

# The Church Guardian

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## SPECIAL NOTICE.

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## CALENDAR FOR JUNE.

JUNE 1st and 2nd—Rogation Days.

" 3rd—Ascension.

" 6th—Sunday after Ascension.

" 11th—St. Barnabas, A. & M.

" 13th—Whitsun Day.

" 14th—Monday in Whitsun Week.

" 15th—Tuesday in Whitsun Week.

" 16th—

" 18th—

" 19th—

" 20th—Trinity Sunday.

" 24th—St. John Baptist.

" 27th—1st Sunday after Trinity.

" 29th—St. Peter, A. & M.

## Whitsunday.

"Dominica alba," or Whit Sunday. The name is also explained as *Witt* (i.e., Wisdom) Sunday, for an M.S. homily of the fifteenth century asserts that "This day is called Witt Sunday, because the Holy Goste this day brought wytte and wisdom to all Criste's Apostles and Disciples, and so bi theire preachinge, doctrine and teachinge to alle Cristene peple." But more commonly, Pentecost, "Dominica Sancta Pentecosten," or in the Greek Calendar, "*Kuriake tes agias pentekostes*;" because it took the place of the Jewish festival of Pentecost, the Descent of the Holy Spirit naturally and most properly superseding the earlier appropriation of the day to a Feast of first-fruits or Harvest Festival. The entire period from Easter to Whitsuntide was anciently called by this name. Thus the "Ordo Romanus" says: "Tempus autem Pentecostes inchoatur a prima die Resurrectionis curritet usque ad diem Quinquagesimum post Pascha." Yet there are traces of a different usage of speech, as in this of St. Augustine, "Dies illi Quinquaginta post Pascha usque ad Pentecosten quibus non jejunatur." During these thirty days, all the services were said standing instead of kneeling as at other times; and *Alleluia* was the Antiphon at all the offices. Some writers have derived the name Whitsunday from the very word Pentecost, through the German *Pfingsten*. L'Estrange suggests that it is from the French *Huit*, eight, because it is the eighth Sunday after Easter, and it is in favor of this that there occurs in documents of the thirteenth century *Witembre* for October, that is, eighth month.

The Collect, beautiful as it is, does not fully

reproduce the admirable terseness and suggestiveness of the original. "*Recta sapere*" is quite a different thing from "to have a right judgment in all things." The Epistle and Gospel are a marked exception to the general rule, which we have pointed out before. The Epistle is historical, being the account of the Descent of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost; the Gospel doctrinal, and containing our Lord's description of the functions of the Comforter in the Church.

Of the Proper Psalms, *xlvi.* is taken by St. Thomas Aquinas, in accordance with the unanimous consent of the Fathers, as referring to the Resurrection of Christ, and the sacramental nature of the Church and its ordinances, upon which its after history depends. "*Psal. lxxviii.*" says the Ven. Bede, "is full of Gospel sacraments, and is chiefly shown to be concerning the Ascension of Christ."

1. The Holy Spirit comes to us in the stead of Christ. (St. John xiv. 16, 17, Gosp.)

The heavenly Gift is not simply called the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of God, but the Spirit of Christ, that we might clearly understand that He comes to us from and instead of Christ. Thus St. Paul says, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts;" and our Lord breathed on His Apostles, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and He says elsewhere to them, "If I depart, I will send Him unto you."

It would seem to follow that, if so, the Comforter who has come instead of Christ, must have vouchsafed to come in the same sense in which Christ came; I mean, that He has come, not merely in the way of gifts, or of influences, or of operations, as He came to the Prophets; for then Christ's going away would be a loss, and not a gain, and the Spirit's presence would be a mere pledge, not an earnest; but He comes to us as Christ came, by a real and personal visitation. \* \* The Saviour, when once He entered into this world, never so departed as to suffer things to be as before He came; for He is still with us, not in mere gifts, but by the substitution of His Spirit for Himself, and that both in the Church and in the souls of individual Christians.—J. H. Newman.

(b.) He came for the foundation of the Church.

From that one house, from that one upper room, went forth the grace, and the light, and the love, that have brought in many souls to Paradise,—that have turned so many kingdoms from darkness to light,—that have enabled the martyrs to bear such torments, the Confessors to do such wonders, the Virgins to show forth such purity, every righteous soul now before the Lamb through much tribulation to enter into the Kingdom of God. That rushing mighty wind has now passed over the whole earth: wherever it has gone, the desert has rejoiced as the rose: those cloven tongues, as of fire, have spoken to all kindreds, and nations, and tongues; wherever they have preached, hearts, hard as stone, have immediately melted; those twelve poor men who were then gathered together in the upper chamber, have themselves sat down at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and have left others, and they again others, to bear the burden and the heat of the fight, as it is this day.—Dr. Neale.

(c.) He came also for the guidance and the comforting of individual souls.

"What if He should not yet have filled our hearts?—what if we should know nothing of His love, nothing of His comfort, nothing of His support, nothing of His light? A sad day must Whitsunday be to us then. We are like the impotent man by the pool of Bethesda, who saw multitudes of other sick persons go down into those healing waters and become whole, and he himself remained year after year in that weakness. Oh, that the Holy Ghost would but come down on such, as He came down on that first Day of Pentecost! not

with a rushing mighty mind, but with the still small voice that is heard in the heart! not with fiery tongues, but with fire of His love!"—Dr. Neale.

(d.) Therefore, while the miraculous gift ceased after a longer or shorter time, the Love and Graces of God's Spirit remained as a permanent endowment in the Church.

There appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire: and it sat upon each of them. It sat, mark you: not they sat. The fire sat and remained on their heads:—not so of the tongues. And why was this? Because the power of speaking different languages was to pass away. The Apostles had it, and the Christians of those very early times; but we have it not; and scarcely one or two among the great host of God's Saints, since the Apostles, have ever received the power. But the fire remained: because the fire of God's love was to remain with His people for ever.—*Ibid.*

(e.) The Pentecostal Gift was the fulfilment of the promise made by our Lord to His Apostles at Eastertide.—St. John xx. 22.

"It was the gift of the Holy Spirit for a special purpose, for the remitting and retaining of sins, that the Lord bestowed upon the Apostles at Easter: but they were about to receive the fulness of the Spirit at Pentecost according to Christ's promise; that by it they might convert the Gentiles to Christ; for then the Holy Ghost, descending visibly upon them by fiery tongues, plentifully endowed them with all gifts, and especially with an effectual power of preaching."—*Corn. a Lapide.*

(d.) The Supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit are the cause of good desires in the heart of man.

"Philosophers observe that the ebbing and flowing of the sea is by virtue of the moon . . . so that the sea ebbs and flows not from any principle in itself. Thus the heart of every poor creature is like the water, unable to move towards Heaven, to think a good thought, much less to act anything that is good, till the Holy Spirit of grace brings in its beams, and leaves a supernatural virtue by them upon the soul, and thereby draws it up to itself."—G. Spencer.

(e.) The Graces of the Sacraments are due to the working of the Holy Spirit.

"Those who take God at His word will not doubt where His Holy Spirit is given. In sacraments which He has ordained; in a message which He has authorized; in prayer, public and private, to which He has pledged His presence, this great gift is certainly to be found. The Spirit is the soul of the Church, and whatever be the weaknesses or diseases of parts of the body which He deigns to inhabit, the soul asserts itself as life in its furthest extremities."—H. P. Liddon.

"Thus the Christian ministry is a ministry of grace as well as of truth; it bids every man, on the one hand, hold out the hand of faith that he may receive God's gifts; while, on the other, it is itself a means whereby the grace or invigorating force of Christ, conveyed by His Spirit, and reaching man by the certified channels of His approach, makes us "one with Christ, and Christ with us." The "Word of Reconciliation," taken in its broad sense, includes all the powers of the Gospel age, which enable Christ's ministers to do their Master's work."—*Ibid.*

"As in a fire, the fuel may be quite burnt out, the flame abated and quite extinguished, but yet there still remains a heap of coals on the hearth, and in them a good fire, though all may seem to be quenched; and as it is obvious to every eye that the sun does not always shine out in its lustre, a cloud may interpose, and so intercept its beams; yet for all that, the body of it is in the heavens, as the fountain of all other light whatever. So it is that the graces of the Spirit, such as faith, hope, love, cannot