Pentecost B 2024

In this Easter season we renewed our commitment to God through the renewal of our Baptismal promises, promising to grow in holiness of life. Today, Pentecost Sunday, Easter’s 50th day, we pray for a fresh stirring of the gifts of the Spirit so that we can fulfill our mission to witness Jesus to others in the power of the Holy Spirit with signs and wonders as our credentials, impelling us to go forth and bring thr Good News of salvation and love to the worl. This is what God expects of us. *“As the Father has sent Me, so I send you.”*

Pentecost opens the Father’s three great masterpieces in the drama of salvation history, the story of God coming ever closer to His creation, to us. In the first, the Wisdom that is God’s Son, joins the Father in the great act of creation, while the Spirit hovers over the waters. In the second, the Man that is the Son Incarnate is identified at His Baptism by His Father’s voice, and the Spirit again hovers over the waters, and over Him. Christ, having completed His saving work, we come to the third masterpiece: and just as Mary was there at the Annunciation for the descent of the Spirit, so Mary is there for His return today. This time Mary is midwife to the Church. The Spirit enlightens, inspires, enkindles the fire within so that believers can take the light of truth and the warmth of love to the ends of the earth and till the end of the age.

Today’s Scripture readings impel us to move beyond ourselves, just as the disciples moved beyond themselves. Again this year we celebrate Pentecost under the scourge and pain of the many expressions of sin around us: hatred, poverty, violence, racism, exclusion of immigrants, human trafficking. And so, we reach out for fresh hope, recalling Pope Francis’ first trip outside of Rome, to the town of Lampedusa, where many immigrants come to land after making the dangerous crossing from the northern part of Africa.

We recall, especially his words at that time, that ring true today: *“Many of us have lost our bearings. We are no longer attentive to the world in which we live. We don’t care. We don’t protect what God created for everyone, and we end up unable to care for one another!”*

In his encyclical “Fratelli Tuti,” Pope Francis offers us a key to understand how important it is to witness against the indifference that tolerates or even causes so much pain. He says that to include or exclude the outcast, wounded on our streets, can serve as a criterion for judging every economic, political, social and religious enterprise.

In Laudato Si’ Pope Francis summons us to work for the common good. The Gospel empowers us to transcend our self-centered habits and life-styles. As Franciscans, children of God and with Jesus our brother, let us Listen, Discern, and Go Forth to imitate Jesus’ love and care for our sisters and brothers, and for all of God’s magnificent creation. Our energy, our determination and readiness come from the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Let us move out of our self-enclosure and share the Gospel with others, to care for our common home, and to do our part to save the world.

Paragraph #240 from Laudato Si’:

The divine Persons are subsistent relations, and the world, created according to the divine model, is a web of relationships. Creatures tend towards God, and in turn it is proper to every living being to tend towards other things, so that throughout the universe we can find any number of constant and secretly woven relationships. This leads us not only to marvel at the manifold connections existing among creatures, but also to discover a key to our own fulfillment. The human person grows more, matures more, and is sanctified more to the extent that he or she enters into relationships, going out from themselves, to live in communion with God, with others, and with all creatures.

In this way, they make their own that trinitarian dynamism which God imprinted in them when they were created. Everything is interconnected, and this invites us to develop a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity.

Sisters and brothers, the presence of the Holy Spirit is among us, falling afresh with enthusiasm and conviction, animating us to break out of the obstacles that holds us back, and give witness to the Spirit of love and mercy that gives true life.

Come, O Holy Spirit. Come. From your bright and blissful home rays of healing light impart. Come, Father of the poor, Source of gifts that will endure. Light of every human heart.

