

A Gospel Reflection From Deacon Steve-  
Grab your bible and read ACTS 2:36-41

This time of year there are so many movies about what it was like from the Old Testament to the resurrection of Jesus, and how his Apostles and followers persevered since then.

It was really rough back then. Put yourself in that time and place when the strong took away from the weak just because they could. Justice was harsh. Governments ruled with iron fists. If people did not do as they wish it was not uncommon to make an example of them by gouging someone's eyes out, or stone them, or crucify them.

When Jesus first met Peter fishing he said, "come follow me and I will make you fishers of men". Jesus and his Apostles set out to change the world.

In today's reading they are already talking about Pentecost. The people gathered are called to repent and be baptized where they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. They are the first Christians. They understood how important it is to have their sins forgiven so they could enter heaven. It was so fresh in their minds what Jesus had just done for them. They were called to evangelize. Those who accepted his message were about three thousand. They were some of the most courageous evangelist ever. They would stand up in times of severe persecution.

As years have gone by and the Church has grown, many Priests, Brothers, and Sisters were sent into the world as Missionaries to help the poor, and needy. They too did so with a great love of what Jesus had done for them in making it possible for them to enter Heaven.

Today we live in our communities where we are safe from the kind of things Jesus and, the first Christians were subjected to. We have so much to be grateful for, our homes, families, great schools, and hospitals, food on the table, safety, and opportunities to do so many different

things. Of course now we are going through a setback, but we will be alright. I hear some people say this will draw our families, and community closer together. As a matter of fact just recently someone in our community had a birthday. He was disappointed he could not celebrate it with his family and friends. Some thoughtful person put on Facebook that it would be nice if we could have a drive-by birthday party for that person. It was a huge success!! I think the people participating were as happy as the person having the birthday. There is so much love in our community, it is inspiring to see that.

Today's message is one of spreading the good news. Spread it by living it, which is the most sincere way, and by acts of service to others. Sometimes in the fall it's hard to find CCD teachers for the year. If you are worried you don't know enough about your faith, don't worry there are so many people here to help you. This community wants everyone to succeed. There are many other ways of contributing to the community, and so many people step up and fill those needs.

When we can go back to our churches it will be good to see Father Gene, Father Tom and all our parishioners again. We will appreciate the mass more. Receiving the Eucharist will be so special. Now, Easter is still fresh in our minds, God never abandoned Jesus, he never abandoned the Apostles, and our most recent ancestors. He is always there for us. I often look at the five great churches in our cluster and think of the sacrifices, and faith of those who started these communities. It makes me think that they had great faith. They went through hard times, and made these communities strong. They did evangelize with their lives. They are an inspiration to us all to continue what Jesus started many years ago. And if we continue to strive forward with great faith and confidence in Jesus we will make the world a better place.

