

**Homily for Pentecost Sunday
Cycle A, May 23, 1999**

By Father Charles Bowes

Acts 2:1 – 11

1Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

John 7:37-39

John 20:19-23

The Lord's Spirit takes flesh in us.

This is a true story, not merely a cute one, about a little girl who had just heard about the Holy Spirit. Her big sister was being confirmed and that word came into her vocabulary...but not much more! She said, in an exasperated way, "First it was Jesus, then it was Santa Claus, and now it's Holy Spirit! I've heard about them all my life and never seen one of them yet!"

The point of our scripture readings today is that the Spirit of the Lord takes flesh in folks...down to this very day, in you and me. "Rivers of living water will flow from within him who believes in me," says John chapter 7, our reading from the vigil. And in John chapter 20 our gospel on the feast, Jesus came and stood in the midst of the "disciples"...a term that includes both men and women. The recipients of the vision of the risen Christ were a mixed group. There's no evidence in the text to restrict this apparition to the Twelve. Like St. Luke's description of Pentecost in the Upper Room amid the violent wind and commotion, St. John's narrative concerns the bestowal of the Spirit on

the whole infant Church. Apparently everybody could fit into a single room and it was to them that Jesus appeared and bestowed his spirit.

We are graced in this holy season to have had folks received into full communion and baptized at Easter and also to have folks who have participated in our Parish Retreat – all of whom have received an outpouring of the Spirit. This is not something altogether new – for everyone who has been baptized receives the Spirit at that time. Rather it is an increase, an influx; there's always more Holy Spirit to receive.

Some of these folks have graciously offered to say something about their experience and I'll invite Mrs. Klich, our Pastoral Associate, to assist us in this regard.

Pentecost in the Christian calendar refers to both the period of fifty days after Easter and the culminating fiftieth day. The often "cranky" Tertullian, a prominent father of the Church, describes the fifty day festival as a "most joyful period" and bans any kneeling during this time of feasting; Christians are to stand while praying as a symbol of the resurrected Christ. So, let us stand and profess our faith.

**The Lord's Spirit
takes flesh in us.**

Reflections

July 14 & 15th
15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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