

May 23, 2021

Pentecost Sunday

Mass during the Day

Acts 2:1-11

Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34

1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13

Jn 20:19-23

ARE YOU ON FIRE FOR JESUS?

A little boy stops in front of a Church with his bike and he sees the priest come out. The priest says, **"Come inside, I want to show you something."** The little boy says to the priest, **"But somebody will steal my bike."** The priest says to him, **"Don't worry, the Holy Spirit will watch it."**

So, the little boy goes inside, and the priest says, **"Let me show you how to do the Sign of the Cross. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Now, you try it."** So, the boy says, **"In the name of the Father, and of the Son. Amen."** The priest says, **"What happened to the Holy Spirit?"** The boy replied, **"The Holy Spirit is outside, watching my bike, Father."**

Joking aside, the **Solemnity of Pentecost** we are celebrating today highlights the role of the Holy Spirit, the 3rd person in the Holy Trinity, in the lives of Jesus Christ's followers.

What happened at the first (1st) Pentecost?

- Filled with the Holy Spirit, the disciples were rejuvenated/revitalized to do what the Lord Jesus commanded them to do. They took seriously what the Lord Jesus said, **"As the Father has sent me, so I send you."** They embraced wholeheartedly their commissioning. They became passionate missionaries for Christ. They were 'on fire' for the sake of the Gospel.
- Filled with the Holy Spirit, they courageously came out from their shadows and begun to live joyfully in the light.
- Filled with the Holy Spirit, they started to understand the importance of community life and generous sharing of God's gifts.
- Filled with the Holy Spirit, they were able to harmonize/blend their different gifts in building up God's kingdom.
- Filled with the Holy Spirit, they were united in proclaiming to others that **'Jesus is Lord.'**
- Filled with the Holy Spirit, they amplified/magnified the great things that God had done for them.
- Filled with the Holy Spirit, they became so passionate in living holiness.
- Filled with the Holy Spirit, they became on-fire in making sure that their words and actions will give glory to God.

The Holy Spirit that was given to the disciples during the first (1st) Pentecost did not leave the Church. The Holy Spirit stayed up to this point in our faith-life journey as a Church. If the Holy Spirit left the Church, **do you think our Church will survive for more than 2,000 years now?** With all the attacks and scandals that had happened, our Church will not be standing here if the Holy Spirit did not guide the faithful in the 'ups and downs' of the journey. It is the Holy Spirit who inspired the faithful to be courageous in the midst of attacks. It is the Holy Spirit who purified the hearts of the faithful to learn from the scandals that had happened. The Holy Spirit keeps on working for the good of the Church. However, the Holy Spirit needs our cooperation. **Isn't it that's what the earlier disciples did?** When they started cooperating with the Holy Spirit everything changed – **from hollowness to holiness; from selfishness to selflessness; from close-fistedness to generosity; from self-centeredness to God-centeredness.**

The Holy Spirit was shining in the lives of the first disciples. The same Holy Spirit can also do wonders/miracles for us. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, like them, we can shine too. The caveat though is for us to cooperate/unite/submit ourselves to the direction of the Holy Spirit. The question is – **are we willing to do that? Are we ready to follow the direction of the Holy Spirit in our lives?**

How are we going to know that the Holy Spirit is working in us and thru us? Let me give you some examples.

- When we have the courage to cut our ties with our favorite sins like gossiping, arrogance, and greed, then we are cooperating in the works of the Holy Spirit to make us 'new creations.'
- When we are fearless in proclaiming that 'Jesus is Lord' to all we encounter, then we are uniting ourselves to the works of the Holy Spirit.
- When we make a conscious effort for the Lord Jesus to be the focus and we are happy working on the sideline, then we know that the Holy Spirit is working in us and thru us.
- When we allow our hardened/stony hearts to be shattered and agree to having the heart of Jesus, then we know that the Holy Spirit is working in us and thru us.
- When we have the humility to ask for forgiveness in the context of the Sacrament of Confession/Reconciliation and to the person whom we have hurt, then we know that the Holy Spirit is working in us and thru us.
- When we have the generosity to forgive our offender, then we know that the Holy Spirit is working in us and thru us.
- When we realized that the gifts we have are meant to build up the kingdom of God here on earth, then we know that the Holy Spirit is working in us and thru us.
- When we stop insisting on doing our own will and begin to embrace God's will wholeheartedly, then we know that the Holy Spirit is working in us and thru us.
- When our hearts are always bursting with gratitude and we look with hope in the midst of difficulties, then we know that the Holy Spirit is working in us and thru us.

These are just some of the things that the Holy Spirit can do for us. In this Mass, therefore, we invoke the Holy Spirit by saying:

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.