

Day of Pentecost

**The Spirit of truth . . . will take what is mine
and declare it to you. (vv. 13, 15)**

One of my favorite images of Jesus is of him walking alongside the Sea of Galilee, where he called his first disciples. I watch him and see myself walking beside him and slightly behind, always on his left. I often call this image to mind when I pray, and my heart settles into an incomprehensible love that invites whatever I am feeling, needing, or wanting, especially as the roles and places that once defined me slip further into the past. Words Jesus spoke and things he did bubble up in my mind, and we speak. But often as not, I am just there, communing with a heart so much larger and more embracing than any other.

It is then that the Spirit carries me into the deepest and most important reality Jesus has to share with us, not words or ideas, but his intimacy with the Father. The Spirit draws us into the truth of who Jesus is, his oneness with the Father, that we may live heart to heart, friend to friend, with the infinite love God is.

**Come, Holy Spirit, carry me into the heart of Jesus.
Fill me with the joy of being with him. Amen.**

Prayer concern: Friends and friendships

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; Acts 2:1-21; Romans 8:22-27

God plays

**May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD rejoice in his works. (v. 31)**

I wonder if the author of this psalm ever saw dolphins play in the ocean, leaping, hanging, then plunging headfirst into the waves, appearing again and again in a graceful swirl. I wonder if the psalmist saw otters playing, twisting, rolling over and over in a stream, right-side up, upside down, chasing each other, life as play and play as life. Who can look at them and not smile? In his final days, an author I love mused that if he had to live on earth again, he'd like to do it as an otter.

Watching them, *delight* is the word that comes to mind, the delight that comes as we sit still for a moment and marinate in the color of flowers, the embrace of a breeze, green leaves filtering morning light, the call of a cardinal from among the branches. Every sight and scent a sacrament of God's creative love, each moment invites us to share God's joy. For God plays in the garden of creation, coaxing us beyond our preoccupations to delight in the wonder of being.

**Renew my heart, O Lord, in the beauty
of all you have made. Amen.**

**Prayer concern: The care and preservation
of nature**

Joel 2:18-29; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

The beauty we bear

. . . Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were
all made to drink of one Spirit. (v. 13)

Look and see the beauty that lies beneath. If but once you could see, Paul says, you would search every face you meet, hoping to glimpse the face of Christ. Baptized in his name, we bear the Spirit of Christ, which is to say Christ's love and beauty, Christ's joy and kindness, Christ's care and compassion.

The self-centeredness of this and every age urges us to emphasize how different, singular, and special we are relative to those of another race, class, nation, church, or orientation. It's an ancient and acidic sickness that split the Corinthian church to which Paul wrote. Their anxious egos eagerly compared and ranked their graces and gifts, ignoring the Spirit deep within them. The result was elitism, anger, and division.

In Christ, our true identity is the wonder of love living within us, love expressed through the unique prism of our lives, binding us as one with all who bear the beauty of Christ.

**Heal your church, Lord Jesus.
Open my heart to see your Spirit
in those different from myself. Amen.**

Prayer concern: Unity in Christ's church

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; Genesis 11:1-9