

Living the Word: Acts 4.32-35

This all seems too good to be true. Besides, we might say it may have happened in the very early days of the Church but not now. This description of the first Christians does not match our experience of the local parish Church! But there is a powerful message here which we need to listen to and work at as individuals and as Church Communities. God uses those who follow his Son, Jesus Christ to save the world. God uses the love, the joy and the peace of those who follow his Son Jesus to extend the kingdom of God and the good news of the Gospel. God uses people like us whom he fills with the grace of Jesus Christ to pour out his love on the world. This description of the early Church is no pipe dream. It is dream coming true. God uses the church, that is us, to draw people into the world of his love. As the Church locally invites hurting people into its community, God pours out his grace and to witness to the resurrection of his Son. Are we open to such life changing grace?

7th April 2024

Second Sunday of Easter

Divine Mercy Sunday



Elements of the Mass: Baptismal Garments

At a baptism it is normal to speak about being washed clean in the waters and putting on Christ. This is represented symbolically in what we wear. The garment represents outwardly the change that has occurred internally, we put on Christ literally and metaphorically. We also put on the armour of Christ, not metal armour, but spiritual armour and the garments represent this too. A child may wear a Christening Gown, often this is handed down through families. In some traditions it is made from the mother's wedding dress. This garment will be white. The baby may often be wrapped in baptismal shawl, again which will be white. For adults a person may want to wear something white or indeed wear a shawl. Often in full immersion baptisms the person being baptized will wear a white robe. If you have ever been to the Holy Land you may have seen people in white robes being baptized or renewing their baptismal vows in the River Jordan. In your parish you might want to sponsor a baptism shawl for those who may not be able to afford to have one made. It is a sign of our joy in sharing with others the life of being baptized.

In the rites of baptism, traditionally celebrated at Easter, we see the outpouring of the Spirit on catechumens as they are baptized and confirmed. When we gather together for the Eucharist, we see the outpouring of the Spirit on ordinary bread and wine, making them the Body and Blood of Christ. Well today we hear what receiving the Spirit means: it means allowing oneself to be healed and it means being drawn together in unity. It is given for our atonement – at-one-ment – when we are made whole again following the divisive influence of sin. It happens at baptism, when we are incorporated into God's family by being grafted on to him, made one of his sons or daughters. It happens in the sacraments of penance and anointing, when the Lord forgives us of our sins and reconciles us with himself and his body, the Church. It happens in the Eucharist, in which God collects together a diverse and fragmented people, and makes them whole again, before sending them out into the world to be agents of his reconciliation there.

Today's Gospel: St John 20: 19-end