

Homily/Reflection for Pentecost Sunday 2020.

Dear Parishioners,

Happy Birthday! Today we celebrate the birthday of the Church – Pentecost Sunday!

Father Paul, Deacon Kevin, Father Fred, Monsignor Danny and I wish you all a very joyful Feast and hope that you are able to enjoy a festive birthday meal. May the Holy Spirit renew our lives and our world.

More and more I have come to rely on the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in my life. I find the images the Church uses to describe His presence and power immensely helpful – **Wind, Fire, Fountain of Living Water**. We grapple to express in language His action in our lives and in our world and sometimes we realise that words cannot adequately express the reality of His presence.

The joy His love inspires in us makes us want to sing God's praises and thankfully we have a good repertoire of hymns and music for this Feast day of the Church.

The sequence for Pentecost Sunday is a powerful expression of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Father Paul and I listened to it today during Mass, its Latin title

“Veni Creator Spiritus”

We look forward to hearing our Deacon singing it once again in Church.

In today's first reading from the Acts of the Apostles Saint Luke's tells us that on the Day of Pentecost the Apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech. In response to this extraordinary gift of

languages those who heard them speaking said: ***“we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.”***

The language of the Holy Spirit is a language of love whose effect is to bring harmony and unity to humankind.

I remember a priest describing his journey by rail and how he sat next to two families whose four-year-old children played with one another throughout the train journey. Nothing unusual for children to play together apart from the fact that one was English and one Indian, and they were not familiar with one another’s tongue. However, they shared a common language – that of love.

“The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us,” wrote Saint Paul.

The language of the Holy Spirit is like balm to soothe hearts which are grieving or in pain, it brings hope which overcomes fear and mistrust, it brings healing to our bodies and minds.

Saint Paul in his letter to the Ephesians advises us: ***“Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.”*** (Ephesians 4:29-32.)

Father Dominic

SEQUENCE FOR PENTECOST SUNDAY

Holy Spirit, Lord of Light,
From the clear celestial height.
Thy pure beaming radiance give.

Come, thou Father of the poor,
Come, with treasures which endure;
Come, thou Light of all that live!

Thou, of all consolers best,
Thou, the soul's delightful guest,
Dost refreshing peace bestow.

Thou in toil art comfort sweet;
Pleasant coolness in the heat;
Solace in the midst of woe.

Light immortal, Light divine,
Visit thou these hearts of thine,
And our inmost being fill.

If thou take thy grace away,
Nothing pure in man will stay;
All his good is turned to ill.

Heal our wounds, our strength renew;
On our dryness pour thy dew,
Wash the stains of guilt away.

Bend the stubborn heart and will;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;
Guide the steps that go astray.

Thou, on us who evermore
Thee confess and thee adore,
With thy sevenfold gifts descend.

Give us comfort when we die;
Give us life with thee on high;
Give us joys that never end.
Amen. Alleluia.

