

## FROM THE PASTOR

My dear brothers and sisters,

This weekend is Pentecost – the Feast of the Holy Spirit. We hear in the first reading about how the Holy Spirit descended upon the Disciples gathered in prayer in the Upper Room. There was a strong driving wind, and tongues, as of fire, that came to rest on them. This is how God chose to manifest Himself with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. But who is the Holy Spirit?

When we look to God, we can imagine the Father (since most of us have had a father), and we can have an idea of what the Son looks like, since He became human like us, but we're not always sure about the Holy Spirit. After all, who can really relate to a tongue of fire, or the wind, or a dove? But the Holy Spirit *is* truly God in all things, as the Father is God, and the Son is God, except He is not the Father or the Son.

Last weekend, we heard from the second reading that “God is love.” Love is not an emotion, or a random force out there, but relationship – relationship of self-giving from one person to another. We see this love relationship in the “God-head” as the Father perfectly, completely and eternally pours Himself out to the Son, and the Son perfectly, completely, and eternally returns that love from the Father. This love is so real that He is an eternal person – the Holy Spirit (incidentally, this is why we see marriage as a reflection of God – the husband and wife love each other so much, that love becomes real; so real that sometimes, nine months later, you may have to give it a name – the love becomes a person). The Holy Spirit is the love uniting the Father and the Son, eternally given to each other.

This Holy Spirit – this love bond – IS THEN GIVEN TO US! Jesus said, “As the Father loves me, so I also love you.” The Father eternally pours out His love – the Holy Spirit – to the Son, and so the Son (Jesus) also pours out that love (the Holy Spirit) into us. Now, we are united into the very Heart of God! How great is our dignity!! We too often lose sight of this fact, what God has made us. Of ourselves, we can do nothing, but God has raised us so high, that, with the Holy Spirit, our dignity is higher than the angels!

God the Holy Spirit gives us His seven-fold gifts in Confirmation (you remember, right? Wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord or wonder and awe). These gifts have been given to us so that we can grow in holiness, so that we can come to a deeper relationship with God, allowing His love to flow in and through us. May we stir up these gifts in our lives – stir up the movement of the Holy Spirit – so that when we leave this world, we may enter fully into the Heart of God!