

OUR LADY OF VICTORY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION CHAPEL

EASTER~PENTECOST



*Rejoice, O Mother Church! Exult in glory!
The risen Savior shines upon you!
Let this place resound with joy,
echoing the mighty song of all God's people!*

-EXSULTET OF EASTER VIGIL



ADORER NEWS

Confirmands & Candidates: Please continue to remember in prayer those preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation, as well as those who have entered fully into the Catholic Church this Easter. May the Holy Spirit guide and strengthen their souls!

Spanish Language Adorer Training: We will be offering an OLV Adorer training for any adorer *whose first language is Spanish*. The training will be held Saturday, April 20 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. in the main church here at St. Mary's. Please help spread the word to anyone who may be interested. For more information, call or text Elsie at 518-929-0858. *Ven y adora!*



When God created Adam, He did not give him physical wings such as the birds had, for He preferred to give him the wings of the Holy Spirit. These He will return to him at the Resurrection, to raise him up and bear him wherever the Spirit desires. It is these wings that even now the saints possess, so that their spirits can fly up to the kingdom of heavenly comprehensions.

-St. Makarios the Great

Wishing a blessed Easter to all our OLV Adorers!



THE DEATH AND RISING OF THE CHURCH

The Church, like Christ, not only lives, not only dies, but always rises from the dead. Unless there is a Good Friday in her life, there will never be an Easter Sunday; unless there is the crown of thorns, there will never be the halo of light; unless there is the cross, there will never be the empty tomb.

At least a dozen times in history, the world has buried the Church and each time she has come to life again. A hunted Savior must always have hunted children; and in those days of the Roman persecution the Church, like a mole, had to dig into the caves of the earth. There, under the foundation of Rome's proudest temples, under roads that rocked with the tramp of Rome's restless legions, these children of God were nourishing themselves on the Bread of Life, fortifying their bodies as well as their souls, for the day they would be led to the "thumbs-down" crowd of the Roman Colosseum to testify to their faith, even with their blood.

Caesar's minions scattered fresh sands to hide their blood, but could not still their voice. It rose from the din of that arena; it entered into the very chancery of God's justice; it pierced the midst of undawned ages with no uncertain challenge: "In our blood has been mingled the blood of the living God, dying and behold we live." Caesar was certain he had conquered. He rejoiced that the Church was dead... And even as they watched, the Church like her Risen Savior came from the grave of the catacombs and was seen walking in the glory of her new Easter morn.

There came other moments in her history when in the eyes of the world she seemed to have her very life drained of her. Whenever the Palm

Sundays of earthly rejoicing came her way, and the world proclaimed her king, and strewed palm branches beneath her feet – in a word, whenever a great measure of temporal prosperity came her way, and she began to rely more on action than prayer, she became weak. The yoke of Christ seemed heavy to her children; bodies craved for the line of least resistance, and hearts yearned for the fleshpots of Egypt. It is a strange but certain fact that the Church is never so weak as when she is powerful with the world; never so foolish as when she is wise with the fancies of the world. She is strongest with divine help when she is weakest with human power, for like Peter she is given the miraculous draught of fishes when she admits by her own power she has labored all the night and taken nothing.

When her discipline, her spirit of saintliness, her zeal for Christ, her vigils, and her mortifications become a thing of less importance, the world makes the fatal mistake of believing her soul is dead and her faith has departed. Not so! What may be weak is her *discipline*, her prayerfulness, and her saintliness, for these are of men, whereas her *faith* is of God. But the world, failing to make this distinction between the human and the divine in her, as it failed to make it in Christ, takes her for dead.

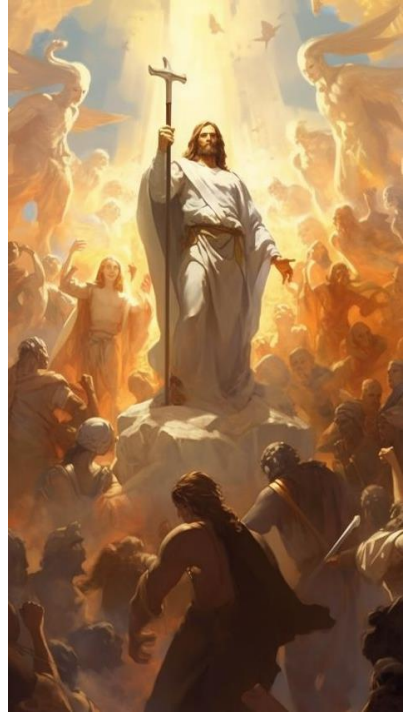
With our own times comes another death. Her death this time was inflicted not by executioners, but by other Pilates. Any civilization is in a bad way when it becomes indifferent, like another Pilate, to the answer to the question “What is truth?” From inside and outside the Church sprang up that old Greek error that there is no truth – an error, which for want of a knowledge of its ancient history, was called Modernism.



With our own times comes another death. The world was asked to chant her requiem. War was on. Long-range guns were tearing great, gaping wounds in majestic cathedrals; plowshares were beaten into swords; cannon fire changed poppy fields into Aceldamas* of blood. And lo! That which was thought dead

was seen on the battlefields pressing a crucifix to dying lips; and when the smoke of battle cleared and the mist lifted, she was seen walking in the glory of her new Easter morn....

There emerges, then, from her history one great and wonderful lesson, and it is this: Christ rose from the dead, not because he is man, but because he is God. The Church rises from the sepulchre in which violent hands or passing errors would inter her, not because she is human, but because she is divine. Nothing can rise from the dead except divinity.



Civilizations are born, rise to greatness, then decline, suffer and die, but they never rise again. The Church does rise again; in fact she is constantly finding her way out of the grave because she has a Captain who found His way out of the grave. The world may expect her to become tired, to be weak when she becomes powerful, to become poor when she is rich, but the world need never expect her to die. The world should give up looking for the extinction of that which so many times has been vainly extinguished.

Like a mighty oak tree which has stood for twenty centuries, the Church bears fresh green foliage for each new age, that the age may come and enjoy the refreshing benediction of its shade. The flowers that open their chalices of perfume this spring are not old things, but new things on an old root. Such is the Church. She is reborn to each new age, and hence is the only new thing in the world. It is the errors that are old, for our so-called new thought is only an old mistake with a new label. The Church has put to bed all the errors of the past; for she knows that to marry the passing fads of any age is to be a widow in the next. She is therefore not behind the times, but beyond the times, always fresh while the age is dying.

-Ven. Fulton J. Sheen, *The Divine Romance*.

* Aceldamas - Aramaic for "Field of Blood". See Acts 1:19.



A Meditation on Pentecost

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them as

tongues of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Acts 2: 22-24

Let us try to extend our understanding of the biblical text and meditate on its meaning.

Seeker: I really do have a lot of questions. First of all, why did the Holy Spirit take the form of tongues of fire?

Sage: The tongue is the instrument of speech; the tongue of fire represents God’s tongue. The disciple on whom it rests will proclaim the Word of God. After the descent of the Holy Spirit, each apostle becomes a bearer of the Word. That is why Peter immediately began to proclaim the Resurrection of Christ, and the others told of the “mighty works of God.”

Seeker: Why is it written that the tongues were “distributed and resting on each one of them”?

Sage: The gift of the Holy Spirit is personal; it was received individually by each one of the disciples. And yet there is only one Holy Spirit. This divine fire descends upon all (remember the fire that descended on Elijah’s offering), but it is divided to show that each one

individually receives the Spirit.

Seeker: At Babel tongues were also divided!

Sage: Exactly! What happened at Pentecost is the exact opposite of what happened at Babel. At Babel human tongues were divided through pride, so that men no longer understood each other and were separated and dispersed. At Pentecost, it is the gift of God which divides itself so that it may descend on each one individually and reunite them all.

Seeker: Why did the tongues of fire descend only on the disciples and not on everyone?

Sage: They descended on those whom Jesus had prepared to receive the Holy Spirit, on those whose hearts were united (Acts 1:14)

through faith in the risen Lord Jesus: one must believe in the Giver to receive the Gift. The Spirit did not descend on the world because "the world cannot receive (Him), because it neither sees



Him nor knows Him" (Jn 14:17). He descended on those whom the Lord Jesus had brought together because they had believed in Him. He descended upon the Church. The Spirit is a personal gift, which each one receives individually, but at a time when everyone is assembled together: "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place." (Acts 2:1). Suddenly they underwent a radical change; they became conscious of the Word of God within themselves and began to proclaim His wonders in all languages. It is at this point that Peter courageously preached the Resurrection of the Crucified One to those who had crucified Him. Pentecost is still with us today. The Holy Spirit has been continuously present since that

time, coming down to consecrate those who bear witness to the Resurrection of Christ. And He will be with us till the end of time, as St. Simeon the New Theologian, who lived in the tenth century, tells us:

A priest-monk who took me into his confidence once told me that he never served liturgical services without seeing the Holy Spirit, just as he saw him when the metropolitan pronounced over him the prayer of initiation (into the monastic brotherhood) at the moment the sacred book was placed upon his head. I asked him in what form he had seen Him? He answered: "The image was primitive and without form; nevertheless it was a light. And when I myself saw what I had never seen before, I was startled, and I began to reason within myself, saying: "What can that possibly be?" At that moment, mysteriously but in a clear voice, He said to me: "I descend in this way upon all the prophets and apostles, as I do upon all the present elect of God and upon the Saints: for I am the Holy Spirit."

The assembly of those who bear witness to the Resurrection of Christ – those elected by God, whom the Holy Spirit consecrates – is the Church. And each one of us is called to become one of these elect. Pentecost is continuously present within the Church.



Excerpted from *The Living God: A Catechism for the Christian Faith*. Translated by Olga Dunlop.