

## Anglican Parish of Kingscliff

### Pentecost Sunday Homily – 8 June 2025

**Genesis 11:1-9; Psalm 104: 26-36; Acts 2: 1-21; John 14:8-17**

Happy Feast of Pentecost! Today we celebrate the *birthday of the Church* — and in a real sense, our own birthday as temples of the Holy Spirit.

In today's Gospel, Jesus promises to send another Advocate, the Helper, the Holy Spirit — the one who will remain with us and guide us into the truth after Jesus returns to the Father.

Let's reflect for a few moments on the images and mission of the Holy Spirit that today's readings offer us.

#### 1. The Spirit is Wind and Fire

The Acts of the Apostles gives us two powerful images: **wind** and **fire**.

The Holy Spirit came as a strong, driving wind — not a gentle breeze. This is not a timid spirit, but one of power and courage. Through the Spirit, we can cry out, "Abba, Father!" (Romans 8:15) In our weakness, we receive strength. In our fear, we find boldness.

And then there is fire — fire that rested on each of the apostles. Fire that burns away what is not of God. Fire that gives passion, zeal, and life. We speak of having "fire in the belly" — that inner drive that moves us toward God and goodness. The Holy Spirit ignites that fire in our hearts for things that matter: for justice, for love, for holiness and for God.

#### 2. The Holy Spirit is Divine Love

St. Paul tells us that "the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (See Romans 5:5) The Spirit is not an abstract force — he is the love of God, made personal and real, dwelling within us. Jesus gives the Spirit as his parting gift, so that we might never be alone (see John 14:8-17).

I invite you to ask the Spirit today: *Enable me to know your love personally. Enable me to see myself as God sees me.* No matter what's going on in your life right now, *you are not an accident. You are not forgotten. You are deeply and eternally loved by God who created you.*

Blessed Lady Julian of Norwich (c.1343 – after 1416) had a vision from our Lord Jesus: "*And in this [sight], our Lord Jesus showed a little thing the quantity of a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand as it seemed to me, and it was as round as any ball. I looked therein with the eye of my understanding, and thought: "What may this be?" And it was answered generally thus: "It is all that is made." I marveled how it might last, for it seemed to me it might suddenly have fallen into nought for its littleness. And I was answered in my understanding: "It lasteth and ever shall, because God loveth it. And so hath all things being by the love of God."*

It is the Holy Spirit, God's love, that sustains all creation -you, me, and everyone and everything.

### 3. The Holy Spirit is the Witness to Jesus

The Holy Spirit reminds us that in Jesus, we see what it truly means to be human. To live in his way is to discover who we really are. Outside of Christ, we lose our sense of identity. We shrink into fear, despair, and confusion. But the Spirit works quietly, gently, persistently to bring us back — back to truth, back to hope, back to life.

In a world so often marked by anxiety and noise, the Spirit offers clarity, and points to Jesus — not as a distant figure of history, but as the Living One who walks with us now, and forever.

### 4. The Spirit Unites

At Pentecost, people from every nation heard the apostles speak in their own language. This is a reversal of Babel (see Gen 11:1-9)— where human pride led to division and cacophony of voices. The Holy Spirit brings unity, and unites us with God, and with one another.

And how much we need this unity today. From the cries of Aboriginal children in the margins of our own country... to the suffering of children in war zones like Gaza, Yemen, the Congo, Sudan, or Ukraine... to the hostages held by Hamas....to the lost young person in our suburbs, wounded by life and searching for hope... to the quiet prayer of a parent, aching for their child...

In all of this, the Holy Spirit hears our cries, moves in our hearts, and gives us a thirst for something deeper — for connection, for love, for truth that doesn't fade.

### 5. The Spirit Sends Us Out

Finally, notice where the disciples are when they receive the Spirit: in the upper room, the *cenacle* — a place of prayer, waiting, and community.

This church — this community — is our *cenacle*. And more than that: *you*, and *I* are the living temples of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 6:19).

Each Sunday, we gather to receive the Spirit of Jesus — the one who gives purpose and meaning to our lives. And from here, we are sent out — not as perfect people, but as people on fire with love, mercy, and truth.

So today, let us pray with the Church throughout the world:

#### **Come, Holy Spirit!**

Come, fill our hearts with the fire of your love.

Without you, there is nothing good in us.

Heal our wounds. Renew our strength.

Melt the frozen. Warm the chill.

Bend the stubborn heart. Guide those who go astray.

Give us joy that never ends —

and send us out as witnesses of the Gospel. Amen.

*By The Reverend Constantine Osuchukwu*