

St Stephen's Epistle

MAY 2008

Beloved of Christ,

On May 11th we will be celebrating many things; the Feast of Pentecost, Baptisms, Confirmations, and Mother's Day. The retired Bishop of Idaho, the Rt. Rev. John Thornton, will be with us that day to receive and baptize. In Baptism we pray "Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring mind and discerning heart, the courage to will and persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works." In Confirmation the Bishop prays; "Strengthen, O Lord, your servant [] with your Holy Spirit; empower her for your service; and sustain her all the days of her life." We will, as the people of St. Stephen, make promises that day to "do all in our power to support these persons in their life in Christ". We will be like spiritual mothers (and fathers) to them in this Christ life!

We do not do this on our own but through the power of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is the celebration of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church, not the Church building but to the body of Christ, you and me. That body is animated and empowered by that Spirit. One way to look at it is as Thomas Smith looked at it in his poem about Pentecost:

A Pentecost poem

*On this day, Pentecost, I believe:
That God changed his address
He relocated
He decentralized
He chose me as a dwelling place
He chose you as a dwelling place.*

*The Spirit moved into us
It's a pity that we so often segregate Him to our hearts!*

*The Inhabitant is the Great Interior Designer
And yes He is interested in your heart
But he would love to redesign your head, your arms and legs
He will extend your hands to touch the others
Your mouth to bless the others*

*Our Great Interior Designer will upset you,
And afterwards you will know that he has blessed you.*

As we have been blessed by the Holy Spirit may we be God's blessing to others.

Faithfully,

Susan+