism over you. For His Name is a sign and seal given among men by which we are saved—FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT. It is by the Name of the Triune God that the HOLY SPIRIT gathers the Church together from every tribe, from every nation, from every tongue.

It is in this Name alone that God’s holy people are gathered together with one accord. In this Name, the scattered people of God are brought together from the nations and the many are made one—one Body—*“even as the one Cup is filled with wine of many grapes and one Bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one Body in CHRIST.”* So it is, that the Bride of the Lamb who was slain and yet lives, being many, are made one in CHRIST.

In and with this Name, the Name of the Triune God, the confused tongues of a rebellious people are no longer confused but set free to confess JESUS, our SAVIOR, as LORD of all. Therefore, no longer are the people of God scattered because of their rebellion. By the grace of God, they are united in one Body by a common confession, a confession which can be found only in the language of the One True Faith—faith in CHRIST JESUS, where God’s people are made one in JESUS for the glory of God and the service and love of their neighbor.

That, my friends, is what we celebrate this day. For Pentecost is a day of liberation—a liberation of the tongues and souls of men through tongues of fire that are the HOLY SPIRIT. In the pouring out of the HOLY SPIRIT, the curse of Babel is undone. No longer do God’s people wander as vagabonds throughout the earth. We, the many, now speak with one voice, making one confession—our LORD and SAVIOR is JESUS, the CHRIST, the SON of the Living God.

Yes, today is the day we celebrate the coming of the Helper, the Comforter, the Counselor, the HOLY SPIRIT who proceeds forth from the FATHER and the SON and with the FATHER and the SON together is worshiped and glorified. He is the very same SPIRIT who

speaks His holy Word of truth through the Prophets, the Apostles, disciples and faithful pastors, to create faith in the hearts of God's holy people down through the ages. He proceeds forth from the FATHER and the SON for just such a purpose; to *“teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all things that [CHRIST JESUS] said to you.”*

No longer are your souls blown about like a breath upon the four winds. You are now filled by the Mighty Wind, and that Mighty Wind is the very breath of God. The people of God are now free to speak with a multitude of tongues, yet they speak as of one voice, in a language unlearned and given as a gracious gift from God—the language of faith. With this gift, you are edified and made holy.

This one Body, speaking with one voice the language of faith, confesses each LORD's Day that we are by nature sinful and unclean, having sinned against God in thought, word, and deed, by all that we have done and by what we have left undone. Confessing with one voice, the one Body then receives from God His mercy and love as He speaks back to us His Words of absolution.

That one Body hears with one heart what God speaks into each of you—His gift of love and grace in the message that JESUS, His only begotten SON, was given to die for you, and for His sake, you are forgiven all your sins. With these words, you receive that peace which JESUS promised to leave with you, that you may come to a blessed end with hearts untroubled by fears of Satan and the grave; untroubled by a conscience burdened by sin. In joyful response with one voice as one Body in CHRIST, we sing with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, praising God and acknowledging Him to be the LORD.

Yet, our old Adam resists the HOLY SPIRIT. He desires a different message. He would have the SPIRIT speak *our* words and not the Words of the FATHER and the SON who sent Him. In resisting the Holy Spirit, we call God and His Prophets and Apostles, His Disciples and appointed undershepherds, liars, and imagine within our hearts that we have a better truth, a better way.

If we truly loved JESUS, we would rejoice when we hear His Words, but instead, we rebel and curse them because they do not fit into our image of JESUS. We do not want to follow all things which JESUS has taught. We would rather cherry-pick and choose what we feel is right for us. We would rather follow our own imaginings or listen to the voice of the ruler of this world, who is Satan. We tell ourselves that we believe in JESUS as the SON of God and that is enough. But know this my friends, even Satan and his demons know that JESUS is the CHRIST, and they tremble.

Repent! Repent and receive the peace of God which passes all human understanding. Repent and hear the Word of God, the whole Word of God, so that your hearts may not be troubled, and you will have no reason to be afraid. Let every one of you remember your Baptism where you received the Name of God upon your breast and upon your forehead

marking you as one redeemed by CHRIST the Crucified. For it is there, in the waters of Holy Baptism, that you received the HOLY SPIRIT. Your Baptism is your Pentecost. There, in those Holy Waters, you were born again of water and the SPIRIT.

Through Baptism, you stand as the rightful heirs of Pentecost. Through Baptism you stand in the heritage of the Apostles and Prophets of God. The Word of Pentecost, that blessed utterance given by the SPIRIT through the Apostles, is yours. Where is it to be found? In the glorious, life-giving Words of Holy Scripture.

In Holy Scripture, we hear the voice of the HOLY SPIRIT, and in hearing Him we hear the FATHER, and in hearing the FATHER we hear the SON, the incarnate Word of God and giver of Life. We hear all this by means of the Helper, the HOLY SPIRIT, who inspired men of old to write the very Words and the very thoughts and will of God, revealing His grace and mercy to poor miserable sinners such as you and I.

The SPIRIT was sent in JESUS' Name, to speak not His own Words, but those of the FATHER and JESUS His SON. For He is humble and speaks not of His own accord but speaks only the Words given Him by the FATHER and the SON from whom He proceeds. His Words can be nothing more and nothing less for the FATHER, the SON, and HOLY SPIRIT are one. Through that Triune Word of love, the SPIRIT teaches us and reminds us of what JESUS has said and done, who JESUS is, and who we are in Him. He takes what belongs to JESUS and delivers it to the world for whom JESUS died. In this, the HOLY SPIRIT delivers God's peace to you.

Pentecost is not over. Though we may hear no rushing wind and see no tongues of fire, yet, we are given the language of faith. The HOLY SPIRIT gives to you the Words of faith in JESUS to speak back to God, and when you cannot find the words, He, Himself, prays for you, interceding *"with groanings that cannot be uttered."* This is the real and ongoing work of the HOLY SPIRIT, work which He delivers to you in Word, water, bread, and wine.

It is for this reason that the HOLY SPIRIT was sent on the day of Pentecost: to put the Word of God on our lips and in our hearts, the Word that says, *"Jesus died for you and for His sake you are forgiven and have eternal life in His Name,"* the same Word that brings us to our knees crying out, *"Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy."* This same Word gives us ears to hear His loving response, *"I forgive you all your sins."*

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE ✠ SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

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