

June 05, 2022

Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-11

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

1 Cor 12:3-7

Jn 20:19-23

DEAD CHURCH?

Who wants a 'dead Church?' (May I see a show of hands please.) **Who wants a 'lively Church?'** (If you want a lively church, please raise your hand.)

There was a story about a young priest who started his parish assignment by making personal visits to each of the members of the parish, inviting them to come and attend his Masses. The following Sunday the Church was all but empty. Accordingly, the priest placed a notice in the local newspapers, stating that, because the Church was dead, it was everyone's duty to give it a decent Christian burial. The funeral would be held the following Sunday afternoon, the notice said.

Shockingly curious, a large crowd turned out for the "funeral." In front of the pulpit, they saw a closed coffin, smothered in flowers. After the priest delivered the eulogy, he opened the coffin and invited his congregation to come forward and pay their final respects to their dead Church. Filled with curiosity as to what would represent the corpse of a "dead Church," all the people eagerly lined up to look in the coffin. Each "mourner" peeped into the coffin then quickly turned away with a guilty, sheepish look. **In the coffin, tilted at the correct angle, was a large mirror.**

The point of the story is that 'dead Church' happens when the members choose to be indifferent, disengage, and detach from their 'spiritual family.' On the other hand, a 'lively Church' emerges when the members, inspired by the Holy Spirit, intentionally shares in doing the mission entrusted to them by the Lord Jesus.

Today we are celebrating the **Solemnity of Pentecost**. Pentecost literally means 50th. This feast is celebrated to commemorate the descend of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles fifty (50) days after the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

What happened with the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles? The Church was born in the sense that they came out from their shells - from hiding to proclamation of the Good News to all. The Church came to life because they started to recognize that it was now their turn to continue and carry out the mission entrusted to them by Christ. On the 1st Pentecost the Church was not dead but alive. The Church was on fire sharing the Gospel. The Church was fearless and daring in going to mission

territories. The Church was joyful in spite of being threatened and persecuted. The Church was, indeed, a community of faith sharing God's love to everyone.

Our Church, particularly here at ICP, can duplicate/match what happened during the 1st Pentecost if we will allow the Holy Spirit to guide, teach, inspire, and lead us.

- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we are open to new possibilities in doing ministry.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we embrace the mission entrusted to us seriously.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we are not indifferent to the call to be stewards of the Gospel.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if all our works and words are rooted in his love and compassion.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if all of us will continue to be hospitable to one another.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we move in faith and confidence in him.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we are doers of the Word and not hearers only.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we let go of our biases/prejudices against each other.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we learn to be joyful in inviting/encouraging others to be with us.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we try to be witnesses for Christ.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we become intentional disciples of his.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we will do our mandate received in baptism to be priests, prophets, and kings in our world today.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we deepen our prayer life; we thirst for formation; and we humbly serve each other.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we let go of our old selfish ways and start living the ways of Christ.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we actively work on making other disciples of Christ.**
- **Our Church will be alive, not dead, if we become more and more like Christ as we approach him in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist regularly.**

Do you want our Church to be alive and thriving? I am sure we all want to and that's what we have been praying for these past years when we pray

the **Prayer for A Stewardship Parish**. Hence, let us learn from the 1st Pentecost event wherein the disciples allowed the Holy Spirit to guide, teach, inspire and lead them. Let us also pray for each other that we may always be open to the promptings of the Holy Spirit in our lives so we can actively contribute in building up his Church on earth. And so, we pray...

**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 the same Christ Our Lord.
Amen.**