



**COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION  
SUNDAY 19 MAY 2024 - PENTECOST**

**COLLECT**

God, who as at this time  
taught the hearts of your faithful people  
by sending to them the light of your 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 the merits of Christ Jesus our Saviour,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

**Psalm 104.26-36,37b**

- 26 O Lord, how manifold are your works! ♦  
In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.
- 27 There is the sea, spread far and wide, ♦  
and there move creatures beyond number, both small and great.
- 28 There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan ♦  
which you have made to play in the deep.
- 29 All of these look to you ♦  
to give them their food in due season.
- 30 When you give it them, they gather it; ♦  
you open your hand and they are filled with good.
- 31 When you hide your face they are troubled; ♦  
when you take away their breath, they die and return again to the dust.
- 32 When you send forth your spirit, they are created, ♦  
and you renew the face of the earth.
- 33 May the glory of the Lord endure for ever; ♦  
may the Lord rejoice in his works;
- 34 He looks on the earth and it trembles; ♦  
he touches the mountains and they smoke.
- 35 I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; ♦  
I will make music to my God while I have my being.
- 36 So shall my song please him ♦  
while I rejoice in the Lord.
- 37 Let sinners be consumed out of the earth and the wicked be no more. ♦  
Bless the Lord, O my soul.  
Alleluia.

## A reading from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2, verses 1-21

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: 'Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:

"In the last days it will be, God declares,  
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,  
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,  
and your young men shall see visions,  
and your old men shall dream dreams.

Even upon my slaves, both men and women,  
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;  
and they shall prophesy.

And I will show portents in the heaven above  
and signs on the earth below,  
blood, and fire, and smoky mist.

The sun shall be turned to darkness  
and the moon to blood,

before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day.

Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

***At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:***

The second reading is from John, chapter 17, verses 6-19.

***and then at the end:***

For the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

***For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel and it is introduced with an Acclamation, as below:***

Alleluia!

**Alleluia!**

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful people  
and kindle in them the fire of your love.

**Alleluia!**

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, chapter 15, verses 26&27; and chapter 16, verses 4b-15

**Glory to you, O Lord**

***And then at the end:***

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Jesus said, 'When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. But I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them.

'I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, "Where are you going?" But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgement: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgement, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

'I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

## ***A Reflection from Peter...***

The trouble with spirits is that they are invisible – and the Holy Spirit is no exception! This is always a challenge for us. St Paul does his best to help us by often using “Spirit” and “Christ” interchangeably. That certainly helps us get the closeness between Jesus and the Spirit – but it doesn’t help us appreciate the individual person of the Spirit.

Bishop John Taylor, writing about the Holy Spirit, called his book “The Go-Between God”. In part, he was responding to that verse from our Gospel, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears...” Yes, he will not speak on his own – the Spirit is the faithful witness, the bearer of truth, the revealer of God. For many, the title will also call to mind L P Hartley’s novel “The Go-Between” and the young boy who is the bearer of messages between lovers who are otherwise unable to communicate. Here, we have to confront a darker side of the go-between and recognise an element of manipulation and exploitation. Such distortion is, it seems, inevitable in our human relationships, but not so in God. Father, Son and Spirit are in perfect unity, perfect truth, perfect love.

But it is still very hard to speak of one who is invisible! Whenever we arrive at Pentecost we are out of our depth. God has started us on a journey that goes beyond our capacity to speak coherently. But the Spirit is known to us above all through the gifts that are the marks of God: love, joy, peace. Where the Spirit is embraced and accepted, there love, joy and peace abound. But we can never pin the Spirit down. Rosemary Haughton once said that theologians (and people generally!) spend lots of time trying to create nets to catch God in, but the nets, like fishing nets, have holes, and the Spirit goes in and out of the holes!

So today, the day that we celebrate as the birth of the church, is a day of adventure and expectation. No matter how many Pentecosts we have celebrated, God has still more surprises in store for us...