

The Living Word

Sixth Sunday of Easter, Year B

9 May 2021

First Reading

Acts 10:25-26. 34-35. 44-48

The gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the gentiles also.

As Peter reached the house Cornelius went out to meet him, knelt at his feet and prostrated himself. But Peter helped him up. 'Stand up,' he said, 'I am only a man after all!'

Then Peter addressed them: 'The truth I have now come to realise' he said, 'is that God does not have favourites, but that anybody of any nationality who fears God and does what is right is acceptable to him.'

While Peter was still speaking the Holy Spirit came down on all the listeners. Jewish believers who had accompanied Peter were all astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit should be poured out on the pagans too, since they could hear them speaking strange languages and proclaiming the greatness of God. Peter himself then said, 'Could anyone refuse the water of baptism to these people, now they have received the Holy Spirit just as much as we have?' He then gave orders for them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterwards they begged him to stay on for some days.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 97:1-4. R. see v.2

(R.) The Lord has revealed to the nations his saving power.

or:

(R.) Alleluia.

1. Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders. His right hand and his holy arm have brought salvation. (R.)
2. The Lord has made known his salvation; has shown his justice to the nations. He has remembered his truth and love for the house of Israel. (R.)
3. All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy. (R.)

Second Reading 1 Jn 4:7-10

God is love.

My dear people,
let us love one another
since love comes from God
and everyone who loves is begotten by God

and knows God.
Anyone who fails to love can never have known God,
because God is love.
God's love for us was revealed when God sent into the world his only Son so that we could have life through him; this is the love I mean:
not our love for God,
but God's love for us when he sent his Son to be the sacrifice that takes our sins away.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

**All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them and we will come to them.**

Alleluia!

Gospel Jn 15:9-17

No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.

Jesus said to his disciples:

'As the Father has loved me,
so I have loved you.
Remain in my love.
If you keep my commandments
you will remain in my love,
just as I have kept my Father's
commandments
and remain in his love.
I have told you this
so that my own joy may be in you
and your joy be complete.
This is my commandment:
love one another,
as I have loved you.
A man can have no greater love
than to lay down his life for his friends.
You are my friends,
if you do what I command you,
I shall not call you servants any more,
because a servant does not know
his master's business;
I call you friends,
because I have made known to you
everything I have learnt from my Father.
You did not choose me,
no, I chose you;
and I commissioned you
to go out and to bear fruit,
fruit that will last;
and then the Father will give you
anything you ask him in my name.
What I command you
is to love one another.'



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

A pagan Roman officer was so evidently graced by the Holy Spirit that St Peter realised that the followers of Jesus Christ need not be constrained within the confines of Judaism. This incident, together with St Paul's mission, has helped Christianity spread to every tribe and nation on the face of the earth.

'Catholic' simply means 'world wide', and the Church's universal mission is to preach the truth of Christ's victory over death and the true meaning of love: 'No greater love can a man have than to lay down his life for his friend.'

In our experience, this is best exemplified in the desire of a mother or father to substitute themselves for a dying infant or child. Our Lord practised what he preached with incredible intensity. He substituted himself for the whole of humanity dying because of a broken relationship with its Creator. He did so on behalf of us whom he calls friends, those with whom he wishes to share his victory over death.

This is the message entrusted to the members of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church to be spread to the people of every tribe and nation.

We could take a moment to pray that we better express our undying gratitude for our status as friends of the Risen Lord, and better do our part as missionary disciples spreading the news of his great love embracing the whole of humanity.

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