**Deacon Steve’s Reflection on the Sunday Readings**

**May 20, 2018 – Pentecost Sunday**

*“When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.”*

Pentecost marked a new beginning for the disciples, when Jesus’ promises were fulfilled and he sent another – the Advocate, the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit – to remain with them and guide them throughout their lives. Jesus himself foretold the coming of the Spirit, as recounted in the Gospels, especially in the Gospel of Saint John, heard at both the Vigil on Saturday evening and at the masses on Sunday. That Spirit would come when Jesus had been glorified through his resurrection and had returned to the Father. Jesus had promised: *“But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.”* And through the guidance of the Spirit, Jesus’ disciples and their successors – although many, remain one in the body of the Church – would proclaim the Good News and devote their lives in the service of the Lord so that all men and women might be saved.

As we heard in the Acts of the Apostles, those filled with the Holy Spirit were emboldened to bear witness to the Lord, speaking to men and women from every nation in their own language, as testimony of the power bestowed upon them by God. Filled with the Holy Spirit – they proclaimed to all, “Jesus is Lord!” to each in their own language. Those empowered by the Spirit, offered themselves to the Lord in different ways. Saint Paul told the Corinthians: *“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.”*

We can see the manifestation of the Spirit in our own parish, among those who offer their talents, in whatever way that gives glory to God and furthers the Gospel message to others. Some may offer themselves in highly visible ways; others may bear witness to the Lord and further his work in silence and even anonymity; still others by simply their prayer and presence. Yet all, who give of themselves in generosity, mercy and love, participate in the great salvific mission of Christ. Only through him, can we become instruments of the Holy Spirit. And so we pray: *“Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.”*

Deacon Steven K. Szmutko