

Closing Prayer

God, who on this day of wonders
sent among us the Advocate,
the Spirit of truth;
set us on fire with the gospel of Jesus
and give us boldness to announce
the mighty works which you have wrought.
We ask this in the name of Christ,
who in the new life of the Spirit
is one with you, God, now and for ever.

Celebrating the Christian Year · Pentecost, Year C⁴

Pentecost

Principal Service readings

Acts 2.1-21 ¹	The Day of Pentecost
or Genesis 11.1-9	Babel, the confusion of language
Psalm 104.24-34,35b [or 24-36]	The glories of creation
Romans 8.14-17	The Spirit of adoption – Abba, Father
or Acts 2.2-21	The Day of Pentecost
John 14.8-17,[25-27]	'I shall ask the Father and he shall give you another Paraclete'

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
speak to our hearts in the stillness,
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

Gospel Reading

Jesus' promise of another Paraclete

⁸Philip said to Jesus, 'Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.' ⁹Jesus said to him, 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, "Show us the Father"? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

¹⁵If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you for ever. ¹⁷This 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.

⁴ *Celebrating the Christian year : prayers and resources for Sundays, holy days and festivals, years A, B and C* / compiled by Alan Griffiths. – 3 vols. – Norwich : Canterbury Press, 2004-5.

¹ The reading from Acts must be used as either the first or second reading.

[²⁵I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.]

John 14.8-17,[25-27] NRSV²

Comments and Questions

The foot-washing carried out by Jesus (13.1-38), symbolic of caring, carries also a sense of foreboding, as Jesus is willing to give himself up to death for his disciples. In chapter 14 Jesus encourages faith as he asks them to believe in the oneness between him and his Father (14.10-11). To know Jesus is to know the Father (14.7). Philip, however, shows his ignorance in asking his question (14.8). The problem lies in the disciples' lack of faith (14.11), because they have been presented with the evidence (14.11b). Belief in Jesus will lead the believer to do the works of Jesus, and even to excel the works of Jesus (14.12). This is made possible by Jesus' departure. However, the disciples will not automatically perform these greater works – they need to be done in the name of Jesus' (14.14). A crucial point to discern is that the continuing presence of the absent Jesus will be found in the worshipping community; as its members ask in his name and the Son is glorified (14.13).

Jesus will ask the Father to provide another Advocate (*parakletos*) on the departure of Jesus. This word first appears in the Bible in John 14.16.³ It was a word often used of someone who was called to help in a law court, and, in Jewish tradition, a word used for angels and prophets and just advocates before the court of God. It has complex meanings, referring to the Holy Spirit who replaces Jesus as an advocate and witness, but also as consoler.

Jesus is the former 'Advocate', who will ask the Father for 'another Advocate' (14.16). This is the 'Spirit of truth' (14.17). The Spirit of truth 'abides' with the disciples now and so they can have confidence in the future presence of the Spirit.

² *New Revised Standard Version Bible* is copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

³ In the New Testament, the term 'paraclete' appears only in the Johannine texts, and it is used only five times: John 14:16, 14:26, 15:26, 16:7; and 1 John 2:1.

Quotations

1

The word 'paraclete' is one of those rich Greek words that are difficult to translate completely. A paraclete is someone who defends and comforts, and speaks up for and helps a weak person. So the word 'paraclete' can be translated as 'advocate', as well as 'comforter', 'consoler', or 'helper'. Etymologically, the word 'paraclete' means 'the one who answers the call.' What a beautiful name!

Drawn into the mystery of Jesus through the gospel of John / Jean Vanier. 2004

2

It is the Paraclete Spirit, the 'Comforter', who grants us the courage to take to the streets of the world, bringing the Gospel! The Holy Spirit makes us look to the horizon and drive us to the very outskirts of existence in order to proclaim life in Jesus Christ. Let us ask ourselves: do we tend to stay closed in on ourselves, on our group, or do we let the Holy Spirit open us to mission?

Pope Francis

Related topics

For further study:

Mystery of the church; resurrection / ascension / Pentecost; paschal mystery; ministry in the church; sacraments, symbols of the church; evangelisation