

# Witnessing to Our Faith

The Rev'd. Dr. John Roddam | [www.pleromainternational.ca](http://www.pleromainternational.ca)

Diocesan Times Article – May 2018

The Prayer Book commemorates special Feast Days during the Church Year by certain additions to the liturgy. One such embellishment is a Proper Preface added to the Eucharistic Prayer. The Proper Preface sets the theme for the day. This is a pithy statement about how the Church understands each celebration. Pentecost is Sunday May 20th, 2018! Here is the Proper Preface for Pentecost, a celebration originally known as Whitsunday –

## Propers for Pentecost

Upon Whitsunday, and six days after, and at Ordinations and Synods.

*THROUGH Jesus Christ our Lord; according to whose most true promise, the Holy Spirit came down as at this time from heaven, lighting upon the disciples to teach them, and to lead them into all truth; giving them both the gift of tongues, and also boldness with fervent zeal constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations; whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error into the clear light and true knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Jesus Christ. Therefore with Angels... Pp. 80-81. BCP (1962)*

One phrase stands out – “and also boldness with fervent zeal constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations...”

Jesus stated, “*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8 NKJV)

As the Holy Spirit comes upon us, one of the main purposes is to empower us to testify to Jesus. However, in our Anglican Culture, such spoken witness is commonly frowned upon. Some see this as un-Anglican!

One Northern Bishop suggested that Anglicans are like the MacKenzie River – we’re frozen at the mouth! Dr. John Stott, beloved Anglican Evangelical Scholar, was even more pointed, stating, “Nothing ties the tongue, shuts the mouth, seals the lips more than the poverty of our own spiritual experience. We do not witness to Jesus because we have no witness to bear!”

Many 20 and 30-comers are stating “Why bother go to Church if God is apparently not present and His people are seemingly unaffected and silent about Him?” They are aching for an “experience” of God! Do we have anything to offer them?

## An Active Living Faith

Do you know Jesus as a living person with whom you have a relationship? Is the risen Christ alive in you? I have found that for those who have an active, living faith, it’s hard to keep quiet about it!

I love the Anglican Church. In my view, it is the most comprehensive tradition in Christendom. I ask my parishioners if they love their Church and they always respond with a hearty “Yes!” However, few will invite others. The Anglican Digest reported a few years ago that the average Anglican invites someone to Church every 169 years! Something is wrong here! Any thoughts?

While politics and religion have been “no go” topics for many Canadians, we have had much to say about our southern neighbours. What about the latter?