

Homily 3rd Sunday Year C - The Word of God 2025

In celebrating the Word of God, we come to the close of Unity Week whose theme was “*Do you believe this?*” It was the question Jesus asked Martha about the resurrection and rising from the dead; her brother Lazarus had just died. Martha replied positively.

The Word of God as found in scripture offers us the support, encouragement, insights and graces that help us respond to the same question Jesus asks us, *Do you believe?* Our response is the one we make when proclaiming our faith in the creed, probably with the caveat, *Lord help my unbelief!*

Our first reading introduces us to Ezra speaking to the people who had returned to Jerusalem after years of exile in Babylon, many had never seen Jerusalem before. On returning to Jerusalem, they found it in a shambles so they rebuilt the city and the Temple. Ezra then gathers all the people before him and uses scripture to remind them of their heritage and teach them about God’s love for them and how special they were in God’s eyes. The same scripture outlined the will of God for them and the direction and manner in which they were to live by placing God at the centre of their lives and showing special care for each other as well as the stranger.

To help, let us use a prayer attributed to St Patrick asking Christ to take pride of place:

Christ be with me, Christ within me,

Christ behind me, Christ before me,

Christ beside me, Christ to win me,

Christ to comfort and restore me.

Christ beneath me, Christ above me,

Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,

Christ in hearts of all that love me,

Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

I arise today through the mighty strength of the Lord.

The Word of God helps us recognise how God is present, living in and among us 24/7. Sundays are days for rejoicing, offering us freedom and hope. The Jubilee calls us to be pilgrims of hope knowing that the Lord God is our strength and a joy-filled and sustaining strength at that!

Jesus was aware of the Spirit of God’s presence in him when he said to the people in the synagogue: *The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, to the blind new sight, to set the downtrodden free, and to proclaim the Lord’s year of favour.* (Is 61:1)

The Holy spirit that worked in Jesus also works in us like a:

Swirl of dust moving along the face of the ground,

untameable presence hovering above the water,

flicker of flame and wisp of smoke.

There, there you are.

Breathing, dancing, tending, challenging, bristling with energy.

By your breath,

your dreams for the world are made into flesh and bone,

animated by your love,

we can be fire dancers, peace breathers and bone shakers.

God, Giver of Life, Light of the World, Breath of Heaven,
the one God three times holy –

Blessed are you past, present and future.
We confess our common faith in you.
Let us rejoice in the Spirit,
who renews the face of the earth and draws us towards unity.
Forgive us when our breath is distasteful.
Enflame us with your Pentecost fire,
to speak the truth of the gospel that brings freedom and life.
Awaken our prayers and give them flesh
as we work with you,
to make well and full, the whole of creation.

While fixing an injury to a local farmer at the doctor's, they began talking about politics and politicians.

The farmer says. *Well, the way I see it is that Politicians are "**Post Turtles!**"*

Doctor: *What's a Post Turtle?*

Farmer: *When you're driving down a road and come across a fence post with a turtle perched on it, that's a Post Turtle.*

As the doctor still looked puzzled the farmer continued:

You know he did not get up there by himself;

he doesn't belong there;

he doesn't know what to do while he's up there;

he's elevated beyond his ability to function;

and you are left wondering what kind of idiot put him up there to begin with.

Best explanation of a politician ever!!