

Homily: The Solemnity of The Pentecost

“Opening our hearts to receive the Holy Spirit and to become aware of the greatness of our vocation as Christians!”

An old beggar-man lay on his deathbed. As he was departing from this world, his last words to his only son who had been a constant companion during his begging trips were: “Dear son,” he said, “I have nothing to give you except a cotton bag and a dirty bronze bowl which I got in my younger days from the junkyard of a rich lady.” After the death of his father, the boy continued begging, using the bowl his father had given him.

One day, a gold merchant dropped a coin in this boy’s bowl. The merchant was, however, surprised to hear a familiar clinking sound. “Let me check your bowl,” the merchant said. To his great surprise, he found that the beggar boy’s bowl was made of pure gold. “My dear young man,” he said, “why do you waste your time begging? That bowl of yours is made of gold! It is worth a huge amount of money! Realize that you are a rich man. Be aware of the worth of the treasure that is with you, and live a life worthy of it!”

How often is our Christian life also lived in such ignorance of the treasure that we possess! We fail to realize that as Christians, we have been blessed with immense spiritual riches. Today, on this Great Day of Pentecost, we are invited to open our hearts to receive the power of the Holy Spirit and to become aware of the greatness of our vocation as Christians. On the day of Pentecost, in the Upper Room, as the disciples were gathered in prayer, along with Blessed Mother Mary, “the Holy Spirit filled the entire house in which they were” (Acts 2:2). It is to be noted that the word used to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit is the Greek word “aphno” which

means “suddenly.” “And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind...” (Acts 2: 2)

The coming of the Holy Spirit was “sudden”. This energetic entry of the Holy Spirit is a glimpse to one important characteristic of the person of the Holy Spirit: Vitality!

The Holy Spirit is a spirit of life

... of energy

... of vivacity

... of animation

... of dynamism!

Where the Holy Spirit is, there is the great movement of the will, the mind and the heart! It was this “sudden” coming of the Holy Spirit, that transformed the small group of Jesus’ disciples into mighty warriors of the Kingdom of God. Fear was transformed into power...Timidity was changed into boldness...Uncertainty was converted into conviction...

Our own lives need an encounter of this “life-transforming” experience. Is my Christian life, dull and slow – merely laced with routine actions of prayers and sacraments? Is my life of faith, lethargic and tepid – simply being pulled on, without any particular awareness or lived without any enthusiasm? ... then, we need the mighty movement of the Holy Spirit to impress life and vitality to our life and our faith!

The Holy Spirit – the shy Person of the Blessed Trinity – is often neglected in our prayers or devotion The study and awareness of the Holy Spirit is certainly, in general, given lesser priority and importance in comparison to the other Persons of

the Trinity The Feast of the Pentecost is very often not accorded the “solemn” tone in comparison to other feasts like Christmas or Easter. But let us realize, that in the Holy Spirit and in the celebration of this Feast, we have a great treasure to cherish and enjoy.

Each Christian ought to build an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit. Each Christian must become more aware of the role of the Holy Spirit in daily living. Let us inculcate a few practical resolutions to grow in our intimacy and union with this Powerful and Dynamic Personality of the Blessed Trinity:

- a. Begin the day by offering our lives to the Holy Spirit.
- b. Praying, “Come Holy Spirit, fill our hearts and minds” as we begin a particular activity or work.
- c. Making a short examination of conscience at the end of the day... introspecting our lives with respect to sin ... being grateful for His guidance through the day ... seeking for help to do better the following day.
- d. Asking for enlightenment in moments of taking decisions and offering to the Holy Spirit – even simply and ordinary ones.
- e. Purposely creating a few seconds of silence in the schedule of our works or through the course of the day, and talking to the Holy Spirit, as a friend, in the cave of our heart.
- f. Listening to the still, gentle voice of the Holy Spirit in the depths of our being... asking Him to help us to be more active to read God’s Word in the Bible... and to

partake of the Sacraments more frequently especially Confession and Holy Eucharist.

The Lord has blessed our lives with the gift of the Holy Spirit. He longs to empower our lives. He earnestly wants to be in total control of our lives. But for this, He needs our permission. A permission in the form of...longing for Him... making sincere efforts to live away sin.

Let us realize that by the Grace and Power of the Holy Spirit, we are all rich! May we be aware of the worth of the treasure that is with us, and live a life worthy of it! On this last days of the month of May, we seek the special intercession of Mother Mary – Our Lady of the Rosary – and pray for the deeper infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Wish you a very Happy Feast of the Holy Spirit – the Pentecost! Happy Birthday to our Mother Church! May we receive the sweetness of the Holy Eucharist more worthily and enthusiastically!