

HOMILY PENTECOST YRC 2019

Pentecost, the birthday of the Church when we remember the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples after the Ascension of Jesus, is a really big feast in the Church year. However, not one has figured out how to commercialize it. We do not have a Pentecost cake. There do not send Pentecost cards or buy Pentecost gifts. We do not have Pentecost sales at department stores. We do not have special Pentecost dinners with our relatives. We do not have an office Pentecost party. There are no Pentecost specials on television. I think it is difficult to commercialize Pentecost because the Holy Spirit Himself is rather illusive. If I ask you to picture Jesus in your mind, you may recall an artist rendering of Jesus or a mental image you created upon reading the Gospels, but you have a very concrete image. If I ask you to picture God the Father you may picture an old man with grey hair and a long beard, you may picture a father figure, but you have a pretty concrete image. If I ask you to picture the Holy Spirit what comes to mind? A white bird? It is hard to picture the Holy Spirit and it is equally as hard to nail down the work of the Holy Spirit in our world and in our lives.

One of the images of the Holy Spirit in the first reading is tongues of fire. Have you ever sat and watched a camp fire? The flickering flames produce heat, provide light and burn away debris. The Holy Spirit can warm cold hearts, illuminate our lives and burn away burdens and evil from our lives. There is also an image of the Holy Spirit like a strong driving wind. We cannot see it, we do not know where it comes from and we do not know where it is going, but it can blow us in directions and we do not know why. Sometimes that is the way the Holy Spirit works in our lives. The Holy Spirit sometimes pushes us in a particular direction and we cannot figure out why. I have come to realize that in order to understand the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives we have to get out of our heads and into our hearts. We need to stop trying to

figure out the movement of the Holy Spirit through our reason. The movement of the Holy Spirit is not linear. The Holy Spirit frequently does not lead you to the next logical place. It frequently does not make logical sense; you just kind of know that it is what you are supposed to do.

The Holy Spirit descended upon a whole community not just to individuals. People where there from all over the world speaking different languages but they could all understand one another. What they were saying to one another was probably not important or it would have been recorded here. What was important is that they understood each other. I think they were all speaking the language of the Holy Spirit that day. That is not a language that we can classify as Hebrew or Greek or English. I think it is a language of the heart. If a whole community is following the movement of the Holy Spirit everything comes together. We can all use our gifts to complete the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit can make us whole as individuals and as a community.

The disciples were definitely not being led by the Holy Spirit in the beginning of the Gospel reading when they were locked in the upper room for fear of the Jews. The Holy Spirit does not play on our fears. The Holy Spirit is like a gentle whisper giving us comfort, giving us peace, helping us to make sense out of our lives. A voice that says stay in your comfort zone, you are not good enough, do not try you might fail, or people may not like you is not the Holy Spirit. Fear is never of the Holy Spirit.

To be open to movement of the Holy Spirit in your life you have to get out of your head and into your heart. Be open to what comes into your world. Maybe it is not what you expected, maybe it is not the next logical step, but maybe it is exactly what you need to do. And let go of the fear. If the Holy Spirit is leading you in a particular direction, the Holy Spirit will help you.

11:00 Only. For those of you graduating this year I want you to be particularly connected to the movement of the Holy Spirit in your lives during this time of transition. God has given all of you particular gifts that he wants you to use to help other people. It is important that you find those gifts if you have not already. This is something that you like and something that you are very good at. These are usually the same thing. You are good at it because you like it and you like it because you are good at it. This is what will make your heart sing. This will give you a reason to get out of bed in the morning. This is where you will shine. Do not be controlled by reason...this is what makes sense as a next step...this is where I will make a lot of money...this is where there are a lot of jobs. Do what makes your heart sing. You will never be sorry.