

SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST: Cycle "B"
Sunday, 20 May 2018

TODAY'S PASSAGE FROM THE BOOK OF **ACTS**,
PRESENTS US WITH **TWO IMAGES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**.

- 1 IT SPOKE OF HOW ALL THOSE GATHERED IN THAT UPPER ROOM
HEARD WHAT SOUNDED LIKE ***A STRONG DRIVING WIND***
- 2 THE PASSAGE WENT ON TO SAY THAT
THERE APPEARED SOMETHING WHICH, to them,
RESEMBLED ***TONGUES OF FIRE***.
 - JUST AS THE EVANGELISTS DO NOT SAY THAT
THERE WAS AN ACTUAL DOVE AT THE BAPTISM OF JESUS ...
 - SO TOO LUKE, IN his second volume, THE BOOK OF ACTS,
DOES NOT SAY THAT THERE WAS ACTUAL
WIND OR FIRE AT PENTECOST; ONLY:
 - WHAT **SOUNDED LIKE** WIND, and
 - WHAT **RESEMBLED "TONGUES, AS OF FIRE!"**

THE HOLY **SPIRIT IS NOT DESCRIBED** USING
"CONCRETE REPRESENTATIONS/images" ... BECAUSE:

- THE HOLY **SPIRIT CANNOT BE SEEN**, and yet
- THE HOLY **SPIRIT IS PROFOUNDLY REAL!**

SO INSTEAD OF TRYING TO DESCRIBE WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT LOOKS LIKE
THE **SACRED AUTHOR SEEMS TO HIGHLIGHT:**

- **WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES, and**
- **HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT IMPACTS THE LIVES OF BELIEVERS.**
 - IN OUR **2ND READING**,
AS ST. **PAUL** IS SPEAKING TO THE **CHURCH OF GALATIA**,
HE USED AN IMAGE, drawn from nature,
THAT **DESCRIBES** THE "**FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT:**"
 - IN THIS, PAUL IS RELATING HOW, IF THE SPIRIT IS A PART OF YOUR LIFE,
THEN THESE ARE SOME OF THE WAYS
BY WHICH THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL BE REVEALED.
 - **JUST AS YOU & I CAN'T SEE THE WIND ...**
BUT **CAN WITNESS** HOW IT **IMPACTS THE WORLD AROUND US ...**
SO TOO → EVEN **THOUGH WE CAN'T "SEE" THE HOLY SPIRIT**,
WE CAN DEFINITELY WITNESS THE SPIRIT'S IMPACT UPON:
 - US, and
 - OUR WORLD.

- THE HOLY **SPIRIT** IS GOING TO BE **AUTHENTICALLY PRESENT IN THE PERSON WHO EXUDES:**
- > LOVE, JOY, PEACE,
- ▶ PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GENEROSITY,
- FIDELITY, GENTLENESS AND SELF-CONTROL!
- **PAUL** TELLS US THAT IT IS **IN AND THROUGH** THESE “**FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT**” THAT **WE COME TO REALIZE HOW PROFOUNDLY PRESENT** THE HOLY **SPIRIT ACTUALLY IS.**
- AND THE **PERSON WHO MOST PERFECTLY EXHIBITED** ALL THESE QUALITIES WAS **JESUS,** BECAUSE HE WAS:
 - **FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ...**
 - **FULL OF THE LIFE OF GOD.**

THAT “DIVINE LIFE AND LOVE” WAS FIRST Poured OUT AT PENTECOST!

- **INITIALLY ON** THE FIRST **DISCIPLES**, *but through them*
- **ON ALL WHO ARE OPEN** TO RECEIVING THIS WONDERFUL & POWERFUL **GIFT OF GOD!**
- **PAUL**, IN THE **5TH CHAPTER** OF HIS LETTER TO THE **ROMANS,** **DESCRIBED** THE **SPIRIT’S OUTPOURING** IN THIS WAY:
 - ▶ *THE LOVE OF GOD HAS BEEN Poured OUT INTO OUR HEARTS THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US.* Rom. 5:5
- **THAT SPIRIT** OF GOD’S LOVE IS **CONSTANTLY AT WORK** IN OUR LIVES, **MAKING US MORE LIKE JESUS** EVERY DAY.
 - THE **ORDINARY**, DAY TO DAY EXPRESSIONS OF **GOODNESS & KINDNESS ...** of **FIDELITY & SELF-CONTROL ...** of **PATIENCE & GENTLENESS ...** ARE **ALL MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT** THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN TO US BY GOD.
 - WE CAN **RECOGNIZE THE SPIRIT’S PRESENCE** IN THE **COMMON HAPPENINGS** OF EVERYDAY LIFE ... **WHICH MEANS** THAT:
 - THE **SPIRIT IS NOT** SOMETHING “**OTHER-WORLDLY**” – rather
 - THE **SPIRITUAL IS HUMANITY AT ITS BEST!**

AND IN OUR **FIRST READING**, FROM THE BOOK OF **ACTS**,
WE HAVE AN **EXAMPLE OF HUMANITY AT IT'S BEST!**

- **PEOPLE** FROM ALL OVER THE ROMAN EMPIRE
WERE **UNITED IN HEARING**, in their own language,
THE **WORDS OF THE APOSTLES** WHO SPOKE OF THE MARVELS OF GOD!
- **DESPITE THE DIFFERENCES** OF LANGUAGE AND CULTURE,
THERE WAS **A PROFOUND COMMUNION & UNITY AMONG THEM!**
 - WHEREVER YOU FIND **SUCH ONENESS-OF-HEART** & SPIRIT
AMONG THOSE WHO ARE STRIKINGLY DIFFERENT,
THERE IS WHERE **YOU WITNESS THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK!**
 - **"UNITY IN DIVERSITY"** IS THE **MARK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

IN THE GOSPEL, JESUS POINTED OUT
YET ANOTHER MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT: **THE PURSUIT OF TRUTH**

- IN JOHN'S GOSPEL, **JESUS DECLARED** HIMSELF TO BE
"THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE."
 - JESUS, WHO IS THE FULLNESS OF **TRUTH**, IS **ALWAYS BEYOND US**, and
 - WE CAN **NEVER FULLY POSSESS HIM IN THIS LIFE!**
- **JESUS DECLARED** THAT ONE OF THE **SPIRIT'S ROLES**
IS TO **LEAD US TO THE FULLNESS OF TRUTH!**
 - IF **ANYONE** IS **AUTHENTICALLY OPEN TO TRUTH**, and
IS WILLINGLY ENGAGED IN THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH,
THERE YOU **WILL FIND THE SPIRIT AT WORK.**
 - THE **FULLNESS OF TRUTH** IS **ALWAYS BEYOND US;**
YET THE SPIRIT IS ALWAYS **REVEALING** TO US **SNIPPETS OF THAT TRUTH**
THAT WE CAN UNDERSTAND.

ON THIS SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST,
WHEN WE'RE REMINDED OF THE PLEthora OF WAYS
BY WHICH THE PRESENCE OF **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS MANIFESTED**,
I BELIEVE **WE'RE CHALLENGED TO GROW** IN AN **AWARENESS**
OF **HOW OFTEN** WE TAKE THE **SPIRIT'S PRESENCE FOR GRANTED!**

- **INSTEAD OF QUESTIONING "GOD, WHERE ARE YOU?"**
IN THE MIDST OF DIFFICULT MOMENTS ...
- HOW WILL YOU **LOOK TO RECOGNIZE THE FRUITS**
WHICH BESPEAK THE SPIRIT'S PRESENCE;
THE **FRUITS OF:**
 - **LOVE, JOY, PEACE,**
 - > **PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GENEROSITY,**
 - **FIDELITY, GENTLENESS AND SELF-CONTROL!**