

Lectionary
Readings for every day
You Select!

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 24 July:	136:1-4, 10-15	Exod 15:1-6	Matt 12:38-42
Tuesday 25 July:	126	Jer 45:1-5	Matt 20:20-28
Wednesday 26 July:	78:17-31	Exod 16:1-5,9-15	Matt 13:1-9
Thursday 27 July:	143	Exod 19:1,2,9-11, 16-20	Matt 13:10-17
Friday 28 July:	19:7-11	Exod 20:1-17	Matt 13:18-23
Saturday 29 July:	50:1-6,14,15	Exod 24:3-8	Matt 13:24-30
Sunday 30 July Pentecost 8 Ps 128; Gen 29:15-28; Rom 8:26-39; Matt 13:31-33,44-52			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 31 July:	106:19-23	Exod 32:15-24, 30-34	Matt 13:31-35
Tuesday 1 August:	103:8-12	Exod 33:7-11; 34:5-9,28	Matt 13:36-43
Wednesday 2 August:	99	Exod 34:29-end;	Matt 13:44-46
Thursday 3 August:	84:1-6	Exod 40:16-21, 34-38	Matt 13:47-53
Friday 4 August:	81:1-8	Lev 23:1,4-11,15, 16,27,34-37	Matt 13:54-end
Saturday 5 August:	67	Lev 25:1,8-17	Matt 14:1-12
Sunday 6 August Pentecost 9 Ps 17:1-7,15; Gen 32:22-31; Rom 9:1-5; Matt 14:13-21			

	Psalm	Epistle/OT	Gospel
Monday 7 August:	81:11-end	Num 11:4-15	Matt 14:13-21
Tuesday 8 August:	51:1-8	Num 12:1-13	Matt 14:22-end
Wednesday 9 August:	106:14-24	Num 13:1-2,25 - 14:1,26-35	Matt 15:21-28
Thursday 10 August:	95:1,8-end	Num 20:1-13	Matt 16:13-23
Friday 11 August:	77:11-end	Deut 4:32-40	Matt 16:24-28
Saturday 12 August:	18:1,2, 48-end	Deut 6:4-13	Matt 17:14-20
Sunday 13 August Pentecost 10 Ps 105:1-6,16-22,45b; Gen 37:1-4,12-28; Rom 10:5-15; Matt 14:22-33			

SHALOM M

in the HCUC

No. 8

For 23 July 2017

Dear Friends

Away back in the late 1950's the resurgence of interest in the work of the Spirit gave birth to what is called the Charismatic Movement. I remember it well as I was in my first parish. It was a time of renewal for many. Like spring after a long dreary winter. There was enthusiasm and renewal. There was also quite a lot of imbalance. Let me explain.

A minister from the USA was staying with us in Rotorua. He told of an encounter he had with a woman who was bubbling with enthusiasm over her experience of the Spirit. She asked him: "Rev Dunlap—have you received the Spirit?" He replied: "Yes, I would say I have felt the Spirit at work in my life." She said: "Then you are able to speak in tongues?" My friend, Tom Dunlap, replied: "No I have never spoken in tongues." She dismissed him with: "Then you haven't received the Spirit!" — and walked off. (We can read in Acts 2:1-4 about speaking in tongues.)

The only comment I want to make is to suggest that it is easy to drop into a narrow understanding of Spirit. Just as it is to have a narrow and rigid understanding of what we understand about the word "GOD". (Do you remember J B Phillips' exciting little paperback "Your God is Too Small"?)

The Spirit is the very centre and heart of our awareness. It always has been. Listen to the comment of a writer who says it more simply, more powerfully and beautifully than I can:

*Can you see the words on this page (of Shalom)?
Then that is Spirit's presence looking through your eyes.
Can you feel the lightness and texture of the paper you are holding now?
Then that is Spirit present taking the world in its hands.
You cannot look for this Spirit, for it is doing the looking. You cannot see this Spirit, for it is doing the seeing. How can you ever be without the Spirit which is reading this sentence now?
The very Spirit itself within each of us is the awareness we have looking out on a world that Spirit created.*

Sincerely - Lester

ALWAYS PRESENT—FOR ALL

Spirit was there, present before creation. It is Spirit which cultures, religions, philosophies have put labels on. Some of the names are strange to us and seem to be beyond our understanding. Are they trying to claim they have the correct label, or the best understanding? Almost all of them agree there is only one Spirit, not several. Whether they call it divine energy, or the Life Force, or the Creative Power bringing forth form and matter, the seen from the unseen. It is always Spirit at every stage of evolution.

In the Biblical story:-

On the first page and first sentence Spirit was hovering—creation was on its way. The clay of people was just form until Spirit came as the breath of life.

The poet of Psalm 139 deepened the wonder of the ever present Spirit and the mystery of our being.

The prophet Ezekiel challenged the barren dry desert when Spirit and hope somehow wither and lose all sap, energy and power when our connection with the greatness of our Spirit is lost.

The Jesus story has the ‘one who knows’ calling us from sleep—“Awake, awake!” And when we clutch him he insists on being the finger pointing beyond himself to the dimensions of who we are, and the values of love, light and life — “Seek first the Kingdom” — it’s at your elbow right now.

Spirit energises our innate compassion, our impulse to create, our deepest desire for ‘the more’ that seems to elude us in our fast and complex life style. The sadness is the way we feel that stillness and silence are a waste of time, and not the doorway to the wider awareness, the greater stable truth, and to the evolution which the Spirit has journeyed for 15 billion years. We are invited to be consciously involved, and be more than just products of its life force.

The Spirit is so near
that we can't see it!
But reach for it ...
Don't be the rider who
gallops all night, and
never sees the horse
that is beneath him.
- Rumi

RANDOM REFLECTIONS

Some years ago a creative priest (ie Louis Everley) suggested that when we say the Benediction we might shift the emphasis from May the grace of the Lord Jesus, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us ... To the reality of ... is with us. The grace, the love, the fellowship are already gifts that are with us Now.

At what stage does the flowing Spirit become the Holy Spirit?

Do you think the
Spirit within us
becomes more refined
or more subtle as we
become aware of the
Vastness—Beauty—
Mystery—Purity
and Power
that is
Gifted
to us
?

Richard Rohr writes:-

“I have become convinced that rediscovering the power, gift and meaning of the Holy Spirit is the key to the recovery of the contemplative mind and heart.”

He offers an old style litany. He offers some images or titles for the Holy Spirit. After each title/image he suggests:

Take a calm breath IN and OUT while saying silently each sacred name—these are metaphors that may help us to get a deeper or fresh image of the Mystery of the Spirit.

Here are some images. Some are from the Bible. Some are more recent.

- ⇒ Breath of Life
- ⇒ Constant Compassion
- ⇒ Mysterious Inner Guest
- ⇒ Bridge Builder
- ⇒ Essence of every cell and gene within
- ⇒ Divine Healer
- ⇒ Implanted Hope
- ⇒ Creative Fire
- ⇒ Wind of Change
- ⇒ (Write your own images)
- ⇒