

Does this sounds familiar to you.

You are out working in front of your house.

Maybe you're planting flowers or cutting grass.

Maybe you're doing some work on your car or trying to assemble a new bike or toy or maybe you just got home from Ikea and are trying to figure out how to put together your new picnic table that can also be used as a bed.

Maybe you're way up on a ladder, trying your best to not look down--- painting or cleaning the gutters or washing windows.

Whatever it is --- you know what happens next:

One of your neighbors sees what you are doing and decides to come and watch.

For a lot of us --- this is a nightmare come true.

And there are a couple of reasons why you might feel this way.

One --- because none of us likes to be under a microscope when we are working on something. Right?

Most of us simply want to work alone in peace and quiet.

But the second reason is really what drives us crazy.

What is that second reason?

Why do we hate when someone wanders over to watch us work?

Because we know that pretty soon they are going to be giving us some advice on how to do it, or is going to tell us what we're doing wrong, or they're going to try to help us with their "expertise". And who wants that?

Who wants THAT?

Today, we gather to celebrate Pentecost, we come together to remember that day long ago when a life-changing experience happened to those who had chosen to believe in the resurrection, had chosen to put their trust in Jesus, had chosen to follow Him, no matter what.

It's really not possible to overestimate the power of this experience in the life of the Church.

And whatever exactly happened that day, however we understand the descriptions in the Gospels and Acts, one thing is pretty clear:

The community of faith was forever changed by this experience ---

changed from being paralyzed by fear to being on fire with the Good News,

on fire with the mission of Jesus,

on fire to tell the whole world what they witnessed and how they had been transformed in ways they could never have imagined.

But really, who wants THAT?

That might strike you as an odd question.

And yet, I believe it's one we must honestly ask ourselves.

You see, we're **not** here on this day only to remember the past.

We're also here to give thanks to God for the gift of himself in the person of the Holy Spirit --- a gift given long ago and a gift given to each of us, at our baptism and again at confirmation.

And so, what **happened TO and FOR** them in the past,, is what God wants for each of us.

He wants to put **his very life** ,,into us,

He wants to pour the grace of his Spirit into our hearts and minds --- setting us on fire --- the kind of fire that can change the world.

But, again, who wants THAT?

And that's the real deal of the matter.

It's one thing to believe **that God** CAN and WANTS to dwell within each of us.

But it's a whole different thing to actually WANT God to do that,

WANT God to shape all that we say and do --- shape our whole being.

It's sort of like that nosey neighbor wandering across the street to "show us exactly how it should be done".

Even if they have something worthwhile to say, even if they know more than we do, even if they have the best sort of advice --- we resist ---

convinced that our way is the best way,

unwilling to admit that maybe we don't have all the answers.

You might disagree.

"Of course I want God to help me in every way possible.

Who wouldn't?" you might ask convincingly.

Well, I'm here to tell you "me" --- that's who.

And I'm guessing some of you too.

What most of us mean when we say we want God's help is that we want God to take away our problems, or keep us from experiencing them in the first place.

What we really want is for God to make sure that our lives go as planned ---

as **WE** have planned.

But that's not what God is selling, or promising.

But what he IS promising is to be with us when we are going through tough times and good times too.

He's promising to lighten our load, promising to help us carry our crosses, promising to help us find grace and hope and meaning in every life experience ---- the joys **and** the sorrows.

And it's **ALL** through his Spirit --- the same Spirit who came alive in those first believers 2000 years ago, and the exact same Spirit who wants to come alive,, in each of us.

But sometimes we just aren't ready to embrace the life God wants for each of us.

We want him to fix our relationships, and he wants to help us love every person in every situation.

We want him to punish those who have hurt us, and he wants **us to** forgive.

We want him to help us get the best job and live in the best house and lower the price of gas, and he wants us to give generously and **not just** from our excess.

You get the idea.

So who wants THAT?

There's that question again.

And so, today, as we gather to celebrate this great feast --- giving thanks to God for the gift of his Spirit --- let us truly believe that God can and will dwell within each of us.

But let's take it one step further.

Let's **not** simply believe that it is possible, but rather lets want it to be so, lets want it to happen.

I guess you could say God is walking up our driveway to offer his help.

Will we let him?

Do we believe he knows more than us?

Will we welcome **the free advice** he is offering?

Or do we wish he would just mind his own business?

I think you know the best choice, it's the only one worth making.

So let us pray that we can welcome and embrace the gift of the Holy Spirit into our lives and use **that** gift to tell others why we believe **in the risen Christ**.

We need to remember Jesus's words that we heard today:

"The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you **of all,,,,,** **that I told you.**"

The world needs a whole lot of Jesus right now

and the Holy Spirit is ready to help **every one of us live without fear and,,,,,,,** spread the good news.

Is there one person you know of,, who you want to talk to about this?

Who is it? Are you thinking about them right now?

Can you see their face in your mind?

A family member?

A friend? A co-worker?

Who is the one person who could use the good news of what Jesus did for us on that cross?

We **have all** been given a gift,,,,,,,,,,,,, maybe it's time **we all** use it.