

CO-CONSPIRATORS WITH GOD

Acts 2. 1-21

1 Corinthians 12. 3b-13

John 20.19-23

I speak to you in the name of  the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Think about a moment when you held another person so close that you could hear his or her breathing, the sound of life. Maybe it was your husband or wife, a parent, your child, or a grandchild. You could feel his or her breath brush across your cheek and he or she felt yours. The two of you shared and breathed the same air. Breathing in. Breathing out. There was only one breath, one life, one love. It was a moment of holy conspiracy.

The word ‘conspire’ literally means ‘breathing with’ or ‘to breathe together’. For most of us, I suspect, conspiracy brings up ideas of wrongdoing, secrets and planning to do something illegal or harmful to another. That is a reality in our world today. Too often the air we breathe is polluted with sorrow and death, attachments and addictions, fear, anger and revenge, sins and brokenness. We live as people in need of fresh air, people who are always short of breath. Pentecost says it does not have to be like that. There is another conspiracy going on, God’s conspiracy.

Whereas human conspiracy takes life, God’s conspiracy gives life. Whereas human conspiracy destroys, God’s conspiracy creates. Whereas human conspiracy hurts, God’s conspiracy heals. God’s conspiracy brings about the winds of change, fresh air and the fullness of life.

Today, the Feast of Pentecost, is all about God’s conspiracy. The Feast of Pentecost is the celebration of God’s conspiracy to give humanity his life, his breath, his Holy Spirit. The outpouring of God’s spirit, God’s own life and breath, was prophesied

by Joel. Later, John the Baptist would remind us that while he baptised with water, our Lord would baptise with the Holy Spirit. Finally, Jesus himself reassures us that we will be clothed with power from on high, that the Spirit of Truth will abide with us and in us as the Comforter, the Encourager, the Advocate who will guide us into all the truth.

The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is the fulfilment of God's conspiracy with and for humanity. Pentecost does not, however, end the conspiracy. God's conspiracy is eternal. Pentecost ushers in a new beginning, a new day, a new creation, a new life. This conspiracy has been taking place from the beginning.

- In the beginning, God took dust from the ground and breathed humanity into being.
- The breath of God parted the Red Sea and blew God's people through the wilderness to a new life in the promised land.
- In the valley, Ezekiel watched the breath of God return life to old, dry, brittle bones.
- God's breath came upon the Blessed Virgin Mary so that the child to be born would be holy and called the Son of God.
- The breath of God gave voice to Christ's teaching and preaching of the good news.
- God's life-giving breath was present at and the source of our Lord's miracles.
- The breath of God swept through Jesus's tomb, defeating death, and proclaiming, 'He is not here'.

The breath of God is not simply a thing or an event. It is the abiding and transforming presence of God's life with us and in us. Wherever life is being created, renewed, put back together or inspired, the Spirit is present. God is breathing and the conspiracy has been accomplished.

Pentecost does not celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit as if it had previously been absent; we have just seen that there are examples of God's breathing life throughout the Old Testament. Rather, the day of Pentecost celebrates *another* coming of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is no longer limited to particular people or events. Today the conspiracy is revealed and made public, available to all, men and women, young and old, you and me. No one is left out.

The wind of heaven, the breath of God, the Holy Spirit, now fills not only our Church, but also our being and our existence. God breathes, and you and I live. God breathes, and our lives are put back together. God breathes, and we are re-created. The deeds of God's power are not just words we hear; they are the lives we are to live. They are lives of love and self-giving, forgiveness and reconciliation, generosity and compassion, healing and wholeness, prayer and holiness.

On the day of Pentecost, 'all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?'" Yes, what does it mean that God has been conspiring with creation from the beginning?

It means that there is only one breath, one life and one love. It means that God never gives up on you, me, or any other person. It means that God breathes his life through humanity: through the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs; through the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints; and most profoundly, through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. It means that God is here among us, as close as our next breath. It means that we are to be co-conspirators, co-breathers, with God, sharing one breath, one life, one love.

Dear friends, it is the Feast of Pentecost and God is present, ready, and willing to conspire with us. There's only one question. Will we conspire with God? Amen.