

John 14:8-27

⁸Philip said to him, “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.

¹⁵”If 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 forever. 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.

Sermon – Sunday, June 5, 2022 – Pentecost

I am going to begin with a question. What do the Feast of Pentecost and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee have in common? What they have in common is the Holy Spirit. Yes!

The coming of the Holy Spirit. That is what Pentecost celebrates. We have different accounts of it in the scripture. Like a rushing wind. Like tongues of fire...but also Jesus breathes the Spirit onto or into his disciples. In different ways, the Spirit comes to God's people as Jesus promised. The Spirit comes to live within us to guide us, to comfort us to even pray through us. The coming of the Spirit completes the great cycle. Christmas marks the birth of Christ...God with us in the flesh. Then our Lord is with us for a while on this earth. He lives and breathes. He has ups and downs. He has a marvelous ministry but he is also hated and feared by the powerful. He is betrayed, tried and dies nailed to a cross. But he defies death. His tomb is found empty. He appears to his disciples during the 40 days after his resurrection, and then he ascends bodily...he departs. He tells his disciples to wait, that he will send them a spirit to guide them. Pentecost celebrates that coming...the coming of the ultimate God with us...the Spirit which is as forceful as the wind and gentle as our breath. It is also unpredictable. We rely on the Spirit. We invite the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit figures in the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth as well. Yes it does! The Coronation, as the Archbishop of York reminds us, is in its essence, a religious ceremony. Before the crowning, before Elizabeth can sit on the throne, an ancient hymn is sung, inviting the Holy Spirit to come. This hymn is believed to have been written by Rabanus Maurus, a ninth-century German monk, teacher, and archbishop. The translation "Come Holy Ghost, our souls inspire" was written by Bishop John Cosin in 1625, and has been used for all British coronations since then. To this day it is still sung in Gregorian chant in the Anglican church at the ordination of priests, and at the sacrament of Confirmation. Let's hear this ancient hymn and take in the words:

<https://youtu.be/WjKcc8lcl>

Now if you will bear with me, I would like for us to watch a clip from the Coronation of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 70 years ago. In it, the same ancient

hymn Veni Creator Spiritus is sung to call on the Holy Spirit to help Queen Elizabeth. We will hear the prayer afterwards. The priest asks that the Spirit of Wisdom, the Spirit of Counsel and the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord will enliven Elizabeth. Truly the power of the Holy Spirit was being called upon in a big way.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52NTjasbmgw>

Now, 70 years on, looking back, it seems to me that the Holy Spirit has indeed inspired her Majesty Queen Elizabeth and guided her. We are in awe! No other British monarch has ever lived to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee! She began a young woman of 26, surrounded by so many learned and formidable people senior to her and most of them men. She has lived through dramatic changes in politics, in technology, in attitudes. She has lived through tragedy and scandal. But still she is there...she holds on and is steadfast, guided and strengthened by a power greater than herself.

Her Majesty was anointed with oil and afforded a time of stillness and reflection before God. She was also given a Bible by the Archbishop of Canterbury Fisher and reminded that scripture is “the most valuable thing this world affords”.

One of the treasures in the Lambeth Palace library is the book of devotions that he prepared and presented to her all those years ago. It includes prayers, passages of scripture and daily meditations.

For Her Majesty, the Coronation was an intimate encounter between a monarch and her God, a moment where the Queen would be called by name and given a lifelong vocation.

The present Archbishop of York says

“The Queen’s Christianity is the lens through which she views the world. Quite simply, the monarch could not be as she has been without her faith in Christ.”

We are no different from her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. We are not royal, we are not rich, but we are in scriptures called ‘a royal priesthood’ and certainly God’s beloved. He promised he would pour out his Spirit on all people...and he has...through our baptism and through the holy bread and wine...we receive the Spirit. So let us, on this Pentecost 2022 acknowledge our great inheritance and live into the great wind that blows us along inwardly and outwardly in this marvelous world. Amen.