

Pentecost 2009

May 31, 2009

QUEEN OF PEACE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA
Rev. Jeff McGowan

1st Reading: Acts 2:1-11
They were all in one place together

Psalm 104
When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

2nd Reading: 1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13
To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.

Gospel John 20:19-23
The doors were locked where the disciples were for fear

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Who is the Holy Spirit? [*“The love of the Father for the Son”*] Nice, but so what? Jesus had flesh and blood. He could be seen and touched. But the Spirit is like the wind: you can’t see it, but you feel it. We, the Church, try to make the Spirit more tangible by anointing with Sacred Chrism at our baptisms, Confirmations and Priestly ordinations. The Spirit works within us and with us. Even though we can’t see, touch, embrace or taste him, he is here living in you and me. God is living in you and me.

When Glenn Cunningham was seven years old, his legs were so severely burned that doctors considered amputation. At the last minute they decided against it. One of the doctors patted Glenn’s shoulder and said, “When the weather turns warm, we’ll get you into a chair on the porch.” “I don’t want to sit, I want to walk and run, and I will.” The doctor walked away. Two years later, Glenn was running. The boy was not running fast but he was running. Eventually, Glenn went to college. His extracurricular activity was track. Now he was running because he was good at it. Soon intercollegiate records began to crumble

beneath his driving legs. Then came the Berlin Olympics. Glenn not only qualified and ran in them, but also broke the Olympic record for the 1,500-meter race. The following year, Glenn broke the indoor mile record. The boy who wasn't supposed to walk again became the world's fastest human.

It is a great and true story. But, you don't think that Glenn made it without suffering, do you? You don't think he made it without extraordinary effort, determination and inner strength, do you? Most people want to be healed but they don't want to suffer through the cure. Glenn was presented a horrible new reality for his life and he took the challenge and literally ran with it. Listen, my son, and you will arrive. Listen, God is within us.

As long as our families, houses, parishes, schools are only ordinary and proper places, they will awaken only ordinary and proper responses and nothing will happen. As long as we are only doing well what others are doing better and more efficiently, we can hardly expect to be considered the salt of the earth or the light of the world. Most people want progress but do not want to work for change. The Holy Spirit lights a fire within us, drives us and empowers us toward greater things.

The Holy Spirit is:

Working in people who dare to proclaim the Good news;

Working in people who risk their lives for others;

Working in people who help us when we are struggling; and

Working in you and me when we make our lives extraordinary.

My friends, there is enormous pressure on us to do what is ordinary and proper. The call we receive in Baptism; the call we receive in Confirmation; the call we receive in Priesthood is a call to move beyond the ordinary and proper toward a heroic adventure. What I am saying is that when human beings are willing to suffer for a good cause without counting the cost, to make the sacrifice greatness requires, to follow call of the Spirit of God that is within us, great things happen. The Holy Spirit isn't about making life easy, the Holy Spirit is about the spark, the fire, the courage to move from where it is comfortable, from where we want to stay, from where we feel at home to greater realities. The Holy Spirit is

living in you and in me, we've already got what it takes to meet our reality and take the challenge and run with it. The Holy Spirit is personal and that is good news!