

Father Jim's Weekly Article for May 14, 2017

The Easter Season: In a certain sense the Easter Season has two parts. The first focuses on the Resurrection and our share in the Resurrection through baptism. The second focuses on Pentecost and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which we celebrate ritually in the sacrament of confirmation. In a greater sense, the Easter Season has no parts. The movement from new life in the resurrection to new life in the Spirit is one. The same is true for our ritual celebration of baptism and confirmation. Confirmation is often spoken of as a completion of baptism. Confirmation is putting into action the faith we professes at baptism. It is the gifts of the Holy Spirit that enable us to do the work of the family of the baptized.

Readings for next week: Acts 8:5-8,14-17; 1 Peter 3:15-18; John 14:15-21

Reflection: Healing often comes in unexpected ways. Jews and Samaritans had been enemies for centuries. The Jews refused to accept Samaritans as equal members of God's family. Samaritans refused to look to Jerusalem for spiritual guidance. Now, Philip comes to Samaria proclaiming the Messiah. It is no small miracle that Philip is willing to share his faith with the Samaritans. It is no less a miracle that the Samaritans are eager to hear him. Ironically the reconciliation becomes complete when the Samaritans turn to the apostles at Jerusalem for the fullness of the Spirit. This is a healing which could only have happened through faith. God longs for union with his people. When we open ourselves to the Spirit, we also open ourselves to the Spirit's desire for unity. Barriers fall with our recognition of the Spirit dwelling in our brothers and sisters.

1. Describe a time when you felt left out or alone.

2. Consider people you know who may be feeling alone. What can you do to welcome them?

Prayer: Father, you gather all people into one family through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Enable each of us to share that Spirit, helping each other to grow in service and loyalty and patience. Help us to build and preserve a Spirit of peace among us.