Easter IV

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Date: 03 May 2026

Preacher: Seminarian Matthew Stuart

[0:00] In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. We heard in the Gospel text this morning that Jesus was going away, returning to the Father who sent him.

And his disciples were filled with grief because they couldn't see past their own loss. The one who they had followed for three years was leaving them.
And all they could think about was what that would mean for them. Our Lord says in verse 5, Now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, where are you going?
Peter had asked that question earlier, but not seriously. Because he was more concerned with his own fate than with where Jesus was actually going.
So our Lord responds, Nevertheless, I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away. For if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you.
[1:08] But if I depart, I will send him to you. Our Lord's departure was necessary. The Holy Spirit could not come until Jesus went to the Father.

Earlier in John's Gospel, we're told that the Spirit was not given because Jesus had not yet been glorified. Jesus' glorification means his death, resurrection, and ascension.
We see this by comparing the disciples before and after. At the end of Jesus' time with them, everyone deserted him and fled.
But after the Spirit came at Pentecost, they spoke the word of God boldly and rejoiced because they had been counted worthy of suffering for the name of Jesus.
Christ's departure enabled the Spirit's coming. And the Spirit continues Christ's work by convicting the world and guiding believers into all truth.
[2:16] Jesus explained two things that the Spirit would do. And when he has come, he will convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.

Of sin because they do not believe in me. Of righteousness because I go to my Father and you see me no more. Of judgment because the ruler of this world is judged.
The Spirit's work is to convict. To make the world's guilt known to the individual sinner's conscience. Because otherwise, people would never come to see themselves as sinners.
The Jewish leaders thought they understood sin, righteousness, and judgment. They were wrong on all three counts. Concerning sin, they condemned Jesus as a sinner and thought themselves righteous.
But they were the ones guilty before God. The work of God is to believe in the one he sent. And rejecting Jesus is the ultimate and unpardonable sin.
[3:24] On Pentecost, 3,000 souls, when Peter preached, they were cut to the heart that Jesus had crucified, that had been crucified, was both Lord and Christ.

Concerning righteousness, they applied their own standards and concluded Jesus was guilty. But the one they had declared sinful was vindicated by God when he raised him from the dead.
The Spirit shows that righteousness before God depends not on our own efforts, but on Christ's atoning work. Concerning judgment, they condemned Jesus and thought they were executing justice on a criminal.
But the Spirit reveals that Satan was the one who was judged and condemned at Jesus' glorification. Cast out when our Lord conquered death. So we read in verse 12, I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear to hear them now.
The disciples were distraught and couldn't handle hearing more. But there was a deeper reason that they could not bear what Jesus had to say.
[4:40] Until the Spirit came and they received the new birth, they could not understand the things of his kingdom. Jesus says to them, However, when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide

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you into all truth.

For he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears, he will speak, and he will tell you things to come. The Spirit would enable them to grasp the revelation of Jesus.
The Spirit is the internal illuminator who leads the church into a deeper understanding of what has been given in Jesus. This is not the revelation of new truths left unrevealed by Christ.
In the person of Jesus himself, and his manifestation through death, the resurrection, and the ascension, we have the full final revelation.
Just as the Son did not speak independently of the Father, the Spirit does not speak independently of Jesus. When Jesus says the Spirit will tell them things to come, he is talking about the significance of his death and resurrection.
[5:54] He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. The Spirit draws attention not to himself, but to Christ.

As we witnessed this morning with the baptism of little Lila, we are regenerated in holy baptism, born of water in the Spirit, and through him we share in the very life of God.
The Spirit continues this work today. He convicts the world through the witness of the church, through the works of charity he produces in us.
When the world sees Christians loving one another as Christ loved us, the Spirit exposes their rebellion and convicts them.
He guides us into all truth, not by giving new revelation beyond what has been given in Christ, but by opening our eyes to see the glory of Christ.
[6:57] As we read scripture, pray, receive the sacraments, the Spirit takes the things of Christ and declares them to us.

Our Lord's departure enabled the Spirit's coming. We have the helper Jesus promised. The same Spirit who came upon the apostles at Pentecost dwells in us through baptism, leading us deeper into the knowledge of God revealed in Jesus Christ, our Lord.
Amen. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

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