

Spirituality of the Readings - Gone for Good

This is the last Sunday of the Easter season! Its Mass is vivid and exciting.

Suddenly there came from the sky
a noise like a strong driving wind,
and it filled the entire house in which they were.

Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire,
which parted and came to rest on each one of them.
And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit
and began to speak in different tongues,
as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. *(First Reading)*

*The most essential
thing we can say is
that the Holy Spirit is
completely and truly
God.*

Wouldn't you have loved to be there? How thrilling!

Even more delightful, look at the wording. The noise was not an actual wind but something "like" a wind. And these were not tongues of fire, but tongues "as of fire" (i.e., "as if they were made of fire"). These were marvels that could not be described "as is." So the writer uses *metaphors*.

Imagine it this way:

There was this sound that came from the sky, something that sounded like, uh, oh, let's see, uh, wind! That's it. It wasn't wind but that is the closest I can get. And then stuff that looked sort of like chunks of fire, or maybe like tongues made out of fire. Only it wasn't really fire. Or tongues either. Oh, I can't describe it.

It was a presence that is very real but too deep for words. So "as if" becomes a way to help us sense it. We call this procedure "metaphor," or just "comparison."

But why don't we get to prophesy and talk in tongues as the apostles did? St. Paul handles this question beautifully in the *Second Reading*, but the answer is also found by recalling who the Holy Spirit is, as we have been doing in previous weeks. The most essential thing we can say is that the Holy Spirit is completely and truly God. The third person of the Holy Trinity comes to dwell within us. No wonder it is hard to describe!

As time went by, the bestowal of the Spirit became less dramatic but just as real. Look, for instance, at *Acts 19:1-8*, in which St. Paul came upon a dozen or so disciples who had never even heard of the Holy Spirit! He baptised them, and, as he "laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied." It was the sacrament of Baptism! Today, when we receive baptism and other sacraments, we are receiving the Holy Spirit! But quietly and in ritual form. Christ and his Father come to dwell within us.

Alright, then why do we not act as someone who has God within us? Well, like anything planted so deep, the Spirit's presence must have time to make its way into our actions, our words, our deeds. Whenever we find patches of charity or joy in ourselves, or patience and kindness, or the ability to endure hardship and injuries; when we are tempted toward mildness and modesty, then we can believe that the Holy Spirit is at work within us.

It is not as if heavy winds and tongues of fire were raging, as in former days. But it is the same Spirit of Jesus and of the Father - the one we celebrate today.

John Foley, SJ
Fr. John Foley, SJ, is
a composer and scholar at Saint Louis University



St Thomas Aquinas Parish Bulletin



Parish Website:
Parish Facebook Page:
Parish Priest:
Assistant Priest:
Parish Pastoral Council:
Parish Office Hours:

168 Hawkesbury Road, Springwood, NSW, 2777
PO Box 4410, Winmalee, NSW 2777
Phone: 02 4754 1052
Email: springwood@parracatholic.org
www.stchurchspringwood.org.au
St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood
Fr Paul Slyney - 4754 1052 **Emergency ONLY:** 0418 461 316
Fr Shinto Francis - 4754 1052 **Emergency ONLY:** 0415 077 969
Email - springwoodppc@gmail.com
Tuesday to Friday 8.30 am - 3.30 pm

Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil Mass 5.00 pm, Sunday 8.00 am and 9.30 am
Weekday Mass: Tuesday - Saturday 9.30 am
Rosary & Devotions: Tuesday - Saturday 9.00 am
Adoration, Rosary & Chapelet: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month, 7.30 - 8.30 pm
Intercession & Adoration: None until further notice
Baptisms: 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month - 10.30am and by appointment
Reconciliation: By request
Weddings: By appointment - restricted numbers
Funerals: By appointment - restricted numbers

A Poem to Sit With

*And when he had said this, he breathed on them
and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."*

Drink my blood
wine
and know I would
die a thousand
deaths for you
for
given
unto you is my
promise

sealed in blood
I shall not
leave you orphans

My Spirit is
given
you - it will
tell

you what to do and say - for my
Father's will is
that
none be lost.

J.Janda

The First Reading

Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

*And suddenly there came from the sky a noise
like a strong driving wind.*

Like wind-driven fire blazing,
you flash through
all creation.

You are
far
and
near.

Not in one place
and time,
but everywhere.

We
welcome
your Spirit in us.

Set a fire in our hearts
every minute of every day!
Make us fierce in your love,
and send us to the
ends of the
earth.

Anne Osdieck

Today's Readings: Acts 2:1-11; Gal 5:16-25; Jn 15:26-27, 16:12-15

Entrance Antiphon: The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Spirit of God dwelling within us, alleluia.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 103: 1-2, 24, 27-30, 35

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

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

Communion Antiphon: On the last day of the festival, Jesus stood and cried out: If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink, alleluia.

Next Week: THE MOST HOLY TRINITY Deut 4:32-34, 39-40; Rom 8:14-17; Mt 28:16-20



Sick: Susie Zinno, James Wallace, Mischa Damaguc and family, Margaret Day, Adam McCully, Christopher Coombs, Kate Moore, Luca Hurley **and all Private Intentions.**

Due to the strict privacy laws, names of the deceased and sick can only be included in the Bulletin with the express permission of the immediate family. Thank you.

Parish and Local Community News

ST FINBAR'S INVITES YOU: Monday, **24th May, 7.00pm Mass** to the Solemnity of Our Lady, Help of Christians, Patron Saint of Australia. Please contact St Finbar's Parish to book your place on secretary@stfinbars.org.au or 4739 8928.

KNITTERS WANTED: A group of children from St Thomas Aquinas Primary will be knitting squares to be joined together to form blankets and presented to our local branch of St Vincent de Paul for their annual **Vinnies Winter Appeal**. Are you able to spare an hour from 1.30pm-2.30pm every Thursday to help teach these eager children how to knit? If so, please contact Virginia Fortunat at STA on 4723 3800. Thank you.

BELOVED 2021 WOMEN'S RETREAT: A retreat filled with peace, prayerfulness, adoration, Mass, reconciliation, inspiring guest speakers, praise and worship. St Finbar's Catholic Church, Glenbrook, 12th June 2021 from 8.30am to 8.30pm. Registration is \$60, and with places limited please register now at <https://forms.gle/KkBaTAvm1qkYYCzm8>. For enquiries, email beloved2021info@gmail.com.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY? You may be interested in Christians Together for Climate, a Blue Mountains ecumenical group that is looking to take some political action inspired by our faith calling to care for the Earth. The group is meeting **via Zoom once per month** and has a broad range of Churches involved from across the region and with other groups across the nation. For further enquiries, please contact Dennis Farrar 4751 7096 or Sally Butler at Catholic Care, Springwood 8843 2545.

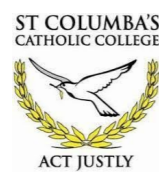
LITURGICAL-SPIRITUAL FORMATION DAY: Fr Dr. John Frauenfelder, Liturgist and Dean of The Australian Institute of Theological Education, Saturday, 26th June, 10.30am – 3pm. Fr. John will touch the question: How to actively participate in the Mass? For Catholics, the Eucharist is the source of Christian life and on the summit of worship. However, there is a perception that the "mass is done by the priest", while the congregants are reduced to sit, to stand and to pay. Yet, Vatican II teaches that all baptised are to actively participate in the Mass. Fr. John is a prominent Australian liturgist who serves not only as a priest, but also has a broad expertise in liturgy. All are welcome! Morning Tea and Lunch provided. Registration fee: Only \$5! For registration, please contact Julian Knouf on secretary@stfinbars.org.au.

ARCHBISHOP TIM COSTELLOE SBD PUBLIC LECTURE: **28 June** - Archbishop Tim Costelloe SDB, Archbishop of Perth and President of the Plenary Council, will be speaking on the coming Plenary Council at a public lecture in the Diocese of Parramatta at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta, on Monday 28 June at 7pm. Bookings are essential, as limited spaces are available. Please RSVP by 25 June to mark.oconnor@parracatholic.org.

COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: The Community Visitors Scheme, a program with CatholicCare, is looking for volunteers to provide a friendly visit to residents in local Aged Care Facilities who are lonely or isolated from their family and friends. If you feel you could spare one hour a week, or a fortnight, to help a person feel more valued and respected, please contact the Manager, Deb Woolcott on 0418 114 055 or email deb.woolcott@ccss.org.au.

'To act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with our God'.

t: 02 4754 8900
e: StColumbas@parra.catholic.edu.au
w: www.stcolumbasspringwood.catholic.edu.au



ST THOMAS AQUINAS

Celebrating 100 Years of Education

JOIN US TO CELEBRATE
SAVE THE DATE : 17 SEPTEMBER 2021

Details to follow



Commissioning Mass, Sunday 16th May

At our 9.30am Mass last Sunday, Fr Paul commissioned a lovely group of SRE Educators in our Parish through prayer and a blessing. These SRE Educators are active members of our parish that have volunteered to commit their own time in sharing their faith with the children in our local State schools. This amazing group of people enter the schools and teach Catholic Scripture.

We thank you all for you do for our Parish. God Bless.

If you are interested in becoming an SRE teacher, or helper, and you are free on Wednesday or Thursday, please contact Wilhelmina de Raadt on 4751 3319 or wilhelminaderaadt@gmail.com.

Commissioning Mass

Glancing Thoughts - The Coming of the Spirit

In the Gospel Reading, Jesus foretells that he will send the Holy Spirit on his disciples. And this Sunday we celebrate that coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.

But Genesis tells us that the Spirit was in the world from the beginning of creation. The Spirit moved upon the face of the waters when God first made heaven and earth. From that beginning all throughout the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is present in the world. For example, the Spirit of God came upon Balaam (Num. 24:2), Joshua (Num. 27:18), Gideon (Judges 6:34), Jephthah (Judges 11:29), Samson (Judges 13:25), Saul (1 Sam. 11:6), David (1 Sam. 16:13), and others as well.

So why in the Gospel Reading does Christ say that he will send the Spirit? How does he send the Spirit if the Spirit was already in the world in Old Testament times?

The first thing to notice is that, in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is mentioned as coming only on a few particular people, often just people marked out for some particular purposes by God. But after Christ sends the Spirit at Pentecost, the Spirit comes on every single Christian. As the Second Reading explains, every person who says (and believes) that Jesus is Lord has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him.

Furthermore, after Pentecost, the Spirit that comes is the Spirit of the resurrected Christ, as well as the Spirit of the Father. And so when, after Pentecost, Christ's followers are filled with the Spirit, they are unified with Christ, because his Spirit is within them.

At Pentecost, then, the Spirit comes on all those who believe in Christ; and it comes on them forever, for their whole lives, provided only that they remain in Christ. Those who have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them are made into the body of Christ, because the Spirit of the resurrected Christ is in them.

So that is why the Spirit comes at Pentecost, to inaugurate the new age which God promised long ago. Through his prophet Joel (Jl 2:28), God promised that in the messianic age God would pour out his Spirit on all his people; and then God himself would be the hope and the strength of his people (Jl 3:16).

We are included in that promise too. By God's spirit that dwells in us, we are made one with our risen Lord; and his peace remains with us because he himself is with us and within us always, as he promised.

Eleonore Stump

Eleonore Stump is Professor of Philosophy, Saint Louis University

OUR LADY, HELP OF CHRISTIANS, PATRON SAINT OF AUSTRALIA

Mary, our Mother,

You responded to the call of God with faith and courage.

Help us to express our faith with honesty

Help us to remain faithful in difficult times

Help us to discover meaning and purpose in the events of our lives

Help us to find healing in times of hurt

Help us to be gentle, reasonable and loving in all our relationships

Help us to be compassionate in the face of indifference

Help us to bring joy and hope into our lives and the lives of others

Help us to live lives of practical love.

Amen.

Mary Help of Christians, pray for us.



MAY DATES:

Tuesday, 25th May: Feast of St Madeleine Sophie Barat (founder of the Society of the Sacred Heart)

Wednesday, 26th May: National Sorry Day

Thursday, 27th May - Thursday, 3rd June: National Reconciliation Week

Saturday, 29th - Sunday 30th May: Bishop Vincent's Good Shepherd Appeal

Sunday, 30th May: Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

Monday, 31st May: Feast of the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

