



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This weekend we celebrate Pentecost. Jesus sent His Holy Spirit upon the Disciples in tongues as of fire, and the Church was born! We read in the Acts of the Apostles how the Holy Spirit emboldened the Disciples to go out to all the people gathered in Jerusalem, and in one day, 3000 people were drawn to new life in Christ! The Holy Spirit truly has power to transform hearts and the world!

If you read through the Acts of the Apostles, though, you notice several times when the Holy Spirit is poured out on the Church, even upon those (like Peter) who received the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (see Acts 4:31). This reminds us that, though we received the Holy Spirit in Baptism and Confirmation, God is not done with us. God wants to give us a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit for our needs today – not yesterday.

I encourage you to pray for more of the Holy Spirit. God is doing something new in you – something He has not done before. He wants to bring you deeper into relationship with Him, in a way you have not yet experienced. He wants to empower you with all the grace you need for holiness *today*. Pray for a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Pray to stir up the gifts He has given you in Baptism and Confirmation.

In the second reading today, St. Paul tells us, "No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Corinthians 12:3b). He's not saying that we can't enunciate the words "Jesus is Lord" without the Holy Spirit, but rather that we can't mean them. The Holy Spirit is the One who gives faith. He is the One who allows us to surrender our lives into the hands of Jesus. He is the One who transforms our worldview to belong to the eternal God of love. It is the Holy Spirit who draws us into the Heart of God. It is the Holy Spirit who makes what Jesus did 2000 years ago real and present to us here and now, today. 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"

(Metropolitan Ignatios of Latakia, "The Main Address", *the Uppsala Report* 1968 [Geneva: WCC, 1969], quoted in Ralph Martin, *The Catholic Church at the End of an Age: What is the Spirit Saying?* [San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994], p. 108).

This speaks to how the Holy Spirit is the One who bridges the infinite gap between the Trinity and us. He gives God's very life and presence to us.

May we all be open to the power of the Holy Spirit, drawing us into the Heart of God, and making us into the saints we were created to be.