

Reflections for Pentecost

Many gifts – one Spirit

I am a reluctant and hesitant smartphone user. I got a smartphone more recently than a lot of my friends and relatives, and I have only slowly got used to some of the many things that it can do. Occasionally I see someone doing something with their phone and it reminds me what I could do with mine, or I think 'Wow, I had no idea that you could do that!' But of course we all use our phones in different ways, and use different apps, depending on our interests and priorities.

This Sunday is Pentecost, or 'Whit Sunday' as it used to be known, when we remember the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples as they gathered together on the Jewish feast of Pentecost (as we read in Acts chapter 2), and we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit to God's people in every place and generation.

But the history of the church tells us that the place of the Holy Spirit in the life of Christian people has often been misunderstood, or overlooked, and we have not always made full use of this great gift – a bit like me with my smartphone.

One of the readings for this Sunday is from chapter 12 of the first letter to the Corinthians, which reminds us that the Spirit gives many different gifts, and calls people into many different forms of action and service, but that they are all intended to work together in harmony:

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.
(verses 4 to 6)

The good news for us at Pentecost is that, in the challenges we are facing at the moment, and through all of our lives, we are promised the presence of God, in us and with us, to guide and strengthen us, and the Spirit's gifts to equip each one of us for our particular calling to serve God in Jesus Christ.

Revd John Waller

God within us,
God beside us,
God beyond us,
may we know your presence, your power
and your purpose for our lives,
now and always. Amen.