

## A Sermon for Whit Sunday.

### The Day of the Lord.

It was on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, 50 days after the Resurrection that the Holy Spirit came upon St Mary, the Apostles and other faithful disciples of Jesus in Jerusalem.

The Holy Spirit had come upon Christ himself at His baptism, so now he came upon those who believed in Christ. Christ had promised them “Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you. And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem – Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.”

Our Blessed Lords promise as written in the Gospel according to Luke Chapter 24 Vs 49 “I am going to send you what my Father has promised, but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high” was indeed fulfilled at Pentecost, indeed the Prophecy of Joel had come true, “and afterwards I will pour out my spirit on all people, your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions, even on my servants both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those Days” Joel 2 :28.

On this day, the Church was constituted as a reality in history and its growth began, with the wonderful characteristic of Joy at its heart. So here we are on this day, reminded by today's Gospel “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you” St John deals with the miracles of Christ in a very real and explicit way, and there would arguably no greater miracle than this. He was to leave the world and yet remain, how could this be? Exactly what did He mean? Today's Gospel says so much about and in many ways summarises the earthly work of Our Saviour which in turn opens our minds to this profound final truth.

Many sceptics, doubters, non-Christians and others, view the last 2000 plus years and proclaim to be nothing more than a ridiculous farce. To them a man called Jesus may have lived and claimed to be the Son of God, but was nothing more than a fantasist, liar and fraudster, all came to nothing and the world has not changed from the evil and corrupt ways of old.

Of course, this is exactly what the devil wants the world to believe, this constant state of fear and confusion is frankly milk and honey to the doubters. Tragically, it creates the illusion that the devil, the prince of darkness was or is the victor when in fact he if know body else realises the reality of the situation.

The reality and fact of this Day of the Lord is very clear indeed. The Holy Ghost as Jesus promised descended upon the followers of Christ, His Church became a reality and from that day until this, every faithful follower of our Blessed Lord has been empowered to defeat evil in all of its forms. Every Sunday here in Lincoln, we are reminded as we gather in St Katherine's Cathedral that only twenty short years ago it was derelict and abandoned. Through the power of the Holy Spirit we were empowered to reclaim it for the Kingdom as God's house of Love, Prayer and Praise.

The Keys to the gate of heaven, the Way to that gate and the reality of the promise of eternal life had finally been revealed, the last piece of the jig saw now in place and the means of man's salvation revealed to us all.

St John unlocks the great mystery.

As with all best kept secrets, the basics are so easy to grasp and understand. But to understand the workings of the Ways of the Kingdom, the human mind has to be willing to have unconditional Faith in the reality of God as Creator; Christ as Redeemer and the Holy

Ghost as the Comforter, this as Christians we willingly accept as one co equal the majesty of the Trinity.

St John, not only clearly writes of that Reality, but he very carefully sets out for us the relationship of God and man. It is so beautifully simple. Here on earth the words of the Prophet Joel have been fulfilled:- Christ and His bride the Holy Catholic Church lives in the glory of the Trinity and we the faithful followers of Christ have been truly blessed by the knowledge and reality of Christ within us.

Christ tells us "because I live, ye shall live also" "on that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and He in me and I in you" So here we have revealed to each of us the promise of eternal life and the explanation of the reality of our relationship with God. But what of the doubters and sceptics you may ask, why can they not see or discern the truth? One reason may be, is that they try to look at things in a more logical way, you might say a human way so if they cannot see it then its reality does not exist. There are very many people in the world today that hold this view, they have allowed themselves to be blinded by worldly pleasure blinded by the prince of darkness.

In truth, the devils way is dimly light and only by the light of the fire of the furnace of hell can his followers follow him. Often by the time the truth really dawns, for many it can be too late. Sadly before the Corvid 19 virus took hold with such tragic consequences, many in our country find themselves trapped in a vicious spiral of debt, homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction, poverty and child exploitation.

The world has stood idly by whilst children die of preventable illness, starvation, displacement and conflict. This is what happens when the world follows the way of the devil, where now even so called Christian nations like our own are in denial. Despite huge progress with new wonder drugs, welfare and hygiene standards, improved food production and better housing and healthcare, the injustices continue. The rich get richer whilst the poor are led to that place where evil thrives.

As Christians, we have a duty to Christ to go out and tell the Good News story. The world truly can be a better place it is crying out for Love, Peace and Justice. WE know the Truth by Faith so we are not alone, our daily burden is a shared one as are our sorrows and concerns. This is the reality of having the COMFORTER within us and us in the Comforter. No wonders those early followers of Christ were "filled" with Joy. During every step of the way God is with us, guiding us each and every day. Ready to lift us when we stumble, challenge us if we stray, guide us in our thoughts and actions, enables us to have the courage to stand firm and fast not just for the Truth once revealed, but most importantly to influence society for the better.

The world is starved of Love and Peace, but the Victory is resoundingly won. The victory is HIS and by our faithfulness the victory is our also. We are very members of the Kingdom by adoption and grace, the line from that day to this complete and unbroken, the line complete so the words of St John say it all (he being the last survivor of their company) "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye may have fellowship with us: yea our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" 1 John Chapter 1 Vs 3.

As I said a little earlier, today more than ever people need to not only feel love but to be loved.

St François de Sales wrote the following: - "Love is called the first fruit of the Holy Spirit, because it is to us a very product of the Tree of Life – the spirit of God Himself, grafted upon

our spirits, and dwelling in us by His great mercy. Poverty enriches it, renunciation becomes sweet to it, and all manner of trial is welcome, inasmuch as its best life is to die for Christ. Thus love is at once a virtue, a gift, a fruit and a beatitude.”

May God Bless You

In Christ

+Ian