

SsAM eBlast Reflection

05.26.23

Get FIRED UP!

Today we are blasé. Too many in our own SsAM real or virtual pews aren't reading this *E-Blast* or *Weekly Vision* at all. We show up at our preferred appointed hour and go home, or watch online and don't read what arrives in hand, by email, or through the website and complain in the parking lot or by email "we" don't know what is going on. So it was with the Apostles in their time, minus the parking lot and email, obviously, but surely by vendor stalls and in the courts of the Temple. Jesus was there, they had this confusing "Last Supper," then he was violently executed, Resurrected from the Dead, and tried hard to teach them so much, again, in a short time before he Ascended into Heaven and was gone, again? They were trying hard to understand, like, um, you know: NOW WHAT?! They were frightened and completely unsure about what to do next. So, 50 days after Passover, in the comfort of an ancient and venerable celebration of *Shavuot*, about God giving the Law to Moses who gave it to the Israelites at Sinai, these disciples, men and women, were gathered in an Upper Room when a violent wind roared in and...

We know the story too well; we are immune to the thrill and amazement of it. The churches are more crowded at Christmas and Easter yet come Pentecost, 50 days after Easter, all seems routine even if a "Festival Eucharist" is celebrated. Of course, Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter are all critical to our Christian history. We can't have gotten to this point at all without Christ's birth, death, resurrection ~ and ascension. But it was the arrival of the Holy Spirit, on *that* Pentecost, that fired up the Apostles. That was the moment that strengthened them, and gave them the courage and the understanding, that sent them around the known world proclaiming Christ, converting, and making the way for *us* to be the Church here, now, more than 2,000 years later. Without *that* Pentecost, the Birth Day of our Church, we probably would not know about Christmas or Good Friday or Easter, or Jesus our Christ/Messiah.

It is in these current times with fear, frustration, anger, and intolerance swirling around in ever more intense and too often violent levels, that we must take the time to stop and read the Sunday texts, and especially the passage from Acts 2:1-21 for ourselves with fresh awareness of what it must have been like for those in that Upper Room and then those outside.

For us, today is the day to move beyond merely knowing the story. Today is the day of knowing that the Spirit IS upon and within US ~ to be as awe-struck and dazzled and even as flabbergasted as the Apostles ~ and to be reinvigorated and excited. God's grace, and the love and Salvation of Christ *is* ours. THIS IS the DAY that the LORD has made! Let us truly rejoice and be glad and joy-filled, and *alive* in it! After all, what else is faith for?

On this 50th day after Easter, let us accept and welcome the extraordinary gifts and abilities bestowed on us, chosen for and unique to each of us, none better or worse, lesser or greater but simply different as are all parts of the Body. Let us be eager and enthusiastic in embracing all that a true life of faith calls us to be and to do, to live fully into the belief in the Christ that we claim to have. Let us strive to be all that Jesus and his wonderfully humanly imperfect disciples have shown us that we can be. We, too, celebrate, with our Jewish heritage, the giving of the Law on Sinai as our rules of life, transformed by Jesus into the *Greatest Commandment* [see Matthew 22:37-39].

On this *Birthday of the Church*, let us begin again to live as Children of God, equal one and all, using the language of love with each other and especially with those who aren't so lovingly inclined. Christmas is wonderful, and lovely, and blessed. Easter is fragrant and joyful. Let us not merely sit and DO Church, let us as Jesus and the Apostles tell us, get out and BE Church, *not only with our lips, but in our lives**. With Pentecost comes the true gift that brings fire to our souls and lifts our life's journey to a new level! GET FIRED UP!

*From "Evening Prayer" within the Daily Office found in *The Book of Common Prayer*, page 125, "The General Thanksgiving" and every Monday through Friday on SsAM's Facebook page at 5 p.m, and also 8 a.m. for Morning Prayer, and 8 p.m. for Compline [kom-plin].

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