

Pentecost
5/23/2021

THE DIVINE G.P.S.

Pentecost is literally the fiftieth day after Easter. Sometimes it's called the birthday of the Church but there's another way of looking at it. At Christmas we celebrate the birth of Jesus but later at the Epiphany we celebrate the showing forth, the manifestation of Christ to the world. Similarly, in a poetic sense, just as Eve was created from the side of Adam when he was asleep, so too the Church was born from the side of Jesus as he was on the sleep of death on the cross. In turn, Pentecost, like the Epiphany, is the showing forth of the Church to the world.

Jesus had promised the Holy Spirit to the disciples who would remind them of what Jesus said. In one sense you could say the Holy Spirit is the living memory of the Church.

After the death of Jesus the apostles were understandably frightened and at the Ascension Jesus gave them the promise that the Holy Spirit would come and on Pentecost that promise was fulfilled. Those who were once afraid now went out and courageously shared the gospel. It wasn't something they did on their own but through the Holy Spirit working in them. And the Holy Spirit continues to be at work in the Church and in our own lives.

But we can block the Holy Spirit in many ways. One way of course, is through sin of whatever type. Sin closes us in on ourselves while the Holy Spirit leads us out of ourselves in generous love. We can block the Holy Spirit through bad habits. These may not be sins as such but they can also close us in on ourselves and dispose us to sin rather than drawing us out of ourselves. There's another way we can block the Holy Spirit and that's through micro-managing, in trying to control everything. In expecting everything to be done *as* we want it to be done, *when* we want it to be done and *in the way* we want it to be done.

Now it doesn't take a whole lot of insight to realize that God doesn't work according to the schedule we give him. Like crops growing, like wine fermenting, and like so many other processes, God can be at work but we might not be aware of how he is working.

Hopefully we cooperate with the Holy Spirit in our daily lives but it is comforting to know that even when we make mistakes, the Holy Spirit can still be at work.

Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit are sent by the Father. In Jesus, God entered into our world in a very real and visible way. Through the Holy Spirit, God enters into our world in a very real and invisible way.

Sometimes it's easier to grasp something through an image rather than a definition. The Holy Spirit is like the rain... The Holy Spirit is like the Sun... The Holy Spirit is like the wind... And the Holy Spirit is like a modern device that a great many of us have on ourselves right now, a G.P.S.

As you drive, the G.P.S. will give you directions and if you make a wrong turn it will reroute you. No matter how many wrong turns you make, the G.P.S. won't yell at you but rather will work to direct you onto the right path. So too, the Holy Spirit is always there to guide us and when we make a wrong turn, the Holy Spirit is there to reroute us again and again. No matter how many wrong decisions we make, right up to the last breath of our life, the Holy Spirit can be there showing us another way but we have to open our hearts and minds to the working of the Holy Spirit, we have to cooperate with the Holy Spirit.

There's a very simple prayer that I use and I share it with the children in our school. It's *Come Holy Spirit*. I tell the students, when you're about to take a hard test say, *Come Holy Spirit*. When you have some difficult work to do or you have just been sent to the principal's office, on the way, say, *Come Holy Spirit*.

For adults, When you have a difficult project at work or a difficult coworker, *Come Holy Spirit*. When you don't have any creativity or when your boss calls you into the office, *Come Holy Spirit*.

At times, when I have a difficult phone call to make or meeting to attend; when I work on a homily, I will say, *Come Holy Spirit*. It's a simple yet profound prayer that doesn't take long but invites the Holy Spirit into our lives and the decisions we make.

The Holy Spirit is at work in the life of the Church and our own lives. The Holy Spirit is at work in the Eucharist. The Holy Spirit comes to unite. The Holy Spirit came when the Church was gathered together, in other words, united. The evil one works to divide, the Holy Spirit comes to unite; to guide us in living lives of intentional faith in every little way.

Pentecost celebrates the love and mercy of God. Jesus says that the Holy Spirit will lead and guide us. The Holy Spirit will teach us and remind us of what Jesus has told us. We rely on the guidance of the Holy Spirit both as individuals and as the Church. On this epiphany of the church, as we live our daily lives, may our hearts be attuned to the divine G.P.S. and may we always pray, *Come Holy Spirit*.