

Fr. Brad Neely

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Ordinary Time

Sts Peter & Paul: Jan 24, 2010

Neh 8: 2f-10; 1Cor 12: 12-30; Lk 1: 1-4, 4:14-21

spirit = pnēuma (pnyoo-mah): a current of air, a breath, a spirit---  
God's holy spirit.

drink = pōtizō (pot-id-zo): [not "to drink"] but: to *furnish* drink,  
make to drink, irrigate.

Paul emphasizes in the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading  
that each part of the body  
is integral to the body as a whole.  
In turn, each one of us is integral  
to the **body of Christ** as a whole—**His Church**.

*"For in **one Spirit**  
we were all baptized into **one body**,  
whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons,  
and we were **all** given to drink of one Spirit."*

Three years ago on this Sunday in Ordinary time,  
I paused on the phrase in Paul's letter:  
"drink of one Spirit."

It is worth pausing again.

While our English translation says,

*"we were **all** given to **drink of one Spirit**,"*

the original Greek says,

*"all were given to drink into one Spirit."*

or "all into one Spirit we were given to drink."

Both translations sound basically the same,  
except if we look into the Greek word used for "drink."

The Greek use of the word "drink"

means not just the verb "to drink"

but to "furnish drink,"

perhaps as if we were a host.

If we were to say,

*"all were given to furnish drink into one Spirit,"*

it would be a bit mysterious.

But we don't have to pick it apart too much

to understand that what all of us

are invited to is *very intimate*.

And if we are invited to drink of the Spirit,

that in doing so,

we are also invited to drink of Christ,

and given to drink into the heavenly Father.

With one person of the Trinity,

you have them all.

Holding that to the side for the moment,

I want to recognize that on this past Friday,

January 22, marked the 37<sup>th</sup> year

since the legalization of abortion in the United States.

Some 45 million aborted babies later  
(this statistic through the year 2005),  
*...some 45 million aborted babies later....*

we must face just one of the many tragic realities  
resulting from this court decision.

These 45 million+ babies

were also invited into the intimate union  
between God and humanity.

In that they have every dignity  
given to the created human being  
that any of us have.

These are 45 million+ spirits and souls  
were fused and housed in developing bodies,  
meant to "drink into the Holy Spirit of God."

***And they have been thrown away.***

The truth be told,

the spirits of their mothers and fathers  
have been tragically harmed.

But, even in that, there can be forgiveness and hope.

Whether we are talking about abortion,  
or about numerous other issues,  
if God is to be separated  
from our public American lives,

how are we to reconcile

the sublime and divine reality

that we "all were given to drink into one Spirit."

And yet, it is perfectly legal

to desecrate the gift of life.

Life is such a phenomenal gift

that even we, who are here and alive,

have everything we can do to grasp it.

Let's think about the intimate exchange  
that all are invited to partake of with God---  
to drink of His Spirit.

I mentioned this at the Men's Prayer Group a week ago.

Consider the intimacy

that a husband and wife share,

such that in God's plan,

they give themselves to each other

on a level that is not to be shared

with anyone else in this life--- spiritually, emotionally,  
and physically.

We don't run around in that degree of closeness  
with other people.

***"Follow your dream"***

Now think about Christ inviting us  
to drink of his Spirit.

One of the definitions for Spirit,  
in relation to the Holy Trinity,  
is “God’s breath.”

All are invited to drink *into* and *of* God’s breath.

This is close proximity with divine life!

It is *not* your everyday relationship.

It is *special*, and *apart* from other relationships.

If we have not completely understood the depth  
of Christ’s invitation to us in relationship before,  
now is the time.

Christ wants to be wedded to us-----

yes, that close, and what is more, close and in the midst  
of divinity.

That is why each of us is sacred.

That is why the unborn are sacred.

We are all invited to drink of *one* Spirit.

45 million+ of our *oneness* are not here.

Let us carry ourselves as worthy spouses of Christ.

Let us be concerned with those

who are defenseless and vulnerable,

yet fully created, loved, and wanted by Christ.