

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The Lord has ascended into heaven, and sits at the Right Hand of God the Father. But He has not left us as orphans. He has not left us alone. His salvific Work reconciled us to God, making God the Father our Father, by the work of the God Man who became our brother.

The same Living God Man was received up in the bright cloud to His rightful throne, the throne He has had from eternity, the throne He will fill for eternity, the throne upon which heaven is centered, the heart and center of the New Creation.

He came down from heaven. He took on your Flesh, sanctifying flesh. In that Flesh He suffered and died for your sins. When God dies, death is sanctified. When God is buried, the tomb is sanctified, set apart as the place where the faithful wait for Christ's return.

With that Flesh He rose from the dead, assuring your resurrection. And fully Man, God the Son returned to heaven. It is a Truth we believe, teach and confess. It is the Truth on which our faith is founded. But at the same time we confess our Lord to reign in heaven, we confess Him to be with us. For He promised "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age." Faith takes Him at His Word. We await His return in faith.

This day we celebrate a promise fulfilled, a remarkable miracle, a Divine Gift. On the 50<sup>th</sup> day after the Passover Sabbath God did what He had promised through His Prophet Joel – He poured out His Spirit upon men. It is not that before Pentecost men didn't have the Spirit. The Spirit was present and active in the creation, the work of the Triune God. Pharaoh testified that Joseph had the Spirit of God. Moses wrote by the Spirit of God.

God took of the Spirit He had given Moses and distributed the Gifts to the 70 who would help Moses lead Israel. The craftsmen that fashioned the Tabernacle and its furnishings did so by the Spirit. Samuel had the Spirit of God. The Spirit of the Lord was upon the Judges of Israel. David wrote "take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." The Prophets preached and wrote by the Spirit. The Spirit has always been with the people of God. But at Pentecost, that eternal Spirit came in a new way, a visible way, a miraculous way.

Before He went away, the Lord promised the Holy Spirit to His disciples. And He taught them about that Spirit, the Helper. He taught them that the Father loves those who keep the Word of Christ, and the Father and the Son come to such a one and make Their home with him. The Spirit indwelling the believer fulfils that promise. So the work of the Spirit is to teach you all things, to bring to your mind the remembrance of all the things that Christ said.

When the devout men gathered in Jerusalem saw tongues of fire and heard men speaking in modern, known languages, they did not say "Look at the fire", or "Listen to the wind", but rather "we hear, each in our own language... the wonderful works of God."

There was certainly fire. There was a rushing wind. But the hearing was most important. For faith comes by hearing, and that hearing by the Holy Spirit, working through the Word of God. And as it was for them, so it is for you.

“If anyone loves me,” the Lord taught His disciples, “he will keep my Word.” Jeremiah promised it. He promised that the Word which had been external to Israel, scribed on tablets of stone, that same Word would be written in the hearts and minds of the True Israel, the heirs of the New Testament.

The keeping of the Word of God is an expression of love for God. The keeping of the Word of God is the external manifestation of faith held internally. Truth Incarnate ascended, leaving Truth for you in His Holy Word. The Son speaks, the Spirit teaches, and you who have the Spirit discern the Mysteries of God.

Inasmuch as you have hungered for His Word, inasmuch as you have meditated on His Word, inasmuch as you have immersed yourself in His Word, that is evidence of the indwelling of the Spirit. And love, true love, the love of God, is worked by the same Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies, and keeps. He does it for you. He does it for the whole Christian Church. He calls you by the Gospel.

So faith comes by the Spirit, the Word is received by the Spirit, and the Spirit leads you in the keeping of the Word in your life and works, which returns that love to God, and extends that love to neighbor. You no longer live by the flesh, but by the Spirit, the Spirit of Life, the Spirit of Love.

The Lord teaches of the one who loves Him, the one who keeps His Word “My Father will love him, and we will come and make Our home with him.” Pentecost is a visible manifestation of the miracle promised by God the Son – God the Spirit indwelling men. On Pentecost the Spirit did not descend on only one of the disciples. The work of the Spirit is to gather. He takes many and makes them one. The blessed Unity that God alone can give He gives to His Church.

He, that Spirit, the Spirit of the Living God, is the Helper, the Comforter, the Counselor; your Helper, your Comforter, your Counselor; the Person of the Holy Trinity that proceeds from the Father and the Son, sent by the Father in the Name of the Son, in Christ’s Name. And that is where Pentecost comes to you.

The Spirit whose fiery coming we celebrate this day is the same Spirit whose watery coming brought God to you, brought God into you, and brought you to God. Your baptism is your Pentecost, the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, in which the Spirit that came upon the Eleven and Matthias in Jerusalem now fills you.

By the Spirit you are made a child of God. And by that Spirit working through the Word of God you are convicted of your sins, and seek the remission that faith knows is yours in Christ alone.

It is Christ who worked wonders in the heavens and the earth, as the Prophet promised. For He came down from heaven, and shed His Blood for you. He defeated death, showed Himself to many, worked miracles, taught, and then was taken up.

Those are the wonderful works of God of which the Eleven and Matthias spoke on Pentecost. But before He went away, He promised the very Spirit that fills you, the Spirit that leads you to trust that in the Blood of Christ is the full remission of all your sins. The Spirit works through

the Word to grant you heavenly wisdom, to enlighten you. For to know God is true enlightenment, enlightenment by the heavenly Light of the Holy Spirit. And by the same Word, by Baptism, by Holy Absolution, and by the Sacrament of the Altar the Spirit sanctifies you. He makes you holy. You who are declared to be holy in Christ grow in that holiness by the Spirit.

It is the same Spirit that brings you to the altar this day, to eat the Body of Christ your Lord and to drink His Blood. It is by the Spirit that you receive worthily, trusting that in that Medicine of Immortality you receive the help and the comfort that God has promised to you, the Holy Church, the Bride of Christ, the Remnant whom the Lord calls. For it is you, who, by faith worked by the Holy Spirit, it is you who call upon the Name of the Lord and are saved.

“Peace I leave with you” said the Lord, “My peace I give to you.” Christ is our Peace. He has reconciled us to the Father. That peace, a peace that the world cannot know, comes to you by the work of the Holy Spirit. Having that peace, your heart is not troubled, nor are you afraid, even in the face of tribulation, even in the face of death. So it is that the Spirit keeps you – He keeps you steadfast in true faith.

You have God’s Spirit, dear Christian. God is with you. He has purchased and won you. And God fills you with His Living Spirit, the Comforter, the Comforter that remains with you, that you be prepared for the great and awesome coming of the Day of the Lord.

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