**“Come Holy Spirit”**

All our readings tells us what Jesus did for us by giving us the gift of the Holy Spirit before leaving and after He left us to be with His Father. All the Pentecost readings points to how those who experienced Pentecost were full of joy and peace. They could not contain the joy that the Holy Spirit gave them. They were intoxicated with peace and Holy Ghost fire. They wanted to let the whole world know about it. So they went out and preached about Jesus to the people.

In our first reading, we found out that all the disciples were gathered together in a room in a house waiting for the promise of the gift of God. Suddenly, there was a **“noise like a strong driving wind”** that filled the entire house. Like the intense fire that Moses saw that did not burn the bush, the wind did not destroy or harm anyone in the house. It was peaceful though forceful. Then appeared tongues of fire which rested on everyone and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. They were able to speak in different languages.

Pentecost, is when all Jews would come together to celebrate their being the chosen people of God. So on this day, all Jews were gathered in Jerusalem for the celebration. To the amazement and wonderment of all the Jews present, each could understand the disciples perfectly in their own language. What a scene that must have been like! The apostles must have being beaming with joy and radiating the power of the Holy Spirit!

One would wonder why this amazing phenomenon does not happen in our world today. Well, we who are gathered here today, though we do not individually speak in different languages, we are part of the Catholic Church, the Universal Church which is the one body of Christ, with members that speak all languages that exists all over the world. So, probably the Holy Spirit does not see a need for this gift again. The gift has already given it to the Church as one body of Christ.

St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians explained this teaching by listing the different gifts the Holy Spirit gives out to each and every one of us. His list consists of different kinds of spiritual gifts, different forms of service, and different working that comes from God. St. Paul used the parts of our body to explain how the Holy Spirit works in each one of us individual but collectively as one.

My brethren, at our baptism and confirmation, we have all received different gift from the Holy Spirit. Gifts that are necessary for the building of the Church. In some few minutes, we will be receiving a new member into the body of Christ, she too will be given a special gift by the Holy Spirit as He sees fit for the building of the Church. The Holy Spirit is in and lives in each one of us. It is up to us to allow Him to work in us by living a righteous life.

St Catherine of Siena once experienced a troubling and violent temptation. After the storm passed, Jesus appeared to her and she asked Him, ***“Where were you when I needed you?”*** Jesus told her, **“I was in your heart.”** She then said, ***“How could you have been within me when I was besieged by such detestable thoughts?”*** Jesus asked her, **“Did the thoughts cause you pleasure or pain?”** She said ***“Terrible pain.”*** Jesus explained to her **“You know I was with you. Had I not been there, they would have given you pleasure. It was my presence that made the difference. I defended your heart against temptation. Never have I been closer to you.”**

Yes my brothers and sisters, when we are tempted and we experience disgust and pain, the Holy Spirit is helping us to resist evil. Our disgust and pain comes from the realization of how much we would like to avoid betraying the awesome love of God, the gift he has given us. Our response as Christians to temptation is to avoid the near occasions of sin.

As Christians, we know that the pleasure that comes from sin is temporary. It does not last. Our desire as those who have the Spirit of God leaving in us is to prefer the greater joy that comes from being in union with the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, when the enemy tries to tempt us by reminding us of a past sin, we would feel pain and disgust and say to ourselves, “How could I have done that! Afterwards, we should not despair, but rejoice, because the Advocate, the Spirit of truth that is in us is defending us.

In our Gospel reading, after His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and first gave them ‘peace’ by saying “Peace be with you.” He also gave them joy by revealing His wounds from His crucifixion to them. Their joy came from their realization that He is alive. Then, He gave them another ‘peace’ before telling them that He was sending them out into the world the same way His Father sent Him.

Jesus then breathed on them and gave them another gift of the Holy Spirit. This gift of the Holy Spirit is different from the gift of the Holy Spirit they would receive at Pentecost. This specific gift is for the forgiveness or for retaining sins. It is a gift that reconciles us to God after we have sinned. Jesus told us, sin would come. That is why John in one of his letters, said, whoever says he/she does not sin, is a liar. That is why the Church has made the sacrament of confession and reconciliation available to all who ask for it.

As we come to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us ask Him for His grace to keep the Holy Spirit in our hearts.