

Homily for the Feast of Pentecost

Today we celebrate the great event when Jesus filled his church with his spirit and sent her to establish his kingdom on earth, the kingdom of love, joy, hope, peace and forgiveness. We can learn many lessons from this event.

The Holy Spirit came when the disciples were gathered together in prayer. The spirit is at work when there is unity in the community and a feeling of togetherness in prayer. It is in the community in prayer where the church manifests herself as the body of Christ. We are one with Christ when we are gathered together in prayer.

Wherever the community is founded on faith, there is the spirit of God alive. Only when grounded and rooted in faith, our community will experience the loving presence of God. It was the event of Pentecost that gave the Apostles new strength and courage to confess publicly their faith in Jesus. Pentecost is an everyday event in the life of Christians. It is the birthday of the church.

Before His ascension Jesus said to his disciples "It is your advantage that I go away; If I do not go away the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you".

I would like to ask few questions on this feast day of the Holy Spirit:

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. When do we receive the Holy Spirit?
3. What are the works of Holy Spirit?

1 Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is a person. Jesus never spoke of the Holy Spirit as 'it'. In John's gospel, He always referred to the Spirit as 'He' and not it. The Holy Spirit is not a force or a thing; He is a real Person.

In the Bible we see the Holy Spirit as having intellect, emotions and will. He performed all the functions of a person. He speaks, He intercedes, He testifies, He commands, He guides, He appoints.

In Revelation 2:7

The Holy Spirit speaks	"He who has an ear let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."
He intercedes	"And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groaning too deep for words." Romans 8:26
He testifies	When the Helper comes whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of Truth, who proceeds from the Father. He will bear witness to me. John15:26.
He leads	For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

The Holy Spirit is not merely a person; He is also the divine Person. Throughout the Bible it is very clear. That the Holy Spirit is God. He has all the attributes of God. He is eternal. He is all powerful.

2 When do we receive the Holy Spirit?

We receive the Holy Spirit at the time of our Baptism.

Baptism not only purifies us from our sins but also makes us new creatures; adopted sons and daughters of God.

We become partakers of the divine nature, members of Christ and co-heir with him and a temple of the Holy Spirit.

The moment we receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour we receive the Holy Spirit.

St. Paul in his letter would say "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him."

Romans 8:9

Baptism is one and unrepeatable.

There is no separate baptism by the Holy Spirit.

Nowhere in the New Testament is there a command to be baptised with the Holy Spirit.

3 Works of The Holy Spirit?

The works of the Holy Spirit are regeneration and sanctification.

In other words, the Holy Spirit gives us a new birth in God.

The Holy Spirit plays important role in our lives.

The Holy Spirit cleanses and forgives our sins;

Restores us true peace;

Pours into our hearts true joy;

Gives us light in the darkness of our time;

and gives strength and courage to be witness to the Gospel, even in adverse circumstances.

Finally, my dear brothers and sisters

We know that we are going through tough times.

We can say the world is infected with this virus and various other things.

The feast of the Holy Spirit is an assurance and promise for all of us.

Come Holy Spirit, Fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in us the fire of your love.

Come Holy Spirit and renew the face of this troubled and infected world.

Amen