

## Pentecost - B - 2018

Acts 2.2-11//Galatians 5.16-25//John 20.19-23 or John 15.26-27; 16.12-15

→there once was an elderly woman who had four grown sons

→the woman lost her home to fire, so the sons thought it would be good to build their mother a new home....however along the way they encountered some trouble.

→[you see] the first son was a carpenter but he didn't know anything about plumbing, masonry or electrical work.

→the next son was an electrician but he didn't know anything about carpentry, plumbing or masonry

→the third son was a brick layer...but he didn't know anything about plumbing, electrical work or carpentry

→and as you might guess the fourth son was plumber...but he didn't know anything about electric, carpentry or masonry...

→and so...since they didn't know anything about the other building trades...and thought of themselves only as individuals...rather than a part of something much greater...

→ they decided there was no way any of them could build a new home for their mother...

→so the house never got built.

PAUSE

I tell that opening on this...the Feast of Pentecost...because as we hear in today's gospel reading...there is a similar situation happening among the disciples of Jesus

→...today we find the disciples still thinking of themselves more as individuals rather than a part of something much greater

→and so...Jesus says to them

→ *“I have much more to tell you but cannot bear it now...but when you receive the Spirit...he will guide you to all truth.”*

→in the hope that this group of disciples would finally “get” what Jesus...and his words...and his actions...and his ministry and mission....were truly all about

→because up to this point.....throughout all his time with them...no matter how hard he tried...no matter how often he showed them...no matter how often he explained things to them...the disciples just simply **“didn’t get it”**

→in the midst of trying to teach his disciples what God’s love was all about...they worried about who would be sitting at his right and his left...

→in the midst of trying to show his disciples what God’s presence was all about in their lives...they often doubted or showed a lack of trust in Jesus

→and in the midst of making the disciples aware of what they were being called to do...they often remained self-centered and individualistic...worrying and being concerned about their own needs and desires rather than being about what was expected or required of them...

→in simple words....they just **“didn’t get it”**

→and now 2000 years later...I have to wonder about so many of us today....family members, fellow parishioners, friends and people in general.....who like the disciples...who like those four sons...simply just **“don’t get it.”**

→and sadly...as I move on in life I am coming to the realization that there is a growing number of people today who just **“don’t get it”**...when it comes to faith...when it comes to church ....when it comes to believing.

→in my office files...I have no less than 5 funeral plans of people from this parish...who have come to me to plan their funeral mass...they have already picked out the readings and songs and made every plan...and you might be asking “**why**”...

→and the answer isn't all that surprising....it's because they are afraid that their children....

---who don't come to church anymore...

---who don't practice their faith even after being raised Catholic...

...won't bring them to church for a proper funeral mass when they die....because you see....they just “**don't get it**”

---

→this year we had 12 young 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders confirmed from this parish.

→for close to 6 months...they came to church most Sunday's...their parents and sponsors sat in on the preparation classes...

→in the last session I took the parents and sponsors aside and we had a good discussion about the challenges of keeping young people involved in the Church...practicing their faith....growing in what they believe

→...at that session the parents and sponsors agreed that a large part of making this happen was their responsibility

→that it primarily falls to them to see that the faith of their teenage son or daughter continues to grow and be nurtured...

→confirmation was on March 10...since then over ½ have not been seen back in church....because you see...**they just don't get it**

---

→each year attendance at our religious education classes on Sunday's continues to decrease...this year we had just over 40 students enrolled...I find it hard to believe that...in all of Champion, and Southington and Bristol schools there are only 40 students who are Catholic in grades 1-8....you see...**they just don't get it...**

→likewise...how many of you have children living with you at home...using your electric, gas and water, you pay for their cell phone and internet, car insurance and food and they aren't here in church with you most weeks....or even...grown children who weren't married in the church...who have children....your grandchildren....who aren't baptized or haven't received their first communion or aren't being brought up with any sense of a faith life...because you see...**they just don't get it**

→sadly....it would appear that much hasn't changed from the time of Christ to today...

→but what is different is all of us....you and me....who are here each week...who believe...who practice our faith...who strive to live the gospel message in our lives....

→....**we get it**....and that is what we celebrate today

*PAUSE*

→on Pentecost...and each and every Sunday...God continues to pour out the Holy Spirit touching the lives of each one of us...

And today....is all about being able **to see** and **to sense** how God has touched each of us with the gifts that are necessary for a life of faith.

→this feast is about believing that the power of the Holy Spirit has been poured out upon each of us...

→and in doing so... we recognize that Christ is alive in each of us...that Jesus stands in our midst in the person sitting next to you and the gift of his presence is a life-changing moment...i.o.w. **we get it.**

→today we recognize that it is Christ offering to us his gift of peace and wholeness into our lives

→God's spirit comes to us to make us whole:...healing us where there is pain...giving us hope where there is despair...and life where there is death...

*PAUSE*

→in a few moments we will say to each other "peace be with you"...and to say that to one another is to offer the Pentecost gift of a new creation...a new life... a new future..

--into our fragmented, disjointed, and often dis-spirited lives...

→the Lord is in our midst in the person next to you offering you the gift of "peace"...the gift of the Spirit...God's dwelling in each of us...giving our life meaning and direction...purpose and depth

→on that first Pentecost...Jesus gathered his disciples together and breathed on them...bestowing the Spirit of life to them...and it is that same Spirit that is a part of you and me today....

→so rejoice and be glad...because the Spirit is alive in you and in me...**we get it**

And pray for those who still lack the insight and wisdom...who perhaps remain stubborn and close-minded...

that someday they too will finally **get** what you and I already have