

A few days ago, our nation, and many others, for that matter, celebrated, remembered, even mourned what happened seventy-five years to the day on June 6, when tens of thousands of troops invaded sandy beaches along the shores of France. I remember standing on the hill above about a decade-and-a-half ago, in the midst of thousands of crosses and stars of David. There are certain sights in this life that leave humanity speechless, no matter how vast our language has become. Normandy is such a place, when only sighs too deep for words, as the Holy Spirit is meant to do for us throughout this journey of faith: Normandy makes the Holy Spirit churn at a ferocious pace within the depths of the soul.

We ask, “Why did this horror have to happen?” We ask for the story that lies behind this particular cross buried in the almost-sacred ground: this cross, this star of David that serves as a tangible reminder that what happened on June 6, 1944, is not a bunch of statistics on the bottom line of a television screen or a history textbook; but a real human being lies behind that cross, that star of David. Someone real died for me, for complete strangers in Europe. Can the Holy Spirit take us on this spiritual journey of self-discovery and the most basic wondering of what drives human beings to run into a storm of

bullets? We ask how we can best honor a generation that is gradually fading away from right in front of our eyes. We ask, “What can we possibly do to make sure this never happens again?”

I decided to take such a spiritual journey of sorts down to one of those sandy beaches. I honestly don't remember which one it was, whether it was Omaha, Utah, Juno or one of the others. But I had a little glass jar with me, and I was determined that I had to take some of that hallowed sand back to my grandfather, who served on the Pacific end of things in World War II. Again, holy sighs too deep for our human words: for in that sand lied a horror of humanity at its absolute worst, and yet a beauty of humanity at its absolute best. Sand so incredibly brittle, as brittle as human life itself. My grandfather put that glass jar right above his desk, and there it still sits nearly a decade after his death, another passing of the so-called Greatest Generation.

Of course, the Holy Spirit does not allow us to get caught up in the precious mementos, letting us just stare at glass jars with sand, even crosses and stars of David in the most breath-taking scenery imaginable. That isn't honoring the grandfathers and grandmothers of decades past, nor the God of them all. The Holy Spirit won't even allow the disciples to get caught up in a

holy Pentecost violent wind rush, just to stay there and celebrate the moment, to celebrate themselves and their newfound gifts. There's more brittle, but sacred, depth to sink our hands and hearts and souls into to further transform a broken world.

Yes, not just this past June 6, but any June 6 going forward and plenty other days in between: we should celebrate bravery, we should remember sacrifice of thousands, we should, also, mourn the atrocity that was brought on our world. The Holy Spirit, nevertheless, sends us deeper, into the sighs too deep for words: into the spiritual questions of our own personal responsibility of what *we* can do to, in any way, affect the possibility that additional crosses and stars of David or any kind of death-marker not get erected on any Earth-forsaken ground again. Such impacts do not stop at the edges of Washington, D.C. streets or palaces of foreign dictators. They, also, carry into the depths of our soul too. The Holy Spirit will not allow us to forget the gifts and talents that were unleashed upon us too, not just a few disciples thousands of years ago.

Of course, one of the spiritual-depth questions that we ask when we look on the thousands of crosses and stars of David in Normandy, is, quite simply,

“Is there enough Spirit in this world to offset all of this, all of this greed, all of this lust for power, all of this arrogance, all of this disgusting humanity among us? Is there enough Holy Spirit still left over to have any chance at all against evil and corruption and just us being us?”

The Pentecost story is not just about what happened to give the church a kick-start. The Pentecost story is celebrating, reminding us of the rush that is unleashed upon us too. There is more than enough Holy Spirit to not just go around for us, but to go around the entire world and then some. There is more than enough Holy Spirit to give hope to those underneath crosses and stars of David, that even death at its absolute worst can be met with more than enough life. There is more than enough Holy Spirit in each of us to not allow us to lose any hope whatsoever, no matter how bleak the vista may be. There is more than enough Holy Spirit in all of us to light up the language of love and compassion and a mercy beyond our human understanding. There is more than enough Holy Spirit to continue transforming the world that God still loves, starting on the shores of our very soul, now and into eternity. And for that Greatest News of all, we give thanks to God indeed! Amen.