



Anglican Catholic Church



Diocese of the United Kingdom

Catholic Faith † Orthodox Worship † Apostolic Order

June 2022

My dear friends and colleagues,

The dramatic descent of the Holy Spirit ten days after the Ascension marks the fulfilment of God the Father's promise that is found in the Old Testament – God promising to place His Spirit within His children so they will be enabled to obey His commands (Ezek. 36:26-27 being just one example). Pentecost, or Whitsunday, marks the coming of the Holy Ghost who has arrived to take over the mission of Jesus.

Had there been no Pentecost, there would have been no Church, no indwelling of the Holy Spirit to guide and teach the apostles, including His guiding and teaching of each and every one of us in the ways of Jesus. There would have been no new birth of the human spirit by the power of the Holy Spirit, and consequently no salvation for anyone. For Christ said that unless we are born again of the Spirit and fire, we will not enter the Kingdom of God. That is how important the Feast of Pentecost is to each member of the Church.



If by the grace of God we have received all these undeserved blessings in the Name of Jesus, surely there must be a reason. There is. We have been called to become living members of the Body of Christ. Through the Spirit of God we were all baptised into one Body, all being called to allow ourselves to be sanctified through the same Spirit.

We have been called to unite our hearts as one in the Body of Christ for the glory of God. God has arranged the Body, giving the same honour to all members, that there may be no dissension within the Body, but the members will have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it. (1 Cor. 12:24-6)

So, receive the Holy Spirit. Welcome the Holy Spirit into your lives. Do not ignore His gifts that benefit the Church as a whole and you as an individual member of that Church.

In appreciation of God's gift of the Holy Spirit, allow yourselves to flow like living water in the work of Jesus Christ to become shining lights in the world. Walk your living faith in the Spirit of God, always being thankful to God for the blessings He has given you, and continues to give you, so you may grow more like Him in your lives.

With every good wish

Fr. Raymond Thompson

Archdeacon

Mobile: 07443 438465 Email: rthompson@anglicancatholic.org

Diocesan website: <http://www.anglicancatholic.org.uk/>

Email: diocesanoffice@anglicancatholic.org.uk

A reflection on losing those we love

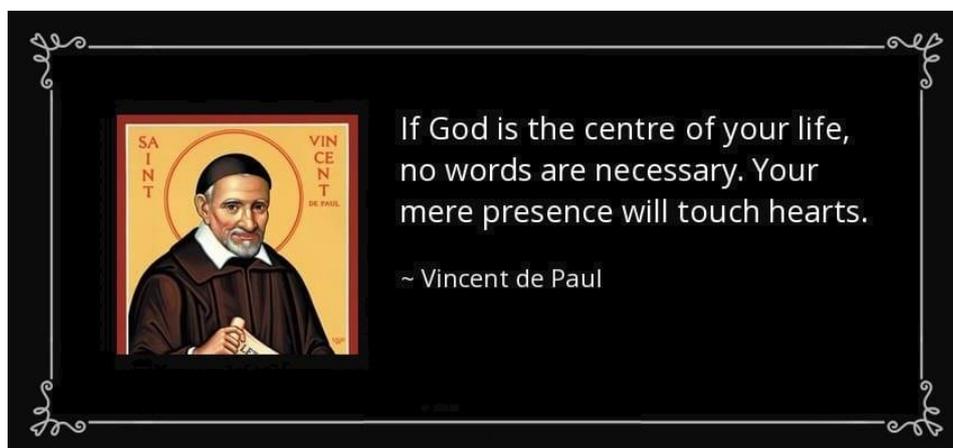
The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die: and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction: but they are in peace. . . They that put their trust in him shall understand the truth: and such as be faithful in love shall abide with him: for grace and mercy is to his saints, and he hath care for his elect. (Wisdom ch. 3)

Sacred Scripture so often contains something new for us every time we read it. Wisdom ch. 3 calms any fears about death for those who trust in God. It says the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God. What better place could we go after death than into the hands of God? What a beautiful way to describe God's care for us.

It's likely that you don't remember when you were small and your parents took you up in their arms, but you were often held in the strong and loving arms of your parents. When we die, God takes us up in his arms. We are in the hands of God. Can you imagine God taking people into his arms as they die? It is a wonderfully comforting and evocative image.

Many of us have lost loved ones – parents, spouses, family members and close friends. This June is the fifth anniversary of my beloved wife's passing to her eternal rest, and every such anniversary is very hard to bear. But we will one day understand fully the truth that when we die we are in the hands of God, in the hands of God who cares for us, and so we do not need to be afraid of death. Those who trust in him will understand that truth. Those who are faithful will live with him in love. When we die, we go to experience more fully God's love. There is no need to be afraid if we have not rejected God's offer of love. After all, who is ever afraid of love? Love attracts us, heals us, helps us, gives us energy for life, helps us to grow, develop and mature. Those who are faithful will live with God in love. Wisdom ch. 3, v. 9 gives another reason for not fearing death, for we are told that grace and mercy await those he has chosen. It is grace and mercy that we will receive from God. Anything else that we will receive in the next life is up to us, and we can use the time before death to repent and reform. But it is that grace and mercy that God wants to give us.

Altogether, it is a most beautiful passage of scripture. We have the assurance that when we die we are taken up by God in his hands; that those who trust in God will understand the truth that people only *appear* to die; their leaving us, while devastating us, only *seems* like a disaster or an ending. With that in mind we can look forward to the love, grace and mercy God has in store for us after death.



(My "desk picture" shows an Isle of Sheppey scene viewed from my desk, from the garden, or within a few minutes of it.)