

ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΙΚΟΣ ΠΛΗΡΩΜΑΤΟΣ
Apostolic Church of the Pleroma

*Delivered by Tau Phosphoros
to the Parish of St. Ambelain
on Sunday, May 29, 2016*

YEAR C - PROPER 4

Greetings, brethren, and welcome. Since last Sunday we have been in the Season after Pentecost, also known as Ordinary Time, which comprises the approximately six months between Pentecost and Advent. During this time, except for certain feast days, the Sunday readings constitute a semi-continuous reading of Gnostic Gospels, canonical Epistles, and one of the canonical Gospels, according to the year. Seeing as this is Year C, our Gospel readings are from Luke. Today's reading relates the healing of the centurion's slave. It is easy to look at this tale as an example of Jesus' magnificent ability to heal at a distance, and we have no doubt of his abilities. But we are not at all told that Jesus has performed a healing here. Rather, Jesus merely comments on the amazing faith of the centurion. In other words, it was by the centurion's own unshakable faith that his servant was healed. And this is what Jesus teaches us time and again throughout the Gospels - that his own miracles are merely signs and examples of the divine gifts available to all. He even tells us that he expects his followers to do yet greater things, since his time on earth would be so short.

So where are the great healers and miracle-workers? They are certainly not among those who wish to limit our understanding of Christ, and to curb the flow of the Spirit so that only a narrowly defined husk of a tradition remains. They are found among the mystics and visionaries, who dare to open themselves up to the diverse gifts of the Spirit, and who allow that Spirit to flow in and through them. The workers of divine wonders have certainly always been among us. But we cannot help but think that they are not found in the vast numbers that Jesus surely wished. His words seem to indicate that he expected all of his future followers to gain access to the same magnificent powers he himself wielded: healing the sick, counseling the distressed, commanding the winds, and even raising the dead.

So where do we go in our own day to seek out these Masters of the Spirit? Ah! But that is the wrong question entirely. What we need to ask is: What must I do to gain these gifts of the Spirit, and to attain to mastership myself? Only when this question is asked with the sincere intention of seeking out the answer may one begin to come into his or her birthright.

The Sacraments and prayer are both methods by which we may obtain these gifts. But as Gnostics, we also advocate initiation into the Ancient Mysteries. Initiation into the authentic Mystery Schools does not supplant the need for sacrament and prayer. Rather, it prepares us and makes us into worthy vessels for the gifts and graces that come from sacrament and prayer. Initiation, by helping us learn to know ourselves, helps us both in the receiving of divine powers and in the instruction of their proper use. Let us never forget, then, that the Spirit is the sole dispensator of the powers of the Father, and that Jesus is the exemplar, par excellence, of the spiritual Master.