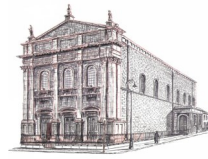




PARISH OF ST. AGATHA
30TH/31ST MAY 2020



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Jesus I Trust in You

HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS ON PENTECOST [SUMMARY]

Pope Francis urged the Holy Spirit to free Christians from the paralysis of selfishness and be builders of unity. *“Grant us the courage to go out of ourselves, to love and help each other, in order to become one family,”* he prayed. Pentecost is regarded as **the Birth of the Church**. He said that despite the diversity of backgrounds and ethnicities among Christ’s followers in the early Church, the Holy Spirit brings about unity by making them realise that they are primarily *the Children of God*. The Pope said that, we too have our differences, *but the temptation to fiercely defend our ideas as good for everybody*, the Pope warned, is *“a faith created in our own image”, “not what the Spirit wants”*.

UNITY AS GOD’S BELOVED CHILDREN

The Spirit loves us and knows everyone’s place in the grand scheme of things. He said. *“We are not bits of confetti blown about by the wind, rather we are irreplaceable fragments in His mosaic.”* The first task of the Church is proclamation. The Spirit does not want the Apostles to be locked in upper rooms where it is easy to “nest”. Rather, He *“opens doors and pushes us to press beyond what has already been said and done, beyond the precincts of a timid and wary faith.”* After Pentecost, the Apostles possessed *“the desire to give what they received”*. In the Church, the Spirit guarantees unity to those who proclaim the message. The *secret of unity* of the Holy Spirit, is a gift, as He Himself is gift. Hence, it is important to believe that *God is Gift!* that He acts not by taking away, but by giving. If we realise that what we are is due to His free and unmerited gift, then *“we too will want to make our lives a gift”*. *“By loving humbly, serving freely and joyfully, we will offer to the world the true image of God.”*

THREE ENEMIES OF SELF-GIVING

The Pope pointed out the three enemies of self-giving when some people offer their services as a gift of self, can be: *narcissism, victimhood and pessimism*.
Narcissism: Can make them concerned only with how they can profit from it. There can be a tendency to think only of their own needs, to be indifferent to those of others.
Victimhood: Victims can complain every day about their neighbours – that no one understands them, no one experiences what they experience and everyone is against them.
Pessimism: Is an unending complaint that “nothing is going well in society, politics, the Church...”. A pessimist gets angry with the world, **but sits back and does nothing**. “When someone thinks this way,” the Pope observed, “the one thing that certainly does not return is hope.” *“We are experiencing a famine of Hope,”* he said, “and we need to appreciate the gift of life, the gift that each of us is.” *“We need the Holy Spirit, the gift of God who heals us of narcissism, victimhood and pessimism.”*

THE MISSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BEGINS: PENTECOST SUNDAY

When Jesus, the Son of God, completed His work, which God the Father had entrusted to Him on earth, the Holy Spirit’s mission began and was sent on the day of Pentecost, to sanctify the Church unceasingly. The Spirit is the first gift of the Risen Jesus, and is given above all for the forgiveness of sins. Here we see the beginning of the Church, the glue that holds us together, which is *forgiveness*. Because forgiveness is the gift of the highest degree and is the greatest love of all. It preserves unity, prevents collapse and strengthens. Forgiveness sets our hearts free and enables us to start afresh. Forgiveness gives Hope. Without forgiveness, the Church is not built up.

OUR BODIES ARE TEMPLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit dwells in the Church and in our hearts as in a temple. He prays in us and bears witness in us to our adoption as Children of God. The Spirit leads the Church into all Truth and gives it unity in communion and in service. The Spirit endows us with gifts of Wisdom, Understanding, Courage, Counsel, Knowledge, Holiness and a reverent and respectful Fear of God, who will Judge us someday. This is not a man-made fear. Those who live their lives according to their own standards and laws, rejecting God and having no fear of Divine Law on earth, will know all about Fear, when standing before Our Lord as Judge, in the Heavenly Courtroom. Yes, He is all Mercy. However, He will forgive us in the same way as we forgave and loved or not. The Holy Spirit creates the desire to make Peace with God now and. Be One with God.

COME LORD JESUS

By the power of the Gospel, the Holy Spirit enables the Church to grow young and its members to become child-like in the virtue of humility. The Spirit perpetually renews the Church, by leading it to complete Communion with its Bridegroom, who is Christ. We, the Members of the Church are the Bride. This New Marriage is what is called the New Covenant. The Spirit and the Bride (us) say to Jesus, the Bridegroom: *Come! As we do in the Our Father: Thy Kingdom Come!* In this way the Church reveals itself alive as a Living Body of Believers, whose unity has its source in the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

THE HOLY SPIRIT ACTIVATES OUR FAITH IN BAPTISM

This instinct of Faith is awakened and kept alive by the Spirit of Truth, which supports us to apply it more perfectly in our lives. The Holy Spirit is a Person (Third Person of the Holy Trinity), who becomes visible in us when we exercise works of charity, mercy, love, patience, tolerance, kindness and peace towards each other. Fire purifies metal and wastelands and seeing the Tongues of Fire descend on the disciples, teaches us that we have a duty to bear witness, by using our tongues as pure instruments to teach and speak from the Gospel of Purity. The Word of God, when practiced, purifies our souls and hearts and those who listen. The Spirit gives us the Courage not to lock and hide ourselves away, but to always open our lips so that our tongues can announce our praise to God. Keep safe and God bless, Fr. Brendan