

Fr Ryan Homily – 5/28/23 Pentecost

Read: Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11; Psalm 104, 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13; John 20:19-23

So it's Pentecost and Pentecost is about the Holy Spirit and what the Holy Spirit does for us is renew. We even pray for that. Lord send out Your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. So the work of the Holy Spirit is to renew and that's what I've been thinking about knowing we're coming down to Pentecost, coming down to this moment, that the work of the Holy Spirit is to renew. And maybe that's exactly what you need right now. Maybe that's what we all need that we receive the Holy Spirit in such a way that the Lord can renew the face of the earth. Because what is it to renew? To renew means to make new, to make new again. That He can make new cultures and cities. He can make new our families, our parishes, our schools. He can make new our lives. Cause I don't know about you, but I used to always go into Pentecost with this idea of let's go, let's move, let's do, let's go out on mission and last week as we celebrated the ascension Jesus said I am going to return to the Father and I'm going to send the Holy Spirit and you will be on co-mission with me. You're gonna be my co-workers. I will send you out and you're gonna do great things and that is what's needed. But at the same time something is more important than that. Something is so much more important than mission. It's so much more important than go; that the Spirit renews. And what He has to renew first is something that's deep inside of us. Because what happens over time is, and this happens to me it happens to all of us, is that the gift of the Holy Spirit cools. Right the passion for the Lord in our hearts tapers off because we just get caught up in the world and we get absorbed in the things of this life. And all of a sudden we find ourselves at a point where Jesus isn't number one. Where He's not the Lord of our lives. Or even worse we forget the reason. Right we forget the why in why be Catholic. And what has to happen when you find yourself in that place is you need to be renewed. That the gift that God gave at Baptism that was strengthened by Confirmation we forget about and we need to be renewed in the first gift of the Holy Spirit. Because the Holy Spirit has so many gifts – there's wisdom and understanding, and council and prophecy, fear of the Lord, the gift of making us holy, of making us children of God. But the first gift the Holy Spirit gives is to know that you're loved. That's the first gift of the Holy Spirit. When you have the Holy Spirit, His first gift that He

places inside every one of us is this depth of knowledge that you are loved which I think is not very common. I think most of us don't know that. I think we've heard it; I think we've been told it, but I'll say this a thousand times I believe most Catholics while we have heard that God loves us, most of us if we're really truly pressed what do I believe, I believe God tolerates me. I believe He just kinda puts up with me. That's one of the reasons we need this renewal because we are made to live in the Father's house. As I spoke of last week because of Jesus' ascension, the Father's heart is completely open to us to abide Him and yet we don't. We chose not to live there. We live like we don't have a home. We live like we don't have a family. And I say this even as Catholics, here we are and maybe you're finding yourself in this place right now living as though you're not really loved. Living as though God doesn't deeply desire you with His whole heart. Living as though you don't actually have a Father. But the Holy Spirit is a spirit of adoption. In fact scripture says this, it says the love of God has been poured into our hearts. God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit so we can cry out abba, Father. But we can't even call God Father without the Holy Spirit living inside of us. And because of the Holy Spirit, now we have this complete access to the Father's heart and yet so many choose to live as though we don't know what it's like to be loved. In today's gospel we hear Jesus say as the Father sent Me, so I send you. Which is huge! That's the co-mission. That's the let's go of the gospel. Let's bring salvation to the world. Let's bring mercy into the world. He says that in John 20. Before that Jesus says in John 15 as the Father loves Me, so I love you. So Jesus sends us as the Father sent Him before that. He says as the Father loves Me, so I love you. And think about that Jesus says that at the Last Supper so that's over 50 days ago before Pentecost. And if you read those Last Supper discourses of Jesus, it goes from John 13 all the way through John 18, all Jesus can say – basically – over and over again is this message of do you have any idea how much you are loved? That's what He just keeps saying. As the Father loves Me, so I love you. You don't have any idea. And that's the truth like you can't have any idea how much you are loved by God. Because sometimes I think we put God into this box where we don't acknowledge the fact that He knows. He knows. Like we don't really live in the reality that He knows us. He knew you before He chose you. Scripture says before I formed you in the womb I knew you. So Jesus, God already saw. He saw it happen. God already saw all of the places you were gonna fail. He already saw all of the places you would mess up. He knew about it. He knew

about the infidelity. He knew about the abortion. He knew about the time that you would give yourself away. He already knew that you would deny Him at that moment where He needed you to step up. He knew about the hatred that you would harbor in your heart. He knew about the anger. He knew about how many people you would hurt. He knew it all before He chose you. And that's why Jesus is saying, do you have any idea how much, all of this I know and still I love you. He proves that in the cross and He shows the power of it in the resurrection. That's when He restores us but today He wants to renew us in this. Jesus says this in John 17, He's praying to the Father, He's with His apostles and He says I pray that the love with which You love Me Father may be in them and I in them. And so pause on that for a second because what is the love between the Father and the Son? The love between the Father and the Son, the love the Father and the Son have experienced for all eternity is so real, it's so powerful it's actually a third person – it's the Holy Spirit. So here is Jesus in John's gospel and He is saying they have no idea. Like you have no idea how much I love you. And He's talking to His Father and He's saying I pray for them Father. That the love with which you love me may be in them. And on Pentecost that's when it happened. On this day we celebrate it actually happened because the love, that love is the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of us. It's abiding in us. But celebrating Pentecost is also about renewing that if it's departed from our hearts. Because you're made to be a temple of the Holy Spirit. You're made to abide in that love. The problem with a lot of us though is we don't let Him abide in us. We don't know how to be loved. We don't let Him abide in us because we just know this truth that we can't add the Holy Spirit to a life that's lived contrary to the love of God. You just can't add the Holy Spirit to a life that's lived contrary to God's love. Or to say it like this you can't turn your Baptism off. You can't switch on and off your confirmation. If you're loved by the Father that's it! You're loved by the Father. You can't just say I'd rather not be loved by Him. But at the same time we can close ourselves off to that through our choices. You can't add the Holy Spirit to a life that's lived contrary to God's word, to His design. You can't turn it off and on, you can't pick and choose but here's the good news. You can be renewed. You can be restored. God's presence in your life, God's gifts in your life, God's Holy Spirit in your life. Your Baptism can be renewed, your Confirmation can be renewed. That's one of the reasons on Easter we renew our Baptismal promises. That's why the church and I will continually talk about the importance of confession. Because sometimes the only way we can be restored by

the Holy Spirit is receiving God's mercy and being healed and receiving His life in that sacrament. And we do that first of all not because God wants to send us out to do something for Him but because He just desperately wants me to know how much He loves me. He just wants you to know how much He loves you. Instead of walking through this world like we are orphans when we're not. Not knowing how much we're loved. I said this at the beginning, for so long, so long I got Pentecost wrong. Like I flat out got it wrong because I would hear this first reading about the descent of the Holy Spirit and I would picture these apostles, who were huddled in fear, afraid to speak about Jesus to anyone, afraid to proclaim the truth of the gospel because of the consequences until the Holy Spirit came. And I thought the Holy Spirit was like this injection of high-octane energy. Like the Holy Spirit revved them up and just pushed them out into the city. Like the apostles were amped up; they were wound up. And that's not it. The apostles they were filled with fear and when the Holy Spirit descended upon them, He removed their fear. But not by sending them into this sort of manic energy. The Holy Spirit removed their fear; He renewed them in the very same way He can remove our fear and renew us by pouring out that first gift again. And His first gift is that deep knowledge inside every one of us that you're loved. And there is such a beauty in that. To know our failures and our sins will never define us. And in fact our good actions are not what define us either. Our being is what is good. You are loved because God just loves you. He just wants to love you. And so the apostles they receive the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, and they go out into the city with no fear. Why? Because they know no matter what happens to them, whether they win people to the gospel or put people put them to death – no matter what they're loved! And so Pentecost is about being renewed in that love so you and I can do the same. God wants us to do great things for Him. He wants us to defend His church and grow His church and bring all people to acknowledge and embrace the truth. The truth about the human person. The truth about how God created us to be. But we'll never do that when we're filled with fear. If we worry about what might happen to us out there. And so the first gift of the Holy Spirit and what He wants to renew in each and every one of us today is this depth of knowledge you are loved. No matter what might happen out there. To be willing to be loved first and to be a temple of the Holy Spirit. To know that you have a dad in Heaven who chose you before you even existed. So this is the gift of Pentecost, the first gift of the Holy Spirit to know you're loved and renewed now in that love. And so we pray come Holy Spirit fill

the hearts of thy faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you will renew the face of the earth. Let us pray oh God who taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit grant that in the same Spirit we may truly be wise and ever rejoice in His constellation. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen