



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This weekend, we celebrate the Solemnity of Pentecost – the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the birthday of the Church. This great gift of God is the gift of God Himself to us. As Jesus, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, humbled Himself to enter into our humanity, so He sent the Holy Spirit – the third person of the Blessed Trinity – to unite us to His Heart.

While we cannot speak clearly about the Godhead – our words, and even our ideas, never reach the full truth about God – there have been many images and analogies to help us understand the Blessed Trinity. One of them, based on St. John's first letter, says that God is love. The Fathers of the Church said that God the Father is the Lover, God the Son is the Beloved, and God the Holy Spirit is the Love which unites them. Using this image, we see that they understood the Holy Spirit as the person who unites Father and Son. When Jesus, then, sends the Holy Spirit to us, we now have a direct connection into the Heart of the Father and the Son. In other words, we can "get inside" the Blessed Trinity.

When we hear about the Holy Spirit, many times we think of a "thing" or an "it" instead of a "He." I think this is because many images we have of the Holy Spirit are non-personal – a driving wind, fire, a dove, water, etc. We also hear about gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit, and so we can imagine the Holy Spirit as an angel that helps us to live the Christian life. The Holy Spirit is not an angel, though, for an angel is a created being, and the Holy Spirit is God, uncreated from all eternity. The Holy Spirit unites us to the very Heart of God, and so we can share in divine life!

I've shared this before, but I want to share it again:

Without the Holy Spirit,

God is far away

Christ stays in the past,

the Gospel is a dead letter,

the church is simply an organization,

authority a matter of domination,

mission a matter of propaganda,

the liturgy no more than an evocation,

Christian living a slave morality.

But in the Holy Spirit:

the cosmos is resurrected and groans with the birth-pangs of the kingdom,

the risen Christ is here,

the Gospel is the power of life,

the church shows forth the life of the Trinity,

authority is liberating service,

mission is Pentecost,

the liturgy is both memorial and anticipation,

human action is deified.

In order to live lives connected to the Cross and Resurrection of Christ, we need the Holy Spirit. In order to have any hope of Heaven, we need to be connected to God by the Holy Spirit. In order for any of the Sacraments to be efficacious, we need the Holy Spirit

On this holy day, pray with me: Come, Holy Spirit come!