

The Feast of Pentecost (Whitsunday)

St. John 14:23-31

May 23rd, 2021

Sts. Peter and Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC

Simpsonville, SC

St. Michael and All Angels Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC

Augusta, GA

All Saints Evangelical Lutheran Mission, UAC

Myrtle Beach, SC

Pastor Jerald Dulas

The Helper, Whom the Father Will Send

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

God of all peace and consolation, Who didst gloriously fulfill the great promise of the Gospel by sending down Thy Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost to establish the Church as the home of His continual presence and power among men: mercifully grant unto us, we beseech Thee, this same gift of Thy Spirit, to renew, enlighten, refresh, and sanctify our dying souls, to be over us and around us like the light and dew of Heaven, and to be in us evermore as a well of water springing up into everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, to Whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever, One God, be honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Lord + Jesus in the Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John tells His Apostles that when He goes away, He will send to them the Holy Ghost. This gift was for the whole Church. The Holy Ghost would be the Helper. He would help all mankind to learn the truth. The truth is that mankind is unable to save himself by his own works; his own keeping of the Law. A person is not saved by being a good person; by being a “good Christian.” We fail to keep the Law daily and often. We break our Lord’s Commandments in our thoughts, our words, and our actions. We do not deserve to be praised for being “good Christians.” Rather, we deserve the Lord God’s eternal wrath and displeasure; we deserve eternal punishment.

The truth is also that, since mankind cannot save himself by his own obedience to the Law of God and is worthy only of punishment, that the heavenly Father sent to us His Only-Begotten Son into our flesh. He was born of a virgin—the Blessed Virgin Mary. He took upon Himself our flesh, and fulfilled the Law which we are unable to fulfill. He fulfilled it perfectly. He then offered up His life as a spotless and sinless Lamb of God on the tree of the holy cross for the atonement of all of our sins. His sacrifice atones for the sins of the whole world, so that all those who cling to Him and His works and His sacrifice in faith are gifted with forgiveness of their sins. And wherever there is forgiveness of sins, there is also eternal life with the Triune Lord God, and salvation and rescue from all of our enemies—the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh.

This is the truth that the Holy Ghost, the Helper, helps us to hear, understand, and believe. The Holy Ghost reveals this truth through the pure preaching of the Word of God, and the right administration of the Blessed Sacraments. This truth is preached and administered to all those who come to this place to receive this wonderful gift in Word and Sacrament. These means of our Lord’s

grace are given to all of us who gather here today by the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. It is He Who creates and sustains life in us; a life that never ends; a life that is eternal and will continue on after we leave this flesh and this vale of tears to dwell eternally in Heaven. As we heard in the Gradual for today, the heavenly Father sends out His Holy Ghost, and dead souls trapped in sin and death are created and given new life; a new life filled with faith which clings to the Triune Lord God. When the Holy Ghost does His work, the whole world is renewed the Psalmist sang in the Gradual.

Our Lord + Jesus promised the Apostles that He would send them the Holy Ghost, the Helper, but the Holy Ghost was not just for them, it was for the whole Christian Church on Earth. Indeed, the Helper, the Holy Ghost, is the One Who creates and sustains the Christian Church on Earth. He is the One Who makes new Christians as He opens their ears to hear the Word of God through the means of grace, and He creates a new heart in those who hear—a heart of flesh and not of stone—a heart that is full of faith. This is what happens for us whenever we gather together in our Lord's Name. This is what is happening now, and whenever two or three, or more, gather together to hear His Word and receive His Sacraments, we are receiving the Holy Ghost, and He is creating and sustaining faith and life in us by these means of grace we participate in today.

This is fully and completely the work of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the One Who makes new Christians. He is the One Who brings the message of salvation to mankind. This message of salvation is that salvation is found only in the works and merits of the Christ. As we heard in the Epistle reading, a different language is no barrier to the Holy Ghost. Through the Apostles all those who had gathered in Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost, the feast of giving thanks to the Lord God for first fruits of the harvest, heard the wonderful things that the Lord God had done for them in all of their languages. They heard what our Lord + Jesus did for them, and for us, in the languages of the Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs. The whole known world heard the wonderful works of the Lord God in their own tongue.

This is, after all, what it means to speak in tongues. It means to proclaim the Word of God in a language that one has not learned. It is not speaking gibberish and babbling. The Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Holy Trinity Who is a God of order and not of disorder, would use men to speak to those who could only understand the Gospel in a different language than what the preacher spoke. The Holy Ghost would loose the tongue of the preacher to speak in the language that the hearer knew, so that the hearer could also hear the Gospel of our Lord + Jesus Christ. It was not speaking in gibberish and babble. This is also why the use of speaking in tongues is no longer a necessary use by the Lord God, for the language barriers that once existed are few and far between.

The people in Church bodies today who claim to speak in tongues, besides the fact that they are not actually speaking another language, and just spouting gibberish and baby talk, are speaking a lie and falsehood. One can tell how corrupt their claims of speaking in tongues is because the focus always seems to be on the person babbling away. It is all about that person and what he is doing, and Christ is diminished. Whenever we put the focus on ourselves, what we are doing, how good of Christian we are, looking for praise for how well we are behaving like Christians, or obeying the Law of God, we have put the focus on ourselves, and taken it off of the only means of our salvation—our Lord + Jesus Christ.

This is what the Holy Ghost does. He is always directing us to the Christ and His works and merits. He is always opening up our ears to hear what the Lord + Jesus has done, and continues to do for us. He is always focusing our eyes to the cross of our Lord + Jesus where the atonement of all our sins was won for us by the shed Blood and death of our Savior + Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost is always, through the means of grace in which we participate when we come to this place and gather

together as two or three, or more, in our Lord's Name, cleansing our hearts from dead works, and destroying our hearts of stone with the contrition that Law preaches and creating a new heart of flesh in us with the faith that He creates in us by the means of grace.

This is why we continue to gather together in our Lord + Jesus' Name, for when we gather together in our Lord's Name our Lord + Jesus is here with us. He is present in the preaching of the Gospel. He is present in His Body and Blood given in bread and wine. He is present the moment our Liturgy begins when the pastor blesses us with the Name that was placed upon us in the waters of Holy Baptism. And our Lord + Jesus continues to be with us until the pastor blessed us with the Aaronic Benediction and sends us on our way out into this world, where we live our Christian lives in this dark world filled with sin. We continue to come back from this world filled with sin, because this world truly is a valley of tears, as we deal with our own daily sins, and see the corruption and sin that exists in this world, and see how it seems to grow darker and more evil every single day.

The Holy Ghost draws us into this place in order that He might create and strengthen our faith in our Lord + Jesus Christ. Just as our Lord + Jesus is present in this place when we gather, the Holy Ghost, the Helper, is also here in this place, convicting our hearts of our sins, and refreshing our souls by proclaiming to us that our sins have been paid for in full by the perfect fulfilling of the Law of the Lord God by the Lord + Jesus, and He has offered up His life as a ransom for our sins, by suffering and dying in our place on the tree of the holy cross. The Holy Ghost opens our ears to hear this wonderful message of salvation in a language that our hearts will hear and believe, and He creates faith in us so that we cling wholly and completely to the works and merits of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us rejoice in the holy comfort that the Holy Ghost brings to us today, and every day when we hear that our sins have been paid for by the Christ. Let us not refuse His accusations of the Law, but heartily confess our sins, and receive the Absolution of our sins given to us on account of the sacrifice of our Lord + Jesus. Let us rejoice this day that the Lord + Jesus has become the ransom for our sins, and by His Holy Ghost, He has brought us into His Blessed Church. In this Church He richly and daily forgives us all of our sins, and He guards and protects us from all harm and danger that the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh desire to do to us, so that we might fall into despair or pride. The Holy Ghost, the Helper, guards and keeps us safe and secure in this Church, so that we can always rejoice in what our Lord + Jesus, the Christ has done for us poor sinners. May we never stop giving Him thanks and praise. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Send, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, Thy Holy Spirit into our hearts, that He may rule and direct us according to Thy will, comfort us in all our temptations and afflictions, defend us from all error, and lead us into all truth, that we, being steadfast in the faith, may increase in love and in all good works, and in the end obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!