

20250608. Pentecost. Cycle C. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the Earth.

Last weekend, we celebrated the Ascension of the Lord. The Ascension of the Lord was on Thursday, which is 40 days after Easter, and Pentecost is Today, which is 50 Days after Easter. After experiencing Jesus's ascension to Heaven, the disciples prayed for 9 days in anticipation of the arrival of the Holy Spirit; that is how we ended up praying "Novenas."

Last week, Father Jose Nery used an analogy I would like to recycle. He asked us to imagine that we were the disciples, who were in a dream in which they woke up and realized that Jesus was no longer with them. They knew it was not a dream; they knew they had been privileged to share a part of their lives with Christ during His short ministry on Earth. They also knew that even when it may have felt like a dream, Jesus' teachings and commands were 100% real.

After completing his mission on earth, Jesus returned to the Father. He ascended to heaven and asked the disciples to, in his name, preach repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus knew that he was asking a bit too much of his disciples, so he wanted to ensure they were prepared and asked them to wait for the power of the Holy Spirit, the Promise of the Father.

As many of you know, Pentecost is also known as the birthday of the Church. Today is a good occasion to reflect on why we come to church every Sunday or sometimes, during weekdays, and how that relates to our mission on earth. Some may say they come to church because they feel good about it. Others may say that they come to church to become "better persons," others may say that they come here to become a saint.

If you come to mass because it makes you feel good, good for you. If you come here to become a "better person," that's okay as well. But if you come here to become a Saint, you are doing precisely what God wants us to do. "You shall be Holy, because I am Holy," says the Lord (1 P 1,16). Every one of us is called by the Lord, every one of us in our way, is called to be perfectly holy, just like the Lord is perfectly holy (Council Vatican II). Every one of us is unique, and we are blessed with different types of gifts or talents from God. How we accomplish our mission depends on how we apply those talents in our own lives.

Our mission is to become a saint. To become saints, it is not necessary to be a bishop, a priest, or a religious person. Sometimes, we are tempted to believe that holiness is reserved only for those who have the possibility of retracting from the daily busyness of the day to dedicate time for prayer. That is not true. We are all called to become saints, living with love and being witnesses of Christ in the busyness of the day, right there, where we live every day, at home, at work, at school, on the street, at the park.

Those consecrated to the Church can be saints, enjoying their ministry. If you are married, be a saint, loving and caring for your spouse, just like Christ loves and cares for His Church. If you are a worker, strive to be a saint by delivering results with honesty and competitiveness at work, while serving your brothers and sisters. If you are a parent or a grandparent, be a saint and patiently teach children to follow Jesus. And if you are in a position of authority, be a saint fighting for the common good and renouncing your interests.

Pentecost is a good day to remember our baptism; today is a good day to remember that the Holy Spirit is a gift of God. Let the grace of your baptism bear fruit on our path of holiness. Let everything be open to God, and to do so, choose him, choose God again and again. Do not be discouraged, you have the power of the Holy Spirit to make it possible. Holiness, ultimately, is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life (Gal 5:22-23).

Living a holy life is living a life in Christ. "Holiness is measured by the stature Christ attains in us, by the degree to which, with the power of the Holy Spirit, we model our whole lives after his." (Pope Benedict XVI)

If you are like me, you must be wondering... "But, who is a saint?" To recognize a saint, it's best not to dwell on details, because there can also be errors and failures. Not everything a saint says is faithful to the gospel, nor is everything they do authentic or perfect. What we must contemplate is the entirety of their life, their entire journey of sanctification, that figure that reflects something of Jesus Christ and that emerges when we manage to grasp the meaning of a person's totality.

All this that you hear today is a firm invitation from Pope Francis for all of us. In his Apostolic exhortation "Gaudete exsultate", Pope Francis said that "We must consider that our lives have a purpose, and that our mission is to become saints."

Today, we commemorate the day the Holy Spirit comes into our lives. Let's ask the Holy Spirit what Christ expects of us in every moment of our existence, and in every decision we must make.

The Holy Spirit is the greatest gift from Jesus, the Son, and from the Father. If we allow the Holy Spirit to forge us into the image of Christ everywhere we go, with His power, we will renew the face of the earth.

Acts 2:1-11

Psalm 104:1, 24, 29, 30, 31, 34

Rom 8:8-17

John 14:15-16, 23b-26