

Gospel Reflection
Pentecost 5/31/2020

Yesterday, as we watched the online liturgy from St. Mark's Cathedral, we heard this reading from Acts. I am experiencing it in a new way in light of the past week.

When I reflect upon Scripture, I pay attention to words and images that capture my attention. Tongues of fire captures my attention now and the symbol of fire brings the following to mind: the fire of justice, the fire of the Holy Spirit, the fire of righteous anger, and the fire of destruction. This speaks to me today, in the current world situation, and I consider how we, as members of the Church, are called to respond.

A line in this passage captures my attention: ***All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.***

I think about our diverse parish. We have different states of life and are united in our Baptismal vows. The Catechism, found in *The Book of Common Prayer*, includes this:

Q. What is our duty to our neighbors?

A. Our duty to our neighbors is to love them as ourselves, and to do to other people as we wish them to do to us... To show respect for the life God has given us; to work and pray for peace; to bear no malice, prejudice, or hatred in our hearts; and to be kind to all the creatures of God... To be honest and fair in our dealings; to seek justice, freedom, and the necessities of life for all people; and to use our talents and possessions as ones who must answer for them to God... (BCP, p. 848)

I ask each of you to consider what the Holy Spirit is calling you to do to show respect to neighbor and to advance racial equality. I shared this link last week for those of us who are white: <https://medium.com/equality-includes-you/what-white-people-can-do-for-racial-justice-f2d18b0e0234> For our parishioners of color, I stand in solidarity with you and will strive for justice.

Finally, today is the Day of Mourning and Lament for those who have died from COVID-19. At noon, St. James will ring our bells 100 times, each one to represent 1,000 people who have died in the United States. Please join me in prayer at noon and ring a bell if you have one.

https://www.npr.org/2020/05/31/866426177/a-national-day-of-mourning-honoring-covid-19-victims-holds-new-meaning?fbclid=IwAR2D1PyasPvBeVj0x52YFGF1YjqKhEdH54dgdwQHhInS3yqQ_XDA9YS-ME

Trusting in the God of peace and justice,

Father Christopher+