

HOMILY PENTECOST YRB 2018

According to the National Weather Service, last year was one of the most devastating years in history for hurricanes. That is no surprise. We all know about Harvey, Irma, Jose and Maria and the devastating effects that the wind can have. In *The Encyclopedia of Useless Information*, they list some extraordinary events that occurred in tornadoes regarding animals. There was a 1,400 pound bull chained to his stall in a barn. After a tornado passed by the barn was found 60 feet away and the bull was still chained in his stall, resting comfortably, unharmed. Here in Michigan, a tornado moved through a dog boarding kennel. Later one of the dogs was found ½ mile away in a tree, unharmed. Certainly the wind can be very powerful, sometimes having devastating effect, sometimes moving things places where they had no intention of moving to, and sometimes it is just a cool gentle breeze on a hot summer day.

Today we celebrate Pentecost, the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples. One of the images of the Holy Spirit in the first reading today is wind. Like the wind, the Holy Spirit is very powerful, and sometimes tries to get us to move places we do not want to go, but unlike the wind, the Holy Spirit never overpowers us. He tries to lead us in the right direction, but he does not over power our free will. Just like Jesus did, he wants us to use our free will to do what is right. And the creative power of the Holy Spirit is a lot like the wind. It blows where it wills and we do not know where it came from and where it goes. The Holy Spirit is much like planting seeds. The seeds are there, but it is up to us to let them germinate.

Certainly there were a lot of seeds germinating on that first Pentecost. Before Pentecost the disciples were lock in the upper room for fear of the Jews. They were immobilized. After the descent of the Holy Spirit their lives were filled with endless possibilities. They left the upper room without fear. 3,000 people were baptized that day. Our lives are also filled with

endless possibilities. Sometimes we become paralyzed by fear of making any changes in our lives. Sometimes we just get really comfortable where we are at and just do not want to move. If we can open ourselves to the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives we can have the courage to move forward and make the changes that we need to make. We frequently know what the Holy Spirit is calling us to do, but sometimes we are too afraid or too comfortable to do it. Sometimes we are called to make big changes in our lives, but more often we are called to make little adjustments.

Prior to Pentecost Jesus had just spent 3 years in his public ministry teaching the disciples and 40 day teaching the disciples in his past resurrection appearances teaching the disciples. All of that is now over. In the Gospel reading Jesus says: “I have so much more to tell you but you cannot bear it now.” We are just able to grasp so much at one time. So he sent the Holy Spirit to guide us. I think we need to allow ourselves to depart from our plan and be guided by the Holy Spirit. If we are guided by the Holy Spirit we can withstand the negative influences of our culture and look past the foolishness and shortsightedness of the decisions we have to make every day. I have come to realize that our lives are shaped not so much by the big decisions we make every day, but by all of the little ones. If we make good choices on the small things, the big decisions are just easier to make. Frequently we are called to be persistent in being a good spouse, a good son or daughter, a good supervisor, a good coworker, a good student. We are called to move away from our own selfish interests and to live lives of service to the people around us. And it is all about the love. The Holy Spirit will guide you if you let her. The Holy Spirit can lead you to a life of health, wholeness, fulfillment and Joy in this life and the next. Are you open to the Holy Spirit?

