

Reflection for Thursday 27th May 2021

The Church finds Courage

Last Sunday we celebrated the great Solemnity of Pentecost, the end of the Easter season and the beginning of the ministry of the Church! It is a day to rejoice in the Holy Spirit who constantly strengthens us and to marvel at how God's grace powerfully works through the Church.

If we think back to the day of Pentecost, even though the Apostles saw the Risen Jesus several times, they were not ready to go out and proclaim the Good News, something was still missing. To consecrate the Eucharist, to wash away Original Sin in baptism, to joyfully be crucified upside down for the sake of the Gospel are feats beyond human strength, they needed God's grace.

And so, on the day of Pentecost, we find the disciples still gathered together in the upper room. Thinking back on the Lord's Resurrection and Ascension they were probably eagerly awaiting the promise of the Holy Spirit, and at the same time nervous of what would follow.

Then, God's power and love showed itself in an extraordinary way. There was a great sound from Heaven that filled the room and tongues of fire rested over each of them. The Holy Spirit filled their hearts and they immediately started speaking in tongues. As a crowd gathered, people from every nation could understand them, and after Peter's inspiring speech, 3,000 were baptized that day!

What we see at Pentecost is an explosion of grace. The Church has been anointed by the Holy Spirit and officially sent out to spread the Kingdom throughout the whole world. Sometimes we may be tempted to think that the Holy Spirit isn't working in the Church anymore, but this is the furthest thing from the truth.

We are so used to it, but think about how amazing the Church really is. After having survived 2,000 years of history, there have been over 10,000 canonized saints. Every single day mere bread and wine becomes the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus in the Eucharist. Every year, millions of souls are baptized and united to the Mystical Body of Christ.

Through miracles, prayer, homilies, the Sacraments, and all the saints here on Earth, the Holy Spirit has and is working through the Church to bring salvation to the world. Let us glorify God and allow the Spirit to work through us on this

great celebration of Pentecost!

"O Holy Spirit, descend plentifully into my heart. Enlighten the dark corners of this neglected dwelling and scatter there Thy cheerful beams." - St. Augustine

Deacon Kevin (adapted from 'My Catholic Gifts')