PEACE Be With You Podcast May 11, 2023 - Pentecost
Fr. Ryan Fischer and Dave Baumgartner

Dave: **And** welcome everyone to another edition of The Peace Be With You podcast, brought to you by St. Anne's Episcopal Church in Warsaw. And uh, today we're gonna be talking about something very, very important to all of us. And that is of course, the Pentecost. And we're gonna be talking to Father Ryan and we're going to explore the different gifts, of course, the greatest of those being the Holy Spirit, which is what Pentecost is all about. So stay with us. I think you'll enjoy the podcast. And there's a lot of great insight that we'll receive from Father Ryan regarding the Pentecost.

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Dave: **And** welcome back everyone to the Peace Be With You podcast. I'm Dave Baumgartner, and we're talking today to Father Ryan and we're talking about a very, very important subject. He and I were talking before we started recording about the Pentecost and Father Ryan's gonna give us some insight on the Pentecost, which is very important to all of us because it provides us with an avenue to talk to God and experience God on a day-to-day basis, and least in my mind, through the Holy Spirit. So Father Ryan with that in mind, go ahead and let's talk.

Fr. Ryan: Okay, thank you. 50th day of Easter is called Pentecost, and Pentecost as a root in Greek pent pente, which means five 50. Anything, any multiple thereof.

And so, so when we speak of the Easter, Celebration. It is, of course not just Easter Sunday, like I mentioned on our last podcast. It goes all the way from Easter Sunday to the day of Pentecost 50 days later, and what we celebrate on Pentecost is the descent of the Holy Spirit to God's people, the church, and then the Holy Spirit is the one who calls gathers, enlightens, makes holy god's people. And so it's very much not just a part of our faith individually. It's also, I think, a big part of the corporate expression of Christianity, insofar as the Holy Spirit created the church. And if we look to the second chapter of the Book of Acts, which gives a lot of insight into the life of the earliest gatherings of Christians, it'll mention how the Holy Spirit descended upon the people and they were brought together from all corners of the known world. Each having a tongue of fire resting upon each and, and they were speaking in all of these different languages, and yet God gave them through the spirit the ability to understand each other. And, and that was in essence on that day, the, the day of Pentecost,

that first day of Pentecost, which we now celebrate as the 50th day of Easter was, was the day on which the Christian Church as we know it was, was gathered. And so, if you want a little evidence as to, as to the origin of, of the church and the reason why we celebrate Pentecost. Well, you can look in particular to the New Testament to the second chapter of Acts.

Dave: Father, also, as you're talking about that, of course we have a group of Christians who feel that it's important and is this where the speaking in tongues originates? From people that are evangelical.

Fr. Ryan: Yeah. Pentecostal, definitely. Yes. And, and their, their expression of the spirit is very much tied to that speaking in tongues, which is a gift. And it's a gift noted by the Apostle Paul in particular, and he's pretty clear that this is a real thing, but it's not that everyone has the gift of tongues.

Dave: And so, as Episcopalians, for example, we're, we're a little bit more cautious about expression such as that because we know that tongues is but one of many gifts and, and the Holy Spirit indeed is the giver of all kinds of gifts. And so, So we're, we're going to emphasize that each one of us coming from all corners of life to the church, has a gift of the spirit that we can bring. I have a friend, it's the Pentecostal of that division of Catholics or of division of Christians rather.

And I asked him one time, I said “Does that mean? I mean, if you can't speak in tongues, does that mean you're not saved? Or something like that?” And he goes, “oh, of course not.” He explained it just like you mentioned there, that it's a gift.(Yes.)And if in fact you have that gift and you speak in tongues, then so be it. But it's not any kind of indication, as to whether what the status of your soul is with the Lord.

Fr. Ryan: Exactly. Exactly. And, and we actually feel that the Holy Spirit is active in so many different ways throughout our lives, and especially as a church that, you know, the presence of the spirit is with us, particularly as we gather, but then also as we go forth, that, that this is the gift that Christ promised.

Because remember now we've, we've celebrated Easter. We've gone through 50 days and of course Jesus after his resurrection does not stay around forever. He ascends to be with his heavenly Father. And so naturally, Jesus’ early followers were very distraught that their friend is gonna be leaving them and what are they gonna have? And, so really Jesus promises his presence to be with his people forever. And that's what happens then. On the day of Pentecost, the spirit comes and, and essentially takes the place of the bodily person of Jesus Christ and, and sustains us with the spirit's own presence until the day, until the final day one could say so.

Dave: Yes. Right. Well, you know, that's the thing too. Had it not been for the gift of the Holy Spirit, I mean, I don't think the Christian religion would've flourished as it did, because, you know, it is such a dependent thing. I mean, and we're talking about the apostles who suffered. They were put in prison, they were tortured, they were killed in some cases. And to

suffer that kind of situation, you need guidance, you need help. And the Holy Spirit is there. I mean all of us that get up in the morning, you know, your prayer is, “Hey, help me through the challenges of the day”, and most of our cases certainly are no kind of challenges compared to what they went through.

Fr. Ryan: That's right. You know, and if you want evidence for the spirit's activity, you need only look to the fact that this Christian religion has survived all these millennia now, and the only reason I can explain that I thinkis the presence of the Holy Spirit within the Christian community.

Of course, the, the statistics may show that the number of Christians is declining, particularly in the United States and in Western Europe. But you know, there's evidence that it is growing elsewhere. And so we say that the spirit moves where the spirit pleases, and we really don't have any control over necessarily, you know our own destiny in terms of where our, our statistics go. But, you know, trusting in the spirit, we know that God can give the growth and maybe not in front of our own very noses, but always somewhere, the spirit is active and most of all, it's active in you and me too.

And that's the one. The spirit is the one who is our breath, our life. That keeps us going. It's pretty clear that if you go back enough through enough vocabularies and through enough etymologies and word origins, you'll see that spirit and breath are directly related and so what do we need? What do we need, to be alive? Well, we need breath, we need air. (And sure.) And so all of these images are related, particularly as we talk about the day of Pentecost. There's the image of wind, there's the fire, the image of fire, all of these important essential elements are all a part of what thihis day signifies and what God's presence means to us in these very basic forms.

Dave: Right, right. Well, the other thing too, that as I look across our church body, and our church family, you see the, the Holy Spirit manifest in many ways. Certainly not just, not in speaking in tongues necessarily, although that could be, but in the different talents that people have that are on display because of the work that they do within the church. I mean, we can go, you know, from your position all the way down to any of the members who have got talents as maybe carpenters, maybe singing or maybe organization of different events and all the different talents that people have. You know, those are gifts in my mind from the Holy Spirit.

Fr. Ryan: Oh, very much so. And, and we're, we're all empowered in, in our own ways, by the Holy Spirit to use our God-given gifts in service in the church and elsewhere. And, and I think that's a wonderful image. I know that the Apostle Paul talks about the gifts of the spirit as well. And he may use some examples that may not be all that familiar to us, but nonetheless, we have, we still have [Spiritual Gifts] in all these various ways, though we may use different words.
You talked about, you know, carpentry, uh, we talked about music, you talked about organization, you know, all of these, all these things, uh, hospitality. I mean that's a huge thing. Yeah. That's a huge gift of the spirit. I think that, that, that our congregation in particular is very gifted with and has just the right convergence of people to get a lot of great and

exciting things done. So,all the ways, this is Pentecost. This is Pentecost at work, right in our lives.

Dave: Let me ask you this question though, as they were gathered in the up upper chamber, Uh, do you think, I mean, were they expecting, they, they weren't really expecting that this is what that was gonna be? Did they have an understanding when, when the Lord said, I'm gonna send you a, um, uh, a gift. I'm gonna send you a way that you can talk to me and, and live each day through me. Did, did the apostles really? Oh, well that must mean that there's gonna be a Holy Spirit. They didn't think that, right?

Fr. Ryan: Yeah. I, I think judging by, especially reading the text and looking at Acts II, in particular, it's pretty clear that this was an unexpected event or eruption, if you want to think about it that way. And, it just happened. Mm-hmm. And so, you know, it's, it's pretty clear I think that, that the apostles didn't, didn't always have the greatest grasp of what Jesus is talking about. And so, so this may be another example of that.

Dave: Yeah. Yeah. Well, I would think it'd be almost terrifying. What they experienced there. But yet, the Lord had a way of opening up their hearts and, and their minds and stuff so that they could accept and come to an understanding of what the Holy Spirit was. (Oh, yes, yes.) And once, once they got that, once they realized that, then, there was, we know by example, there was a lot of strength that as you read through the, the gospels and stuff like that, what these people went through, what they experienced, there's no way you could get through that unless you had the strength of the Holy Spirit to get you through it.

I mean, they faced by all means, they face, they face death. They face, face torture, a rejection. I mean, the list goes on and on very much so. Yes. And, uh, you know, for them to get through that the Holy Spirit was just a, a necessity. It had to be there. And that's all part of. God's great plan.

No question about that in my mind. (Yes.) So, well, father, I tell you what, this is a fascinating subject and uh, it's coming up, uh, where we do that now in our church, we all wear red, correct? (Yep.) On that day and of course that signifies the fire. (Fire, exactly.)And on what took place, and it's just a special day and it's something, I think all of us that are really focused on this, celebrate it. I mean, people do it many different ways. In my particular way, I, in the morning, I do my meditation and my prayers. And by the way, I've heard an interesting definition of *praying is when we talk to God, meditation is when we listen for God's answer.* That's very good. I just think that's a fascinating way of looking at it. And I tell you what, I just really think that that's, uh, It's a key to our strength to face the challenges of the day, which again, I want to emphasize our challenges compared to the apostles challenges.

Really, you know, maybe not so much. Yeah. Not, not so much. Yeah, absolutely not So well, father, thank you so much for spending some time with you, with us and, uh, just, uh, you know, this is, uh, like I said, a great subject and it's a subject where we can draw an incredible amount of strength from. And, uh, I really appreciate you spending some time with us here.

Fr. Ryan: Well, thanks for having me over.

Dave: You bet. And that's this edition of The Peace Be With You podcast, talking about the Pentecost. And of course we'll be celebrating that in the next few weeks, and this podcast will go up on our Facebook channel. Julie Kuhn will put it up there. And so we appreciate everyone listening in and any comments that you might have, we're certainly interested in hearing them and also any suggestions that you might have in regard to what we could do as far as it goes to podcasts. Now we got plenty of things that we can talk about, uh, but we certainly want to listen to the congregation and, and if there's something you feel like that'd be something interesting to talk about. You know, and it doesn't just have to be me or Father Ryan. You can come on and talk on the podcast too. But we always want Father Ryan here because he's our scholar in that regard. So.

Fr. Ryan: Well, that's very flattering. Thank you. hahaha

Dave: Well, it's a fact as a matter of fact. So thank you so much for being with us. Thanks for listening everybody. And we'll be back once again soon with another Peace Be With You Podcast. So, until then, Peace be with you.