

Pentecost 2020

Our age is subject to a growing cult of anxiety and forced busy-ness. Even in the lockdown we congratulate ourselves on always having too much to do; if we are at work we feel the need to appear busier than anyone else lest we or our job look redundant; some are required to work inhuman hours to be considered worthy of promotion. Those retired from work triumphantly proclaim that they are now busier than before. We play at it in the newly managerial Church: you'll have seen the ironic slogan: 'Christ is coming: look busy'._

If we're honest about our busy-ness, some of it is not virtuous. It can be denial, avoidance or keeping up with others. Worse, it may signal inner emptiness, being uncomfortable with our own company, or God's: a displacement activity.

In John's telling of Pentecost (Sunday's Gospel) the primary gift from Jesus is not so much the tongues of fire or the reversal of Babel reported in Acts, but 'peace'. Competitive humble-bragging about how busy we are is often accompanied by an expressed wish for 'peace and quiet', rest. That is within our reach, thanks to the gift of the Spirit. But it requires application, and understanding, of the gift.

Rest, 'peace and quiet' is popularly idealised as sitting in the lotus position in a darkened room, or wishfully conceived of as lying on a beach in the sun. Christ's gift of peace is more robust and engaging than that. 'Peace', rest, like most good things in life, is an attitude of mind, a habit formed by the accumulation of good choices; it is being truly 'at home' as who we are, where we are; the opposite of alienation.

It is possible to do a lot of work and be comfortable and at home with that, serene about it. Peace is a perspective on the world and a way of life, connected to 'the sabbath rest of the people of God' (Heb. 4.9).

My father would have said that 'with acceptance comes peace', a maxim he learned from Buddhist converts in China. To find and experience peace we almost always do have to confront the things we are trying to avoid or deny, not angrily but with acceptance, as God accepts us ('forgive us our trespasses as we forgive...'). Those difficult things so often hinge on painful memories, or events where we were destructive towards others or destructively treated by them. Unless we forgive ourselves or them, our busy-ness will ensure sufficient clamour and activity to silence and mask ugly memories. But being busy not dealing with things does not bring peace.

Keep well.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Michael Bowie

Pentecost Propers, Motet and hymn

All Saints Margaret Street Mass at Noon

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.
Amen.

FIRST READING: Acts 2.1-21

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

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."
This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: 104.24-end

Response:

Send forth your Spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.

Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and glory,
wrapped in light as in a robe!

How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches.
Bless the Lord, my soul.

All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up:
you open your hand, they have their fill.

You take back your spirit, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 12.3b-13

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says 'Let Jesus be cursed!' and no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit.

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;
and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord;
and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.
To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,
to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,
to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.
For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.
For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.
This is the word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA

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

GOSPEL: John 20.19-23

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.'

After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.'

When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.

If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ!

SERMON

CREED

INTERCESSIONS

OFFERTORY MOTET: Attwood (1765-1838)

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire,
and lighten with celestial fire.
Thou the anointing Spirit art,
who dost thy sevenfold gifts impart.
Thy blessed unction from above
is comfort, life, and fire of love.

Enable with perpetual light
the dullness of our blinded sight.
Anoint and cheer our soiled face
with the abundance of thy grace.
Keep far from foes, give peace at home:
where thou art guide, no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,
and thee, of both, to be but One,
that through the ages all along,
this may be our endless song:
Praise to thy eternal merit,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

John Cosin 1594-1672, based on Veni, creator Spiritus

FINAL HYMN

Come down, O Love divine,
Seek thou this soul of mine,
And visit it with thine own ardour glowing;
O Comforter, draw near,
Within my heart appear,
And kindle it, thy holy flame bestowing.

O let it freely burn,
Till earthly passions turn
To dust and ashes in its heat consuming;
And let thy glorious light
Shine ever on my sight,
And clothe me round, the while my path illuming.

Let holy charity
Mine outward vesture be,
And lowliness become mine inner clothing;
True lowliness of heart,
Which takes the humbler part,
And o'er its own shortcomings weeps with loathing.

And so the yearning strong,
With which the soul will long,
Shall far outpass the power of human telling;
For none can guess its grace,
Till it become the place
Wherein the Holy Spirit makes his dwelling.

An ecumenical Pentecost Mass will be livestreamed from the Jesuit Church of the Immaculate Conception, Farm Street

at 6pm this evening, Sunday 31st May.

The service will include recorded music by All Saints Margaret St choir, as well as Soul Sanctuary Gospel Choir, and the choir of Farm Street.

The link for the livestream is <https://www.farmstreet.org.uk/livestream>

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER DIARY

Those who are sick or distressed or for whom our prayers have been asked:

Prisoners and captives: Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, Kylie Moore-Gilbert, Ismaeil Maghrebinejad, Mayshee Eyob.
The work of the London Prisons Mission.

The sick:

David Fettke, Joan Cooper, Vallery Tchukov, Sara Vice, Lenore Kimbrough, Fr Ron Swan, Katherine Lee, Chris Gudgeon, Nicky Yeo, Lorna Smith, James Shrimpton, Tim Knight, Beth Klausing, Hilary Porter, Jane Bolam, Philip Hirsch, Rosemary Orr, Keith Peers, Geoffrey Turner-Mutch, Joyce Morris

Those known to us recently departed:

Terry Meredith
Joan Cox
Margaret Spencer
Christopher Hopkins Pr
Beaumont Brandie, Pr
Richard Hodds
Nora Nettey
Charles Cruse
Audrey Cramp

Anniversaries of death this week:

May 31st - Olga Gaunt
June 1st - Mary Bonar, Edna Hutt, Annie Key, Donald Barnes Pr
2nd - Ronald Self
3rd - Ada Tomlinson, Bob Terwilliger Pr, Vyvian Hall, Gwen Rice
4th - Joan Arnold
5th - Cyril Tomkinson Pr (seventh vicar of All Saints), Winifred Richards, Tony Pulleyn
6th - Margaret White-Cooper

PARISH GIVING SCHEME

A regular visitor to All Saints wrote recently to ask how she could support us financially during this period when she couldn't put cash or envelopes in the collection plate.

Our Treasurer suggests that the preferred option (from the parish's point of view) is to sign up to the Parish Giving Scheme: it makes contributions completely anonymous and deals with GiftAid, which saves our office a lot of time. If you would like to do that online you can register at

<https://parishgiving.org.uk/register/>

The Parish Code, which you need to register, is

230623075.

If you don't want to do this online please let us know and the forms can be posted to you.

Please consider joining the scheme even if you already give by Standing Order. It is a huge help administratively.

Donations for general Church purposes: To give by BACS please use the following details, advising the Administrator to collect Gift Aid:

PCC All Saints (Charity # 1132895)
Sort Code 60-09-15.
A/C # 04559452

Parish Legacy Policy We are always delighted to hear from anyone who wants to support us with a donation. Our PCC Legacy Policy encourages people to leave bequests specifically to one of our two related charities to be used for purposes of lasting value (rather than day to day costs):

All Saints Choir & Music Trust (Charity # 802994) or
The All Saints Foundation (Charity # 273390).