

From The Pastor

Come Holy Spirit; enkindle in our hearts the fire of your love! On this feast of Pentecost may our lives be renewed in the power and the promise of love. Love is our origin, our constant call, and our fulfillment in heaven. This love is the love of God, who is the Holy Spirit.

Though our celebration of Easter is the pinnacle of the Church year, it is really Pentecost that fires the divine love of God into the world to this very day. Love, the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in our lives, is the promise of God. The whole Christian truth is God's promise in love.

The gift of God at Christmas is to know Christ in his humanity: the Incarnation of God in the flesh. Epiphany promises and reveals the divinity of Christ. The Passion and death of Jesus during Holy Week teaches us his dying to self in perfect self-surrender, promising the forgiveness of sins. The Resurrection of Jesus reveals the power of divine love over sin and death, as well as every calamity and disorder of human nature, and creation itself. The feast of the Ascension celebrates the cosmic Christ who ascends into the whole of creation, ever-present, ever new. Christ is the true identity, the true reality ever-present in all creation.

Pentecost serves as the feast of divine love given to the world through the promise of the Father. All creation is held in the unitive love of the Father, reconciled through the work of the Son, now sustained and sanctified in the love of the Holy Spirit. We cannot even exist without the Holy Spirit, who is the Lord and Giver of Life. To say, because we believe in Jesus we do not need the Spirit is not possible. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the permanent bond of love between the Father and the Son. This divine love is so perfect, so absolute and undivided that it proceeds forth onto the world for its creation, its order, and its union with the Father.

Only by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit can we say, "Jesus is Lord" (second reading). Why? It is only the Spirit who inspires us to see, recognize and trust that Jesus is God and Lord. The Lordship of Jesus is his full authority over every created thing. This Lordship is attained through Jesus' acceptance and triumph over suffering and death, in perfect love. In faith, we do not give ourselves to any other person or thing in this world in an absolute way except Christ, inspired and made possible only in the Holy Spirit. Nothing else is worthy of our dignity as God's children.

This is the Christian truth and our faith and trust in all it promises. We believe the Holy Spirit is always with us, and with all creation. We are in God and God is in us. Ever with us, the Spirit is always coming to us anew. Each day is a new opportunity to grow and mature in love and spiritual awareness. As we grow, the Spirit is ever present with new grace for the next step. And there is always a next step. We can always mature, and turn more completely to a life of love for God, self, and others.

As people of the Spirit, are our lives truly rooted in love? What is the motivation and inspiration of your life? For all that we do in life, ultimately our motivation is to be love. Love serves our deepest purpose and fulfills our deepest joy. It probably doesn't feel like love when you get up to go to work every day, but ideally it is for the care and needs of your family and yourself, giving stability and order to your existence. It expresses and sustains love.

Is love not the joy, peace, and fire of our existence? Why would we accept the trials and pains we do except for the satisfaction and fulfillment of love? Without love our lives shrivel up and become disordered in any number of ways. This is the root and source of all sin. Sin is the impoverishment of love. We begin to look for love in all the wrong places. Separated from love inclines us to think we can be self-sufficient, if not selfish and self-centered. Lacking the self-worth and dignity that love would naturally afford us we can become trapped in seeking things that we think will fill our inner void. Instinctively we know this will never work. There is no substitute for love.

If our motivation for life has lost a grip on love, we can quickly lose ourselves in the disorder of greed, wealth, power, control, prestige, or any number of false identities in our search for happiness. All these things will only serve as a mask that hides our need for love in our true self.

The love of God is our hope and our joy. It is the promise of God, revealed in Christ, now present in the Spirit. It is the gift, free and unlimited, that keeps on giving. As the life of Jesus shows, love calls for self-giving surrender. Yet, it also proves that love is truth and life: eternal life in God.

Come Holy Spirit; touch my life in a new way with your love. I desire Jesus to be Lord in my life. Fill me with the Spirit of Jesus, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit that I may accomplish your will for me in love. Amen.

Thank you to all who have given to the CSA. We are off to a good start, over \$13,500.00 in the first week. Please pray and respond to this important work.

May the Holy Spirit fill you with new joy and peace.
Father John Esper