

June 7, 2006
7:00am Holy Communion
Homily by Rev Timothy A Leitzke (Acts 2:1-21)

During my freshman year of college my roommate and I would do our laundry on Saturday mornings. The laundry room was always quiet and all of the machines open. One morning we sat there reading for our classes when these two guys came in, slowly, with big grins on their faces. Despite our being seated right in the middle of the room they seemed unaware of us at first. They talked loudly to each other. Presently they noticed us. One of them said to me, “Hey man! How are ya?”

“Okay.”

“What are you doing?”

The whole not noticing two people thing had given me a poor opinion of their powers of perception, so I wasn’t exactly surprised that the whirring, rattling, sloshing washing machines did not register in their minds. I said, “I’m doing my laundry.”

“Laundry?”

“Yeah.”

Why?”

“My clothes are dirty.”

“What? Man, you two should not be in here doing laundry. You two should be out going wild!”

And I realized that St Peter was an idiot, because his whole speech in Acts was founded upon his argument that the disciples could not be drunk because it was only 9:00 in the morning, and these two guys were totally wasted at 9:00 in the morning. What if Pentecost wasn't the coming of the Holy Spirit? What if it was just the morning walk home from a really wild frat party? St Peter never thought about that, did he?

Live for a couple of hours and you'll notice a lot of little events like this one, events that contradict our expectations or that violate so-called “common sense”. We make a sad mistake when we expect God—or our faith in God—to rid our lives of the unexpected. Perhaps a better approach is to say, “God is with us, which is a good thing because I don't know *what* is going to happen next!” We need the Holy Spirit to have faith when things happen or change unexpectedly. We need the Holy Spirit to have faith, *period*.

St John calls the Holy Spirit the Battle Companion. The Holy Spirit's got your back. The Holy Spirit's got your front, too, and everything in between. The Holy Spirit stands with us no matter what challenges we face, no matter what

the odds are, no matter how sinful we are; part of the Spirit's job is forgiving our Sin. The Holy Spirit is our Battle Companion when things rattle us.

St Peter's argument that the disciples weren't drunk because it was only 9:00am might not stand a chance in our colleges and universities, but it's not the argument that makes me believe. That argument did not get me through college, or seminary, or anything else. The Holy Spirit gives me the faith to trust the gospel. God is so good and loves us so much that God forgives our Sin and enables us to do God's work in this world. God doesn't lord godliness over us; God gives up godliness so that our relationship with God can heal and be whole. God promises that death does not have the last word.

I don't know what is going to happen next. I know that whatever it is we each have a friend and battle companion in the Holy Spirit, who enables us to see, in each of life's challenges, our chance to be faithful, our chance to forgive, and our chance to heal.