



From A Bishop's Journal (692)

Let Us Commemorate the Holy Spirit

On the evening of Easter day Jesus gave his Holy Spirit to the Apostles: "Peace be with you!"

For the celebration of confirmation at Saint-François-de-Madawaska, Father Claude Côté had a beautiful celebration of the Word service. I am pleased to give you a few excerpts to help you revive in you the wonderful gifts that the Holy Spirit continuously gives us.

Presence in Jesus

Let us commemorate the presence and action of the Spirit in Jesus: "The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus in visible form like a dove. A voice from heaven was heard to say: 'You are my beloved Son. On you my favour rests.'... The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, heal the sick, and announce a year of favour from the Lord."

Presence in Mary

Let us commemorate the Spirit's presence in Mary: "The angel said to her: 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; hence, the holy offspring to be born will be called Son of God.'... My soul glorifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour."

Presence in the Church

Let us commemorate the Spirit's presence in the Church: "I shall pray the Father and he will give you a protector to be with you always: the Spirit of truth... Suddenly from up in the sky there came a noise like a strong, driving wind which was heard all through the house where they were seated. Tongues as of fire appeared, which parted and came to rest on each of them. All were filled with the Holy Spirit."

Presence among the Apostles

Let us commemorate the Spirit's presence among the Apostles: "Jesus of Nazareth was sent by God; you put him to death on a cross, but God raised him from the dead; he received the Holy Spirit from the Father and he gives it to us, for our joy."

Presence in Saint Francis Xavier

Let us commemorate the Spirit's presence in Saint Francis Xavier: "Filled with the Spirit of Jesus, Francis Xavier left his country to bring the Good News to the poor and the despised of India."

Presence in Saint Francis of Assisi

Let us commemorate the Spirit's presence in Saint Francis of Assisi: "Turning his back on riches, Francis of Assisi became poor with the poor, and found love and peace in God. He became a lover of nature and spread this love among his brothers and sisters."

Presence in Our Christian Communities

Let us commemorate the Spirit's presence in our Christian communities: "In our days, committed Christians bring relief to the poor and encouragement to the sick; our help and support are a comfort to our brothers and sisters of the Third World who in this way have their dignity and rights better respected."

A Prayer that is still Appropriate

"All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their Helper and Guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence."

Listen to the Spring in You

This final hymn reminds us of God's gift that is always there for us: "Listen to the spring in you telling you of love, listen in you to the eternal spring, listen in you to the spring that brings you to prayer. Your heart is like the earth where the seed can grow if you open it to the sunlight and let the water flow. The living water cannot be stopped, do not try to halt it because in your heart it brings kindness and beauty. The spring becomes a river that folds into the ocean. Listen well to the prayers it murmurs, as it flows on. With Mary as an example of the earth awaiting you, you, too, become the temple of a God who is present."

A Wish

May all of this year's confirmed, and all those who have come before them discover anew the wonderful presence of the Spirit, and commemorate him in their lives.

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