



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

Pentecost Sunday - Year A

We have the same gifts as the Apostles

Readings: Acts 2: 1-11, Ps 104, , 1 Corinthians 12: 3-7, 12-13; John 20: 19-23

One of the joys of the Easter season is to be suddenly and dramatically immersed, by the lection, in vibrant life of the early church. The Acts of the Apostles, the first volume of Church history, invites us into that dynamic world of post-Resurrection excitement, Ascension confirming certainty and Pentecost fuelled confidence and courage to mission the world. It is a time of danger and a time of glory. The Church grows exponentially and, from tiny origins, understands itself to be the Body of Christ on earth, the final revelation of God's saving purposes for Man and the last and beautiful piece of the unfolding jigsaw of salvation history. Brothers and sisters, we live in very different times. But we must be careful not to be depressed or disheartened by our time and place in history. We must not discount the amazing growth of the Faith worldwide simply because we live in a smug, materialistic continent which has rejected God in favour of the idolatry of materialism. We may mourn our native lands overthrow of its godly heritage in favour of consumerism and moral libertarianism. We must never give up our mission for its reconversion for the alternative is disaster for the land and for the people. We live in a time which would be recognised by many of the great prophets who spent their lives under threat, persecution or

exile. It is a time when, having been delivered from the jaws of Hell in the wars of last century, we have dismissed the God who saved us and adopted, as a civilisation, the very culture of death which we had so recently defeated, resurgent under another name.

So what can we learn from our reading of the Acts of the Apostles?

First of all – size really isn't important! The gathering at Pentecost was no bigger than our Sunday congregation at the parish church. What was important was that they were all together with one heart in one place. Our commitment, our regularity and our unity of purpose are vital.

Second, they were actively waiting on God. What does God want me to do and am I willing to do it?

Third, they were not unafraid but they were witnesses of the Resurrection. They knew that Christ had conquered sin and death and opened Heaven and eternal life to the faithful. A brave person is not necessarily unafraid but rather someone who has the courage to do it in spite of his fears or misgivings. If we know the Risen Christ and are witnesses of the Resurrection, then we can overcome the fear of failure or rejection.

Fourth, the disciples were empowered and emboldened by the Holy Spirit of God. This, brothers and sisters, is the same Holy Spirit who infused us at our baptism. This is the same Holy Spirit who strengthened us at our Confirmation. This is the same Holy Spirit who is invoked by the priest, at the altar of sacrifice, to transform our humble offerings of bread and

wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. This is the same Holy Spirit we pray, at the same time, will make us 'one body, one spirit in Christ'.

We have been given the Holy Spirit of God. This is the same Holy Spirit who brought order to creation. This is the same Holy Spirit who sent the Apostles out into the street and into the world. We must not receive Him only to lock Him into the attic of our souls as a comforting relic of a once upon a time faith. We must invite Him, with the priest, at every Mass, to transform us and to drive us out into the world on mission.

We are fed by Christ and sent out into the world to win souls for Him and bring them home to the altar of God.

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Mass is not a comfort stop. It is a refuelling station.

We have the same gifts as the Apostles had. Think of that. We must never be afraid to use them. God alone knows whether our mission in our time in this place will be successful. What He will want to know is whether we were faithful or whether, without a word, we left the lost to perish.

Take this season to re-read Acts and then ask God to cleanse your soul in reconciliation and rekindle the fire of the Holy Spirit on the altar of your heart and use you to bring others to a knowledge and love of Jesus.