

# THE FIRST 15

Thursday, May 9, 2024

Today is Thursday, May 9 and we are studying the Gospel of John.

## OPENING PRAYER

*Blessed and Holy Lord God, I pause at the threshold of a new day and seek your presence. I quiet my mind and focus my entire self on you - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Give me your vision and inspiration for what lies ahead, journey with me in my comings and goings and be my companion on the way. Remind me that you are always working for good in my relationships, activities and conversations. Amen.*

## SCRIPTURE

***But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because people do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned. I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.” John 16:7-15***

## REFLECTION

In his farewell speech, Jesus promised the coming of the Holy Spirit. Who is this Holy Spirit? What do we believe today about the Holy Spirit? What should we expect from the Holy Spirit? Today's scripture reading from the Gospel of John is a little gold mine of information about the Holy Spirit given to us by Jesus himself.

The Holy Spirit was sent in the “in-between time,” the time in-between Jesus' Ascension to heaven and promised return. That is the time in which we live. The Spirit is for our time. This is the Spirit-filled age of Christianity. Jesus' departure made possible the coming of the Spirit (John 16:7). Jesus comforted his friends in their grief over losing him and stressed the importance of his departure if the Spirit was to come.

The Holy Spirit is God and has always been with God. The Spirit was active in the Creation of the world as “wind” that swept over the face of the waters of darkness when the earth was formed (Genesis 1:2). The Holy Spirit was present throughout the Old and New Testaments. There are thirty-eight references to the Spirit in the Old Testament and ninety-two references in the New Testament.

The Holy Spirit is with believers today. The Spirit comforts us in our suffering, grief and sorrow. The Holy Spirit reveals sin and judges the heart. The Holy Spirit exposes darkness and evil in people and brings humanity to judgment. The Spirit convicts us, reveals our wrongdoing and exposes truth.

The Holy Spirit was sent to teach us, lead us, guide us and reveal what is important. The Spirit nudges our minds and imaginations and brings knowledge and insight. The Spirit illuminates the things we should know. The Spirit reminds us what Jesus said in scripture (John 14:26). The Spirit leads us deeper into relationship with Christ and intimacy with God. The scripture provides us confidence and assurance. The Spirit brings us courage and joy.

The Spirit has a variety of names in scripture. These titles broaden our understanding of his role in our lives. He is the Advocate who advocates for us, the Helper who helps us, the Comforter who comforts us, the Counselor who counsels us, the Guide who guides us and the Paraclete who comes alongside us. He is one with God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**Ask:** What has been my understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit in the past? How might God want to broaden my understanding and deepen my experience moving forward?

**Pause and Pray**

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Come, Holy Spirit, teach me the broad bounds of your companionship, guidance and love. I am thankful that Jesus did not leave me alone in the faith but provided the great blessing of a Paraclete to come alongside me in the course of my life. Show me the places I have limited your activity in my life. Help me learn to open the door wide and invite you in, Lord. Come like a fire, come like the wind, move in my heart and circumstances. Amen.*