

Canon Gerard Flynn's homily – Saturday 7th June 2025

When I draw back the curtains in the morning I see trees; oak trees, fruit trees and conifers.

Leaves have been unfurling and unfolding for many weeks now, the freshest, newest and brightest of greens.

A great avenue of trees parades down Riders Lane in true magnificence.

Different colours, different shapes, very different leaves.

All of them lifting up into new life and new strength.

Something inside them is so strong as to have lived through the barren winter and to have vigour for the coming summer.

Occasionally, especially after the recent dry days

We water the plants to bring them back to their freshness and greenness;

other days nature kindly does it for us.

Because all things depend on water; plants and animals have their origin in water.

Water comes down from heaven as rain, and although it is always the same in itself, it produces many different effects, one in the palm tree, another in the vine, and so on throughout the whole of creation.

Water does not come down, now as one thing, now as another;

it remains the same and adapts itself to the needs of every creature that receives it.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem said that about water and plants around the year 360 AD.

The rain helps oak leaves be the finest oak leaves they can be;

they, in turn, give shade and shelter to the squirrels that live among them, and to the birds that sing within them.

Of all the churches that I have known this is the church with the greatest birdsong.

It reminds me that this church really is in the middle of Leigh Park.

When the windows are open and the birds are singing

it's as if the song is being sung within the church from one side to the other.

When Jesus died on the cross some of his friends felt that something had died within them.

But Jesus rose from the dead at Easter;

he promised to send to all of his disciples, to all of us, God's Spirit, the Spirit of love between the Father and the Son.

That Spirit, God's Spirit, makes his home in us and leads us to complete truth.

As the water makes the palm tree become the perfect palm tree and the vine the perfect vine, so, when we are filled with God's Spirit, we are most perfectly the people we are called to be; not anyone else, not anyone we wish we were. We have no need ever to feel envious.

We are the ones that only we can be and we are home to the Spirit of God.

In this great feast of Pentecost we celebrate the coming of the Spirit,

God's Spirit within us as the sap works within the tree.

Let us remember and be thankful for our own Baptism in water and in the Spirit.



I am the song that sings the bird.

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I am the leaf that grows the land.

I am the tide that moves the moon.

I am the stream that halts the sand.

I am the cloud that drives the storm.

I am the earth that lights the sun.

I am the fire that strikes the stone.

I am the clay that shapes the hand.

I am the word that speaks the man.

Charles Causley