



The Holy See

HOLY MASS ON THE SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST

HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS

Vatican Basilica

Sunday, 8 June 2014

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“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:4).

Speaking to the Apostles at the Last Supper, Jesus said that after he left this world he would send them *the gift of the Father*, that is, the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 15:26). This promise was powerfully fulfilled on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples, who were gathered in the Upper Room. This extraordinary outpouring was not limited solely to that moment, but was an event that was renewed and still continues to be renewed. Christ glorified at the right hand of the Father continues to fulfill his promise, sending upon the Church the life-giving Spirit, who *teaches us, reminds us, and lets us speak*.

The Holy Spirit *teaches us*: he is the Interior Master. He guides us along the right path, through life’s challenges. He teaches us the path, the way. In the early times of the Church, Christianity was called “the way” (cf. Acts 9:2), and Jesus himself is the Way. The Holy Spirit teaches us to follow him, to walk in his footprints. More than a master of doctrine, the Holy Spirit is a master of life. And he surely takes part in life as well as in knowledge, but within the broadest and most harmonious horizons of Christian existence.

The Holy Spirit *reminds us*, he reminds us of all that Jesus said. He is the living memory of the Church, and when he reminds us, he helps us to understand the words of the Lord.

This remembrance in the Spirit and by virtue of the Spirit is not reduced to a mnemonic fact; it is an essential aspect of Christ's presence within us and within his Church. The Spirit of truth and charity reminds us of all that Christ said, and helps us to enter ever more fully into the meaning of his words. We all have this experience: one moment, in any situation, there is an idea and then another connects with a passage from Scripture It is the Spirit who leads us to take this path: the path of the living memory of the Church. And he asks us for a response: the more generous our response, the more Jesus' words become life within us, becoming attitudes, choices, actions, testimony. In essence the Spirit reminds of the commandment of love, and calls us to live it.

A Christian without memory is not a true Christian but only halfway there: a man or a woman, a prisoner of the moment, who doesn't know how to treasure his or her history, doesn't know how to read it and live it as salvation history. With the help of the Holy Spirit, however, we are able to interpret interior inspirations and life events in light of Jesus' words. And thus, within us grows the knowledge of memory, knowledge of the heart, which is a gift of the Spirit. May the Holy Spirit rekindle the Christian memory within all of us! And there that day with the Apostles was our Lady of Memory, who from the beginning meditated on all those things in her heart. Mary, our Mother, was there. May she help us on this path of memory.

The Holy Spirit teaches us, reminds us, and — another aspect — *lets us speak*, with God and with men. There are no muted Christians, mute of soul; no, there's no place for this.

He lets us speak with God in *prayer*. Prayer is a gift that we freely receive; dialoguing with him in the Holy Spirit, who prays in us and allows us to address God, calling him Father, Dad, Abba. (cf. Rm 8:15; Gal 4:4); and this is not merely an "expression" but a reality: we truly are children of God. "All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God" (Rm 8:14).

He lets us speak in the act of faith. Without the Holy Spirit, none of us is able to say: "Jesus is Lord" — we heard this today. It is the Spirit who lets us speak with people in *fraternal dialogue*. He lets us speak with others, recognizing them as brothers and sisters; to speak with friendship, with tenderness, with compassion, understanding the heartaches and hopes, the sorrows and joys of others.

But there's more: the Holy Spirit also lets us speak to men through prophecy, making us humble and docile "channels" of God's Word. Prophecy is made with candour, to openly demonstrate the contradictions and injustices, but always with compassion and constructive intent. Charged with the Spirit of love, we can be signs and instruments of God who loves, who serves, who gives life.

In summary: the Holy Spirit teaches us the way; he reminds us of and explains Jesus' words; he lets us pray and say "Father" to God, and lets us speak to men and women in fraternal dialogue and lets us speak in prophecy.

The day of Pentecost, when the disciples “were all filled with the Holy Spirit”, was the baptism of the Church, which was born in “going out”, in “departure” to proclaim the Good News to everyone. The Mother Church, who departs in order to serve. Let us remember the other Mother, our Mother who sets out in haste to serve. Mother Church and Mother Mary: both virgins, both mothers, both women. Jesus was peremptory with the Apostles: do not depart from Jerusalem, but wait until you have received the power of the Holy Spirit from above (cf. Acts 1:4-8). Without Him there is no mission, there is no evangelization. For this, with the whole Church, with our Mother Catholic Church, let us implore: Come, Holy Spirit!