

THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT

May 2nd, 2005

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Invite those present to pause for a few moments of silent reflection and to offer any special intentions).

It's simply amazing. April is already over, and we're into the sixth week of the Easter season. Its good that the Easter season lasts as long as it does because it gives us the time we need to reflect more fully on Christ's suffering, death and glorious resurrection. We need as much time as we can get to plumb the depths of God's great plan of salvation. Not only does God give us time; God also gives us the Holy Spirit. Gift heaped upon gift: how incredible! This Sunday's gospel speaks to us of Christ's great gift, the Spirit, the Paraclete, who acts on our behalf, who speaks for us and through us. It is this Spirit of truth who leads us and all believers to God's divine truth. This Spirit is the manifestation of the love that unites us with the Father in Christ, and it is this same Spirit who dwells in our hearts. After Christ's resurrection, when we think that there is simply nothing more God could give us, the Spirit is poured out on us, into us and through us to the world. God's love truly is without end.

A reading from the holy gospel according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Leader: Jesus said to his disciples,

Side 1: If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever.

Side 2: This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

Side 1: I will not leave you orphaned; I am coming to you. In a little while the world will no longer see me, but you will see me; because I live, you also will live. On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.

Side 2: They who have my commandments and keep them are those who love me; and those who love me will be loved by my Father, and I will love them and reveal myself to them.

Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader: God, as we prepare to celebrate the feasts of the Ascension and Pentecost,

All: may we open ourselves to the outpouring of your Spirit.

Leader: May we always be mindful of your gracious love,

All: so that our lives may be an unending symphony of praise and thanksgiving to you.
We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, your Son and our redeeming Lord. Amen.