

Pentecost Reflection Deacon Charlie Salway

This weekend we come to the conclusion of the Easter season with Pentecost. Sometimes we miss this celebration with spring upon us and all it brings for us to enjoy. But I challenge you to consider and understand what this meant for the disciples and most importantly us. Christ's promise to send them and ultimately us, the Advocate, one who would remain with us and bring us the gifts our Father wants for us and our faith life. In Galatians chapter five we are given that *"the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."*

When you look at what it did for the disciples, now transformed into apostles, you have to hope that God has plans to give us the same. We only need to recall our preparation for Confirmation to remember that God does intend to give each of us, who are open to the Holy Spirit, those same gifts, each given to his own talent and skill. The Spirit makes one man a teacher, another a prophet, and enables another the ability to interpret holy Scripture. The Spirit strengthens one man's self-control, shows another how to help the poor, teaches another to fast and lead a life of asceticism, makes another oblivious to the needs of the body, and trains another for martyrdom. His action and gift is different in different people, but the Spirit remains the same. These gifts, given to us as promised, are always used for the common good of others.

Most of the time we search and grasp for worldly answers to our needs and have not considered the gifts from the Spirit. What we seek from this world will always leave us empty and dry. The Holy Spirit apportions grace to each of us as he wills. We just have to open our hearts and minds to allow these gifts to work in us and bear fruit. As St Augustine said *"Our hearts are restless until they rest in you O God."* How true that statement is. We find peace when we find our solace in God and his reassurance that the Advocate is there for us. We just need to allow that "breath of God" bring us to a life of love.

The inner peace we seek, can be found through prayer and meditation. We can find a peace that transcends all distractions. God will lead us to a peace emanating from the Holy Spirit, a peace born of a constant awareness of God's presence.

Perhaps a passage from John involving St. Peter can give us a glimpse into the kind of peace Jesus wants to give us. In the garden when Jesus was being questioned, Peter, the "Rock" of the Church, had denied even knowing the Lord. Now, here he was on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, perhaps alone with Jesus for the first time since the resurrection. All kinds of thoughts were probably swirling in his mind—and none of them positive. "How could Jesus ever trust me again? Look at how I failed him. There's no way I could ever lead his Church!"

But Jesus cut through Peter's guilt and shame by asking one simple question: "Do you love me?" He asked the question three times, in fact, leading Peter to admit, "You know that I love you." Jesus didn't need to hear Peter say, "I love you" three times. Instead, it was Peter who needed to say it over and over. He needed to see that despite his act of cowardice and denial, he honestly did love Jesus. And that was enough for the Jesus to hear and understand. Peter didn't have to perform arduous acts of atonement to set himself straight, and neither do we. He didn't need to remain locked in guilt, and neither do we. All he needed was to rediscover his love for Jesus, and so do we. When Peter learned this, he was finally at peace with himself. No longer bound up in guilt or anger over his failure, he was free to lead the Church as Jesus had called him to.

God wants us to seek desire in our relationship with mercy he has for us, so we can Him".

and find this peace. That is his him. Our hope is built upon this "Go in peace, to love and serve

