



"The Two Trinities", by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682), National Gallery, London. © Web Gallery of Art. One of the leading artists of 17th-century Spain, Murillo specialized in tender Holy Families, lovable infant saints, graceful Madonnas and Immaculate Conceptions. Whereas most portrayals of the Trinity depict God the Father viewing or holding the crucified Christ, with a white dove overlooking, Murillo depicts a terrestrial trinity of Mary, Joseph and Jesus, and a celestial Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. On this Trinity Sunday, we will pray to be kept "steadfast in this faith and worship" of "the Unity" of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, "one God, for ever and ever."

### We Should Open Ourselves Anew to the Possibilities of the Spirit's Work Among Us, Whether in Explosive Bursts or Harnessed for the Long Haul

"In the past, Pentecost has been somewhat hard for me to celebrate, in part because I think I have longed for a repeated occurrence of that explosive power that happened on that day" when the Holy Spirit came upon the waiting disciples in Jerusalem and the Church was born, the Rev. Dr. Brook Thelander said in his Pentecost Sunday sermon.

"But the day of Pentecost, as marvelous as it was," he continued, "was a unique and one-time event. And as such it is unrepeatable for us. From the day of Pentecost on, the typical way that persons receive the Holy Spirit and enter the Church is through their baptism. Our baptism *initiates* us into the Church and the Spirit, and the Eucharist *nurtures* the life and work of the Spirit in us. In this way, then, we experience the 'controlled burn' of the Spirit in our lives over the long haul."

The day of Pentecost "had to be one of the most dramatic events in all of history," Pastor Thelander said. "The Holy Spirit comes to a room filled with believers in Jerusalem, and fills them with passion and fire. Shouts of joy and praise are emanating from all directions. People are gathered in Jerusalem from every persuasion and city, every nation and province, and they find themselves glorifying God in amazing ways. They speak in a variety of foreign languages, yet understand one another. They express different voices, yet they are still in one accord. . . .

"The text reveals to us a scene of raw power, of a tornado-like storm, of bright flames of fire descending down and filling the room, of a miraculous speaking and hearing. . . .

"Now, power can be used in at least two ways. It can be *unleashed*, and it can be *harnessed*. The energy in ten gallons of gasoline, for instance, can be released explosively by dropping a lighted match into the can" (which Pastor Thelander said he didn't recommend, given the price of gasoline). "On the other hand, the energy in that gas can be channeled through the engine of my small car in a controlled burn and used to transport me almost 400 miles.

"Explosions are spectacular and can be magnificent to watch, but controlled burns have staying power, and often more durable" effects. (p.2→)

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Sundays, 10:00 a.m.: Word & Table service

Sundays, 11:30 a.m.: Refreshments, conversation

Sundays, 11:45 a.m.: Moderated post-service discussion

Thursdays, 7:00 p.m.: Evening Prayers (but not this week)

**For the poor:** Meat; fresh produce; canned fruits and vegetables; dairy products; peanut butter; cooking oil; pancake mix; syrup; spices; diapers; baby wipes; bathroom tissue; for personal care: soap, shampoo, conditioner, razors, shaving cream; new underwear (adults and children); cleaning supplies; bleach.

**Readings, 5/18:** Gen. 1:26—2:3; Ps. 150; 2 Cor. 13:5-13; Mt. 28:16-20.

**5/25:** Is. 49:8-18; Ps. 62; 1 Cor. 4:1-13; Mt. 6:24-34.

**Prayer Emphases:** Pakistan; Plymouth Brethren Churches; Zion Lutheran Church, Cincinnati, OH, and the Rev. H. G. Oliver; Center for Excellence in Preaching; parishioners on Liberty Road.

(Sermon, cont'd.) "I believe the Holy Spirit works both ways. At Pentecost, the Spirit exploded onto the scene in a demonstration of raw power. . . . But the Spirit also works another way. He works over the long haul, in a more enduring and somewhat less spectacular fashion. He meets needs. He changes lives. He continues Jesus' work. And he does it through us, the Church." Pastor Thelander cited the words of the processional hymn, "Come, O Spirit, dwell among us, come with Pentecostal power; Give the Church a stronger vision, help us face each crucial hour." "Let us open ourselves anew," he said, "to the possibilities of the Spirit's work in our lives and in our congregation."