

## INSPIRED WORD

April 4, 2018

### INTRODUCTION

This is our first meeting after Easter. Tonight we'll be looking at our march toward Pentecost. In Lent we were asking to come closer to God, to return to our first love. Now we're going to be talking about preparing for Pentecost. Come, Holy Spirit, come. We are now in the Easter season, alleluia, He has risen. (Review of pastoral team meeting and announcement of change.) When Joshua crossed the Jordan River, he came from a place he knew, which was 40 years wandering around in this desert place; he crossed the Jordan into this new land that the Lord was calling him to. The Lord said to him, *"Be strong and courageous and do not be afraid or troubled. The Lord your God is with you wherever you go."* (**Joshua 1:9**) So he took the whole people of Israel across that Jordan River to that new place. Now they didn't forget the love of the Lord and what they learned when they were wandering in the desert because many good things happened there. But we are crossing the Jordan River, my brothers and sisters. We are coming to a new place, a new time. And the times that we've had were good times – 30-plus years doing basically the same thing, in God's will, but we're sensing that that is about to change. And we need the Holy Spirit, the grace, the wisdom, the power of the Holy Spirit to discern exactly what, where and how to survive in the promised land. So between Easter and Pentecost, we're going to be looking at the upper room, the original room, where Mary and the apostles gathered together to receive the promise of the Father. And we're going to be reflecting on what happened in that upper room. We're going to be reflecting on it by looking at the "Ps of Pentecost" as we call them. The first one being Promise. This is the Father's promise; the Father's promise was the gift of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We're also going to be looking at Prayer. When they were in the upper room, they were praying, they were asking for that Spirit to come. They might have been repenting; they were committing themselves to what Jesus was calling them to, and they were living expectantly for what was going to happen. We're going to be looking at the Presence of God. They experienced the presence of God, with the tongues of fire and the wind, when the Holy Spirit came in power, when they witnessed His manifest presence, and felt His tremendous love and were changed. We're also going to be looking at the Power. They were filled with power; they had new courage; they had new confidence; they had new gifts of the Holy Spirit for mission. We're also going to be looking at Praise. When God comes and touches your heart, what do you feel like doing? You feel like dancing; you feel like praising Him; you feel like standing up and jumping around. And then we're going to be looking at Proclamation. You can't stay in the upper room. They went out, bringing the good news, speaking about the mighty works of God and also doing the mighty works of God. It wasn't just talk; it was also action. So we'll be looking at these in the weeks to come, pondering them, but also incorporating them into our

own lives and our community. We're going to be asking for, crying out for a Pentecost of outpouring, a new Pentecost of outpouring for the church, for our diocese, for our parishes, but primarily for this community, primarily for us, primarily for you, because if we're going to do the mission that God wants us to do, we have to have the power of the Holy Spirit. Why are we doing this? We are a charismatic prayer group with a legacy and we have to be true to that legacy. (Brief history of the Catholic Charismatic movement and related comments from Pope.) To live out this legacy and carry out our mission we need a new Pentecost, a new pouring out of the Holy Spirit for each one of us personally and for this community. We've crossed over the Jordan and some of you might not want to be over here. But we are over here; we've crossed the Jordan to a new place and God's calling us to a new place, a new time, and maybe even new things and new ways of operating. So can we ask Him – no, we must ask Him, we have to cry out to Him – Come, Holy Spirit, come, with Your revival fire. Come, Holy Spirit, with Your Pentecostal power. Come, show us the path that you have chosen us to walk. Command us to walk it, and give us Your power, Your fire, Your zeal to accomplish the mission You've called us to. Let us not stand anymore in that comfortable place. No, let us walk; let us follow where the Spirit is leading us, no matter where that is. And in order to do that, we have to say amen to change in our hearts. We have to ask for the courage, ask for the flexibility, ask for the commitment and ask for the zeal, because we're not back there anymore; we're not wandering around in the old place anymore. We're in a new place and we need a new Pentecost, brothers and sisters, each and every one of us. There isn't any going back; we can't go back. Once they got into that new place, they didn't go back again. So we thank God for what we've learned in the place we've been; we thank Him for those times, the word that He gave us, the graces that He's poured forth, and we look with expectancy now, and maybe a little bit of nervousness perhaps, for what He is going to do. We are praying for that; we are praying for that vision, we are praying for a new Pentecost for each and every one of us – here, now, as we march toward the great feast of Pentecost. Are you ready? It takes a personal commitment; it takes a personal commitment for each and every one of us. Each one of us needs to say yes to that; if we can't say yes to that, we shouldn't really be here. So here we are; we are here. I thank you for that, and we pray for each other, and we march forward with those Ps of Pentecost – promise, prayer, presence, power, praise and proclamation. So Lord, let that be true for us as we open our hearts to receive Your Spirit. Send us a new Pentecost. Amen. I have one more thing I need to say and that is that we may need to help each other in this new place. Pray for each other, encourage each other, help us really to go across that Jordan River and stay in that new place.

### **WORD OF WISDOM / PRAYER**

In all circumstances, sometimes when we're walking through dark places, we really can't discern the hand of God or really see what God is doing. But in the midst of that circumstance, in the midst of the doubt, in the midst of the darkness, God is working. He is working, even

though you can't see it, but He is working, and that is our faith. Lord, we just proclaim You and give You praise tonight.

### **SCRIPTURE / PRAYER**

**Psalm 63:1-8:** *O God, you are my God, early will I seek you, my soul thirsts for you; my flesh longs for you, in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. So I have looked for you in the sanctuary, to see your power and your glory. Because your loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise you. I will bless you while I live; I will lift up my hands in your name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise you with joyful lips, when I remember you on my bed, and meditate on you in the night watches; because you have been my help. Therefore in the shadow of your wings I will rejoice. My soul follows close behind you; your right hand upholds me.* Father, we just praise You and exalt You and magnify Your holy name, for You alone are worthy. Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb, worthy the Lamb of God. Worthy, worthy are You, O Lord. O Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Living God, we praise You and exalt You and magnify Your name. For You are the King, the holy King of kings, righteous and true. You're righteous in all Your ways. We do want to follow You all the days of our lives; we do praise You and exalt You and magnify Your holy name, and worship You and follow You, follow You in all the ways that You lead us. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray, halleluiah to the Lamb, the holy risen Lamb of God. Worthy, worthy, worthy is the Lamb. We praise You!

### **PRAYER**

The love in our hearts is a response, O God, to the tremendous love that You pour forth on us, in our lives and here and now in this place. Lord, help us to open our hearts to that love that You've poured forth, to Your mercy as You pour it forth, to that river of grace that You've poured forth. O God, change our hearts as we open them wide to You, and give us true zeal, O Lord, for Your work, for Your mission.

### **SCRIPTURE**

**Psalm 16:5-11:** *The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup.* I was thinking about that and it doesn't just say the Lord is my portion and my cup; it's "The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup." We choose Him and all that goes with that. *The Lord is my chosen portion and my cup; he holdest my lot. The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage. I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me. I keep the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved. Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul rejoices, my body also dwells secure. He does not give me up to Sheol, or let thy godly one see the Pit. He does show me the path of life; in his presence there is fullness of joy, in his right hand are pleasures for evermore.*

## **PRAYER**

Let us choose You, Lord, from our heart and choose the path that You have outlined for every one of us. We choose You, Lord, bring us close.

## **SHARING / SENSE / EXHORTATION**

In our opening song, part of one of the verses we sang said “the earth is filled with your glory” and I started daydreaming a little bit at that point about the glorious things in the earth that I’ve seen, like startling sunsets, rare and beautiful flowers, mountains, trees, everything in creation, sea turtles, everything in creation is filled with the Lord’s glory. And sometimes the Lord gives me a one-liner and I have to ponder it, and He did tonight. He said, “The earth is doing its part.” That left me sitting awhile. And then I heard Chuck’s talk about how this community has been building for 30 plus years, 50 years in the church at least, it’s been building. And I thought about that and added that to God’s one-liner of the earth doing its part, meaning creation, the flowers, the mountains, the sea turtles – they’re doing their part to shine His glory. And then Jimmie said that we are well able. Then God brought it to completion in me. He said, “You (all of us) are part of creation.” Therefore we are filled with God’s glory. This is how we’re able; this is how we cross the desert; this is how we stand up against giants; this is how we look in the eye of the enemy; this is how we are strong. Not under our own power, but because we are filled with His glory. This is how we will step into crossing the Jordan, into the new territory that God wants us to go. Lord, fill us with Your glory, let us want that glory. And when we get that glory, let us shine it out and proclaim it. That when someone looks at us, they can look upon us as a rare flower, as a sunset, and say, “That’s the creation and the glory of the Lord.”

## **CONFIRMATION**

I just have to confirm that because the thing that I really felt ever since I heard Chuck talking about the Ps of Pentecost, and that like everything that God’s been speaking to me in my own personal life, but being filled with the glory of God is not just coming and being like, “Oh, that was a nice church service” or “isn’t that so nice.” It’s not just the shake-your-hand relationship and “see ya next week”. It’s being filled with power; it’s being filled with His love, even in that moment when we’re just standing in the desert going “how in the world are we here again? What did I do to get to the desert again?” - and you’re already feeling a little bit weary by the time you get to the desert, right? But being filled with His glory means that we have everything we need. He’s like “no, no, no, you don’t get it. When I say that I filled you, it doesn’t mean that you’re half filled; it’s doesn’t mean that the glass is half full and half empty. It means you’re filled.” And so you get to walk in that. You get to say, “Okay, even though I’m feeling so weary, Lord, I know that You’re working in all things.” Scripture says that He works all things for our good. **(Romans 8:28)**

## SCRIPTURE / PRAYER

**John 14:16:** *And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate who will never leave you. Another version says: And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another helper to be with you. And a third version says: I will give you another counselor; I will give you another comforter.* So we have the promise of Jesus Christ to have the Holy Spirit with us. And we praise and glorify His holy name, and we just thank Him forever for sending His holy Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross for us that we may be saved and He said that He will leave His Spirit with us. Alleluia!

## PROPHECY

And now, my beloved, I speak these words to you. Once again I come to you to say to you I love you. I come to you because I love you. I come not to harm you. Yes, it is a new journey but often I have said to you I will walk beside you; I will walk before you; and I will walk behind you. And so now I say as I have said before, be not afraid, for I send you forth and I say to you as I have said before - keep your eye on the vision. Let it not fade away, my beloved. The past has been glorious; the future will be greater. I have called you out of your comfort zone. For 33 years you have come and worshipped me and praised me, and now I say to you, move forth. Be seated no longer. Stand up and walk. Stand up and walk in the power that I have given you. Speak the words that you have learned. Tell others of my glory. Inform them of my works. This is not a time to be timid. This is a time that is...

## SCRIPTURE / WORD OF WISDOM

All this week God has been putting something on my heart and I asked Him as I was sitting there, let me know when to get up. So with what you said, I think this is the time. A reading from **Mark 2:3-5:** *And they came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. And we have heard this many times, and I heard it in my head a lot. But the next lines really touched my heart. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic lay. When Jesus saw their faith (that's our faith that we have), he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven."* So we need to remember the power... and even when we were talking tonight, it came again, my heart was beating again. The power of our community... we have it and we're going to need it going forward across the Jordan. And it brings me back to this: By our faith, we can be healed. We can have the strength to cross the Jordan, and we can have the strength to go out into this community and other communities and heal people, because the bible tells us and Jesus told us.

## SCRIPTURE

I've been reading this prayer from Jeremiah for the last three weeks or so. It seems appropriate for tonight. **Jeremiah 29:11-14:** *For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, plans for your welfare and not for your woe, so as to give you a future of hope. When you call*

*me and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all of your heart, I will let you find me, and I will change your lot. I will gather you together from all the nations and all the places to which I have banished you and bring you back to the places from which I have exiled you.* The part that really speaks to me is: I will let you find me. Don't worry about where He is sending you; He will let you find Him - absolutely.

## **PRAYER**

And so, Lord, we hear Your call tonight. You affirmed in us that we are filled with Your holy glory, Your Holy Spirit, and that we are to take that Spirit into this land, that we are to walk and not sit, that we are not to be content with the way things were but be expectant for the way they will be. Come, Holy Spirit, do Your work. Fill us, guide us, show us, send us.