

**The Lessons Appointed for  
Use on the  
First Sunday after Pentecost:  
Trinity Sunday**



Year C  
RCL

Romans 5:1-5  
John 16:12-15  
Psalm 8

**The Collect**

- Romans 8:14-17
- Psalm 104:25-35, 37
- John 14:8-17

The Collect

O God, who on this day taught the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Call to Worship

Psalm 104:25-35, 37

O LORD, how manifold are your works! in wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

**Yonder is the great and wide sea with its living things too many to number, creatures both small and great.**

There move the ships, and there is that Leviathan, which you have made for the sport of it.

**All of them look to you to give them their food in due season.**

You give it to them; they gather it; you open your hand, and they are filled with good things.

**You hide your face, and they are terrified; you take away their breath, and they die and re-**

**turn to their dust.**

You send forth your Spirit, and they are created;  
and so you renew the face of the earth.

**May the glory of the LORD endure for ever; may  
the LORD rejoice in all his works.**

He looks at the earth and it trembles; he touches the  
mountains and they smoke.

**I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will  
praise my God while I have my being.**

May these words of mine please him; I will rejoice  
in the LORD.

**Bless the LORD, O my soul. Hallelujah!**

**Romans 8:14-17**

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ – if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

*The Gospel*

**John 14:8-17**

Philip said to Jesus, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the

Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”

## SERMON

It's Father's Day! That's why nobody's here today – everybody's out doing nice things with Dad. I have to work, but I understand, and am happy for the other fathers who are out doing fun stuff. It's also Trinity Sunday, when we celebrate the mystery of the Trinity – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When Father's Day intersects with Trinity Sunday it is a particularly happy coincidence. It gives us an opportunity to think about the giving and receiving of gifts from our earthly fathers, and the giving and receiving of gifts from our Heavenly Father.

Last Sunday was Pentecost but I was prevented from delivering my Pentecost sermon, as I told you, so today I'd like to look at the gift of Pentecost – the gift of the Holy Spirit. Our friends in the Jewish community also



have a festival at this time of the year, called Shavu'ot. Just as Pentecost celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit, Shavu'ot celebrates the gift of Torah at Mount Sinai and so is called the “Festival of the Giving of Our Torah”. The Festival of the giving of the Torah, rather than the Festival of the receiving of the Torah. The gift of Torah, the Law, was a one-time event. The receiving of the law, is the work of a lifetime. Giving and receiving – two intimately interconnected but different things. We can celebrate the giving as an event, and remember it annually, but the receiving of the gift is a process – we are constantly in the process of receiving, evolving, changing, deepening our understanding.

For Christians, Pentecost celebrates the giving of the Holy Spirit, but I would suggest that we follow the wisdom of our brothers and sisters in the Jewish community and recognize that we are constantly in the process

of receiving the Holy Spirit. We receive it every day, and by virtue of the work of the Holy Spirit, we are constantly changed.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”

It is the repeated and constant receipt of the Holy Spirit, teaching and directing us, which actualizes all that Christians do, and it is necessary for the Holy Spirit to be given to us constantly because we live in a world which lives by its own understanding. The world in which we live draws us to live acceptable, even praiseworthy, lives by the lights of the world. God demands more than that of His children.

**The Holy Spirit never enters a man and then**

**lets him live like the world. You can be sure of that.<sup>1</sup>**

What that says to me is that you cannot receive the gift of the Holy Spirit if you are content and happy as a person of the world and you cannot do the work of transformation without the aid of the Holy Spirit. It is for this reason that Paul reminded his church in Rome:

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ – if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

What a thought! We are children of God, and if children, then heirs of God! Can you wrap your mind around that? Heirs of God. Beloved children invited

<sup>1</sup> A.W. Tozer, “A Man of God”

into the family business! My grandfather began Ashland Sanitary Milk Company more than a century ago to provide safe, Pasteurized milk to our community. My dad then took the helm. When I graduated, Dad asked me if I wanted it. I declined. Dad sold it and it stands empty to this day. Our heavenly Father expects more enthusiasm from His heirs than that! He expects commitment, commitment to do more than to sit in a church. Commitment to be about the family business in the world for you have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit, a gift denied to the world which cannot receive it.

This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.”

Kathy and I have a unique perspective on the ways of the world because we sat through many sentencings. In serious cases, there is an opportunity for “victim's elo-

cution”, a time when the victim of a crime can address the harm done. In murder cases, it will rip your heart out. So often I looked into the eyes of those who had done terrible things. Sometimes I saw a child, huddled and afraid, and sometimes I saw anger and defiance, and sometimes I saw death, a soul who still inhabited a body, but which was, nonetheless, already dead to empathy, dead to community, dead to an awareness of his holy siblings all about him. Mostly, I became aware that I could not know the paths these men and women had walked which had so ill-formed them, and after a time, I found I could no longer engage in the pleasant pastime of dividing the world into heroes and villains, placing ourselves with the former! My colleague, Jeremy James, put it this way in a conversation exactly five years ago, to the day. He said:

**I often think about the way regulars at a lo-**

**cal dive bar live with one another. Everyone knows they're broken down drunks but there isn't judgment passed because everyone knows that they themselves are in the same boat. Too often we in the church forget our brokenness or never really got a good look at ourselves in the mirror behind the bar.**

Over and over the Advocate teaches us that all have sinned and fallen short. ALL of us. We all have 'selves' (the enemies of our good true selves) to fight, and only in so fighting are we adult, fruitful and happy.

The lessons the world whispers to us are the easy ones – we generally list them out in the ten commandments. The lessons the church teaches are sometimes only slightly less difficult – love your enemies, give to the poor, generally try to be a nice person. The lessons of the Holy Spirit are harrowing, difficult beyond human abilities. We cannot do them ourselves, but we do

not have to, for Jesus has promised us an Advocate to strengthen us. Thanks be to God for His Grace extended to us.

AMEN

## BENEDICTION

Jesus promised:

I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

Be aware of the voice of the Advocate within you.

You will hear it if you will attend closely. Be aware, church.

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;  
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

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