

PENTECOST

Hymns: 224, 232, 231, 236

THE INTROIT

(Wis.1:7; Ps.68:1,3)

P: The Spirit of the Lord filleth the world:

C: Hallelujah!

P: Let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God:

C: Yea, let them exceedingly rejoice. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

P: Let God arise; let His enemies be scattered:

C: let them also that hate Him flee before Him.

THE COLLECT

O God, who didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful people by sending to them the light of Thy Holy Spirit, grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgement in all things and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, who with Thee and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end.

The FIRST LESSON

Joel 2:28-32 (NKJV)

And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

THE GRADUAL

(Ps.104:30; Liturgical text)

P: Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

P: Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created:

C: and Thou renewest the face of the earth. Hallelujah!

P: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful:

C: and kindle in them the fire of Thy love. Hallelujah!

The EPISTLE

Acts 2:1-13 (NKJV)

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia,

Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs; we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.” So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “Whatever could this mean?”

Others mocking said, “They are full of new wine.”

The SENTENCE for the Season

(Psalm 104:30)

P: Hallelujah! Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit, they are created:

C: and Thou renewest the face of the earth. Hallelujah!

The HOLY GOSPEL

St. John 14:23-31 (NKJV)

Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.

“These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I.

“And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me. But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.”

Joel 2:28-32 — “There Shall Be Deliverance”

INTRODUCTION

I. AND IT SHALL BE AFTERWARD, I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT ON ALL FLESH

II. AND IT SHALL BE, WHOEVER CALLS IN THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED

III. THERE SHALL BE DELIVERANCE

CONCLUSION

Joel 2:28-32 — “There Shall Be Deliverance”

Grace, mercy, and peace to you all from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Today is the Festival of Pentecost and the appointed Old Testament Reading is Joel 2:28-32:

And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

INTRODUCTION

Today is Whitsunday, or White Sunday. It bears this name because of the white robe of righteousness received by the saints of God in connection with Baptism. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Church and upon the world so that the righteousness that is by faith would be proclaimed throughout the world for the salvation of all who would hear and have faith generated within them. On this day of Pentecost with the outpouring of the promised Holy Spirit, three thousand heard the Gospel and were turned in their hearts so that they received the promise of forgiveness and the Holy Spirit through Baptism. Thus this day has been named Whitsunday, the day of the white robes with which the saints are clothed. In the reading from the prophet Joel the promise is given with regard to this blessed day, **“And there shall be deliverance.”** This is the promise to which all saints cling with all their hearts, even to this very day.

I. AND IT SHALL BE AFTERWARD, I WILL POUR OUT MY SPIRIT ON ALL FLESH

Our text begins with the words, **“And it shall be afterward, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.”**

The extent of this promise is enormous, for this is the promise that the preaching of the Gospel has no limits. For the Gospel is the means by which the Holy Spirit goes forth from God into the world. With Jesus’ ascension into heaven, having accomplished all that He had come from heaven to accomplish, now the Holy Spirit was free to go forth from the Father and the Son by means of the Gospel. Now that the fleshly work of the incarnation has been fulfilled with the birth, ministry, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, now the time had come that

the Holy Spirit could proceed into all the world through the preaching of the Church. Those who had been enslaved by the devil so that they sat in darkness would now hear the Gospel and be called by the Holy Spirit to be baptized into the name of God to live in the freedom that Christ purchased by means of His blood for His body, the Church. No longer would the Church be limited to a certain locale. Now the Church would be empowered to go forth into all the world by the power of the Holy Spirit to carry the power of God unto salvation, that is, the Gospel, to all the world.

This is God's plan even from eternity. God's will has always been that all people should be called into His Holy Communion to enjoy the blessings of His kingdom. To insure this, He established the Church of the Old Testament, so that a people would be preserved among the many nations, tribes, and tongues, a people of faith through whom the promise of Messiah or Christ would continue to be preached and practiced. In the fullness of time, the Old Testament was fulfilled by the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. At the end of His ministry, Jesus instituted the New Testament in His blood by which the Holy Communion would continue in the Church forevermore. Then Jesus went to the cross where this Testament was ratified by His death and the new life of holiness was confirmed by His resurrection.

When Jesus took His disciples atop the mount of the ascension, He sent them back to the holy city where they were to wait for the day of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. For ten days they waited and prayed and feasted upon the LORD. Then the fullness of the tenth day came to pass and the Holy Spirit came upon those who were gathering into the name of the LORD. He came with mighty power, power as had never been witnessed by mankind previously. Luke records in today's Gospel reading:

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Yes, on the day of the promise they were all gathered with one accord in the same place. This is why the gathering of the saints is called the Church, the ecclesia, the called out. Those who were waiting on the LORD were not scattered about, sitting in their own homes, worshipping by themselves in whatever manner that they chose for themselves. No! They were gathered together in the SAME Place and with ONE ACCORD. Yes in the same place they were gathered and were *homothumadon*, of one mind or will. What this means is that they were gathered together to receive the liturgy of the mass. They were partaking together in the Holy Communion.

What is the promise given in connection with the Holy Communion? The promise is the forgiveness of sins and unanimity or oneness. The promise is the renewal of faith though the oneness of the body of Christ receiving together the life poured out with Christ's blood. The promise is the work that the Holy Spirit accomplishes through the means of grace administered purely and in accord with the pure Word in the holy catholic Church.

Thus Pentecost is the day of blood and fire and pillars of smoke. Red is the liturgical color of this day of the Holy Spirit. As the saints gather as the Church to partake of the blood of Christ and to offer up endless prayers symbolized by the smoke, the Holy Spirit works His miracle of renewal in the body of Christ. All who have ears to hear do hear the calling of the

Holy Spirit and they are cut to the heart so that they come to the Holy Supper by means of the grace imparted through Baptism and they are made white in the blood of the Lamb. And this witness has gone forth into all the world as the Holy Spirit has carried the Church's preaching to the corners of the earth and established congregations wherever this preaching has been received.

II. AND IT SHALL BE, WHOEVER CALLS IN THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED

On the great day of the LORD, the day when the Son of God was made black with our sins so that even the sun and moon gave witness to the darkness, as the sun became dark and the moon was turned to blood, on this great day of the LORD salvation was accomplished for all the world. All sin was taken by the Lamb of God. All sin was carried to the grave to be buried forever. On the third day God demonstrated that sin had no power over the sinless Son of God and Jesus rose again from the dead to show that we too shall be raised with our bodies to live forever in the freedom of forgiveness.

This is the message of the Gospel. This is what the Holy Spirit has come to the world from the Father and the Son to testify unto the world and especially to the Church. Thus is fulfilled the promise declared by Joel: **“And it shall be, whoever calls in the name of the LORD shall be saved.”**

I am not sure why our translations say *“whoever calls ON the name of the LORD shall be saved,”* because the text clearly says **“whoever calls IN the name of the LORD shall be saved.”**

Do you perceive the distinction? This is why Jesus warns that not all who call **“Lord! Lord!”** shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.

This is the distinction that the Holy Spirit has come to the world to make unmistakably clear. Unfortunately, even among Christians, there are few who truly hear what the Spirit says.

The promise is not that salvation belongs to those who call upon the name of the LORD. The promise is actually the exact reverse of this. The promise is that all who are in the name of the LORD will call IN His name and be saved in His name. It is not the action of calling upon the name of the LORD that saves. Rather, it is the salvation worked by the Holy Spirit through the means of grace that moves the one who is saved to call out in the name of salvation.

Repentance unto true faith is not an act of choosing to believe and it is not a decision to commit oneself to follow Jesus. Far from it! Repentance unto true faith is the work that the Holy Spirit brings about by means of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit works through the Church so that the Gospel is proclaimed. Through this preaching He converts the soul, bringing to life hearts that are dead in trespasses and unbelief. Through the preaching of the Church, little children of all ages are brought to receive the Gospel that has been comprehended by the water of Baptism, and this washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit is applied to give the new birth of faith to those who receive it. Then the Holy Spirit calls the newborn members of Christ's body to partake of the oneness of the body and to receive again and again the life of Christ's blood. The administration of the means of grace is the very life of the Church, life that is worked by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

III. THERE SHALL BE DELIVERANCE

And in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD

has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

For many centuries Mount Zion and Jerusalem were the center of the universe. The LORD established this central location for His Church to gather. Until the day of Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the saints were to gather in this one, divinely appointed place. This was the central place where salvation would be accomplished and then go forth into the world. Yes, in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem the deliverance that we all desperately need and desire has come to be. The deliverance from all the consequences of sin is now available for all. The Holy Spirit has come to make this come to pass. Jesus purchased this deliverance for us and the Holy Spirit has come to gather us into the means by which this deliverance is made to be ours, or perhaps better stated, the means through which we are made to be communicants of this deliverance.

Truly Jesus has accomplished the salvation of the world. The powers of sin, death, and the devil have been defeated once and for all. Yet not everyone has received this deliverance. Not everyone is aware that the shackles have been broken so that they are no longer bound to the way of everlasting misery. Because of their lack of knowledge of the truth of the Gospel, because they have not been baptized into the new life that is in Christ, they still live as slaves of sin and the consequences of sin even though there is nothing left to hold them.

Therefore, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, to call, gather, enlighten and sanctify by means of the Gospel. The Gospel has been entrusted to the Church, the LORD's remnant, where the Holy Spirit dwells and works continually to pour out the endless blessings of the kingdom of heaven. And He also resides in each member of Christ's body, moving out into the world and giving witness to the world through the lives of these members of Christ's body. Day by day the Holy Spirit gives witness as He keeps the individual members safe in the true faith. Day by day the Holy Spirit gives witness as He gathers these members back into the gathering of the body in the Holy Communion. As the world observes the saints, the world sees the work of the Holy Spirit, and the world responds to what is observed. Some of the world responds in anger and hatred, seeking to snuff out the Holy Spirit's witness. But others of the world are drawn to the Holy Communion through the Holy Spirit's witness and they receive the preaching of the Gospel and are baptized into the Holy Communion and become partakers of the Holy Communion.

CONCLUSION

This is the promised deliverance. Those whom the Holy Spirit calls and gathers receive this deliverance in their hearts and souls and lives. The Holy Spirit comforts those who are distressed and fearful. He strengthens the weak and the weary and gives hope to the hopeless. Those who are enslaved to resentment and anger and hatred, are delivered from these hellacious sentiments to enjoy the freedom of God's love. Those who are in bondage to various addictions are set free to trust in the One who provides what substances and perverted lifestyles can never provide. Yes, there shall be deliverance! In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus forever. Amen.