

**In the Name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ and may our Lord and Savior sanctify you in the truth, for His word is truth. Amen**

**Fifth Sunday of Easter [Cantate] (2022)**

**The Spirit Glorifies Christ Who Redeems You**

**Rev. Toby Byrd**

***“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” (John 16:12–15, ESV)***

The Season of the Church Year is filled with anticipation. There is the Third Sunday in Advent, Gaudete, anticipating Christmas. The Fourth Sunday in Lent, Laetare, the joyous anticipation of Easter, and today, Cantate Sunday, the Church’s great anticipation of Pentecost: of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

This blessed Sunday derives its Latin name from the summons of the Introit, to: ***“Sing to the LORD a new song.”*** This summons rings out in our Old Testament Reading for Today too. For those of you familiar with the liturgy of the Service of Prayer and Preaching, you will recognize the Old Testament Reading as the Old Testament Canticle in that service. So we sing and prepare for the approaching high feast of the coming of the Holy Spirit as we learn today of the close connection between our LORD’S departure and the sending of the Paraclete, the Helper, the Holy Spirit.

In today’s Gospel Reading the LORD tells us that unless He departs from this earth, the Holy Spirit will not come to be our Helper. However, after His departure, our LORD Jesus will send the Holy Spirit to sanctify us by leading us into the holy, catholic, and apostolic church there to be held in its bosom and preserved by the preaching of the Gospel, which glorifies Christ through whom we are redeemed. Thus, the Holy Spirit becomes the Leader, the Teacher, and the Advocate of the faithful. Yet there will be one great difference between the work of the Spirit and the work of the LORD. Our LORD Jesus performed His work among us visibly with His teaching, healing, and redeeming, but the Holy Spirit will perform His work among us invisibly, working in hearts of God’s people, sanctifying them through the gift of faith. That gift which can be seen by the LORD as He looks into our hearts. Therefore, this morning, we call upon the Holy Spirit to help us understand Scripture’s exclamation of how *The Spirit Glorifies Christ, the One who Redeems you.*

It is the night before the agonizing crucifixion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ whereby He paid the penalty for our sins. On this night He spoke to His apostles regarding His death. Death, that final act of the living which is a topic mostly verboten among the living. Without question the apostle were uncomfortable with the subject, especially when it came to their LORD. So, too, when death stands at the door, pastors generally find that family members don’t want to discuss the issue. Eternally optimistic, the living want to change the subject. We’ll have no discussion of death here they say. Death is not something we want to discuss because it brings it all too close to ourselves. But for the one who is a follower of Jesus Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, death is not this verboten subject. To the contrary, death becomes the great anticipator of the promised reward of eternal life for those who die in Christ. St. Paul reminds us, ***“No one can say “Jesus is Lord” except in the Holy Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:3, ESV)*** How fortunate are those who are

on the threshold of death but who are also in Christ. Such as these they are filled with the Holy Spirit who strengthens their faith in their last hours. When a pastor speaks to them regarding the inevitable, they do not shy away, but gladly speak of the reward promised to them by Christ Jesus, the promises of the Gospel, the forgiveness of sin and life eternal. They desire that the pastor hear their confession, absolve them, as they yearn for the blessed meal of the Lord's Supper. Please pastor, consecrate me and feed me one more time the blessed body and blood of my LORD, Jesus Christ whose face I shall soon see. How blessed it is to be a Spirit filled follower of Jesus Christ. On this last night when our LORD'S death is impending, He consoles His apostles by offering them this same blessing and the promise, feeding them His body and blood and strengthening them with the same Holy Spirit who *Glorifies Christ, their Redeemer*.

Yes, our LORD'S death is imminent, His hour has come. In announcing His death our LORD Jesus told His apostles that life after Him would be difficult. But He also reminds them that He alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life and no one comes to the Father except through Him (John 14:6). In fact, without Him there to preserve them, to remind them of this truth, the world and Satan would work very hard to take this truth away and turn the apostles away from Christ, turning them to Satan and the world.

This truth of their LORD'S impending death was news of great sorrow to the apostles. However, to defend them from their despondency and from falling away, ensuring them that He was not abandoning them, He would send them One who would comfort them and keep them in the faith. This One would remind them of all that Jesus had said so they may in turn proclaim the truth of His life, death, and resurrection for the forgiveness of sin. He would send them the Paraclete, the Helper, the Holy Spirit. But unless He fulfilled the will of His Father in heaven and gave His life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, the Holy Spirit would not come and the fullness of God's plan in Christ Jesus for the redemption of man would not come to pass. He is telling His apostles, if I do not fulfill the plan of My Father, all will remain as it is: everything will continue in the old way, the Law of Moses will prevail, the pagan will remain blind in their sinfulness, and sin and death will have their sway. Unless I die tomorrow, there will be no deliverance from sin and thus, no salvation. My coming would have been in vain, the world will remain under the wrath of My Father.

But if I die, if I go away, the Helper will come and He, ***“will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” (John 16:8–11, ESV)***

What a blessed message not just for His apostles, but for all who come after them as followers of Jesus Christ. First, our LORD'S death brought judgment upon Satan. His dishonorable and traitorous act against God in the Garden of Eden has been overcome. God's wrath against the sin of man is satisfied in the death of His Son, man can now look to his Redeemer, our LORD Jesus Christ and be assured of God's forgiveness. Thus, Jesus tells us, ***“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.” (John 16:13, ESV)***

The Holy Spirit in unison with the Son, guides the flock of Jesus in the truth, speaking what He has heard from the Father and the Son. He brings us to faith, opening our ears that we may hear and believe the promise of the Gospel, the forgiveness of sins and the reward of life eternal for all who believe in Christ Jesus. With that blessed gift of faith comes numerous gifts and blessings, none more important than His calling of faithful pastors and teachers of the Gospel. Their vocation bears much fruit as saints are produced and multiplied, each with their unique

gifts. Thus, through this blessing the Church of Christ grows through the calling of thousands upon thousands of faithful followers. Moreover, this growth is not accomplished by the Law, but by the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone. It is not through morality, piety, fundamentalism, or free will that the holy catholic and apostolic Church grows, but solely through the proclamation of the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus through the living power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of God's children. Yes, it is *The Spirit Who Glorifies Christ, the One Who Redeems You* and gives you eternal life.

Glorifying Christ, the Holy Spirit brings you to faith, sanctifying the lives of believers, calling you by the Gospel, leading you to grow in faith while also leading you to the Last Day. He comes to you in the blessed waters of Baptism (Acts 2:38), opening your hearts to believe in the forgiveness of sins won for you by Christ Jesus. St. Paul reminds us in his letter to Titus, ***“But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”*** (Titus 3:4–7, ESV) Thus solely by the grace of God we are washed in the waters of Baptism, regenerated, and renewed by the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ. Notice, here is a clear reference to the grace and mercy of the Holy Trinity to save you from sin and bring you to faith in Christ Jesus. All accomplished through the working of the Holy Spirit in Baptism.

Thus, filled with the Holy Spirit, we are now led to confess that we, *“cannot by [our] own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, [our] Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called [us] by the Gospel, enlightened [us] with His gifts, sanctified and kept [us] in the true faith.* Moreover, He also, *“calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith.”* Where, *“He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers.”* And *“On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.*

It is true that the impending death of their LORD brought great discomfort and sadness to the apostles, but our LORD gave them comfort and hope in return. Oh, not on that fateful night when He was arrested, but later at His resurrection and on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out richly upon the Christian Church. So, too, the impending death of a loved one brings us sorrow and discomfort, but if we are led by the Spirit of Christ to be true believers in the promises of the Gospel, our sadness is overcome by the knowledge that our loved one in Christ Jesus is going to their final reward, life in heaven for all eternity to live with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To live with the angels and archangels and with all the saints in heaven. There to await our arrival where we who are led by the Holy Spirit will be reunited with those we love.

Yes, the apostles anticipated the morrow with dread, but the church anticipates the morrow of life everlasting with great joy because we have been blessed to be recipients of *The Spirit Who Glorifies Christ Who Redeems Us*. Thus, with the words of the Introit and the Old Testament Reading for today, whenever a loved one in Christ is called from this valley of tears, we can joyously say, ***“Give thanks to the LORD, call upon his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, proclaim that his name is exalted. “Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be made known in all the earth. Shout, and sing for joy, O inhabitant of Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.”*** (Isaiah 12:4–6, ESV)

We are inhabitants of Zion through the Cross of Calvary, and through the Cross of Calvary we are heirs to the heavenly home of the Holy One of Israel, our LORD, and Savior Jesus Christ, but this truth would have remained unknown unless our LORD had not gone away so that He may

send to us the Holy Spirit to give us true faith in the atoning sacrifice of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sins. Thank you, Holy Father, Holy Son, and Holy Spirit, for saving us from the sting of death and the power of sin through the victory won for us by Christ Jesus on the Altar of the Cross. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

May the Peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.