

## ***It's draughty in here!***

*Genesis 1<sup>1-5</sup>; Psalm 29; Acts 19<sup>1-7</sup>; Mark 1<sup>4-11</sup>*

*When Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them,  
and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.  
[Acts 19<sup>6</sup>]*

Even the amorphous form of creation was dependent on the breath (*ruach*) of God and even on that first day of creation we discover that this breath of God, his Spirit, sustains and changes things. That is still the case!

It is that same timeless Spirit that symbolically descended on Jesus at his baptism when he was affirmed as God's Son.

It is that same timeless Spirit that moved the first Ephesian Christians from a simple act of repentance to full faith in Jesus and that second baptism into his name.

It is that same timeless Spirit that enabled us to confess Jesus for ourselves and whom we received in the Sacrament of Initiation, in our Baptism and Confirmation.

But what proof is there that we, as Christians, have received that Holy Spirit?

For those at Ephesus it was fairly easy – tongues and prophecy were the immediate product of the laying on of the Apostles' hands.

There are those who still find that demonstrative affirmation, but even were we to speak in tongues or to prophecy every time we came together to worship or prayed on our own, there is still a need for a deeper affirmation: to hear God say to us, **You are my Son** or **You are my daughter**, or to feel the draught from the wings of the dove as it settles on us.

As we come to terms with this further lock-down how can we be secure in that breath of God in us, to feel the draught from the wings of a dove?

✘ **Wonder:** The God whose Spirit we receive is the same God who had both the imagination and power to **separate the light from the darkness**. The Psalmist is right in his expression of awe – **ascribe to the Lord, you powers of heavens, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength**. Who could doubt when this God says 'your sins are forgiven' or that he **shall give strength to his people and shall give the blessing of peace**. To have strength for each day and to live at peace with God, one another and ourselves is to feel the draught from the wings of a dove!

✘ **Worship:** The God whose Spirit we receive is the same God that we meet in worship. True worship is a two-way process: we **ascribe to the Lord the honour due to his name and worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness**. Holiness is one of the words that has fallen out of fashion – it is to live God's life in such a way that he would never be embarrassed to be part of everything we do: it is to live, think, speak and act with that purity of motive and purpose that makes it clear that we are God's.

God empowers us in the gifts he gives – recognising, as we have observed before, that these are tools not toys! In worship we read the instructions and practice with these tools, but they are never to be contained in a building! Which is why, worship inspires and motivates witness. Worship is to feel the draught from the wings of a dove!

✘ **Willingness:** The God whose Spirit we receive is the same God that we serve. John the Baptist had a job to do and did it. Jesus in his baptism is baptised into our humanity so that he can do the job he is to do so that we can be baptised into his divinity. We, too, have a task to do: just as our faith is dependent on Jesus doing his part for us, the faith of others is dependent on us introducing them to Jesus, which is what the tools are for. Our willingness to witness is to feel the draught from the wings of a dove!

It's draughty in here – just as it will be where you are – from the wings of a dove. It is that draft that fans the embers of our faith and ignites the faith of others.