

Holy Spirit is giver of gifts

Pentecost Sunday (June 8): (R3)
John 20:19-23; (R1) Acts 2:1-11; (R2)
1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13.

We might label the Old Testament as the Gospel of God the Father; and the four Gospels as the words of God the Son; and the Acts of the Apostles as the Gospel of the Holy Spirit.

On the first Pentecost Sunday, the Holy Spirit did three things.

First, he came upon the Apostles in tongues of fire to enlighten their minds regarding Jesus. After his coming, the Apostles saw who Jesus really and truly was. This enlightenment made them drunk with joy. They babbled in prayers of praise — the Gift of Tongues. Some people thought they were drunk.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit came upon a select group of people in the form of wind. These people were gathered outside the upper room — about 3,000. The Spirit gave them the understanding the Apostles' babblings, and each understood them in his own tongue — the Gift of Interpretation of Tongues.

Thirdly, the Holy Spirit came upon Peter. He filled him with wisdom and courage and the power to preach as he had never preached before — the Gift of Prophecy. The result was Peter's preaching won those 3,000 to the faith.

Before the coming of the Holy Spirit, the Apostles were fearful, ignorant. To them Jesus was just a man, Christianity an offshoot of Judaism. After the coming of the Spirit, the Apostles were courageous, wise. They realized Jesus was God and Christianity a distinct religion.

The Holy Spirit, we must remember, doesn't come just once to us, but often. It comes at baptism, con-



Father Albert Shamon

A word for Sunday

firmation, holy orders and Eucharist. In the early church it came upon the Samaritans, Cornelius, Stephen, Paul and Barnabas. The Holy Spirit is active in building up the church.

The Spirit also produces different gifts. It is like the rain. Without the rain, nothing would grow, but with the rain gardens will grow and produce all kinds of fruits and vegetables. So the Holy Spirit produces different gifts in people. He converts sinners to a good life; the lukewarm to a fervent life; and the fervent to a holy life.

Besides these, the Spirit pours out gifts upon the church, like tongues, prophecy, miracles. These are not signs of holiness, but deeds performed for the good and the growth of the church. "To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good."

The Holy Spirit always comes in answer to prayer, especially community prayer. The events in Acts were in answer to nine days of prayer — the first novena.

Our Lady at Medjugorje said that we do not pray enough to the Holy Spirit. Is my heart spirit-filled?

What are my values? Is money all

I think about?

Where does God fit into my life? Are self and pleasure all I think about?

What do I think of the church? Is it just an institution or the Mystical Body of Christ to me?

Do I confess frequently or do I boast I don't need to go?

Do my words divide or unite? Wound or heal? Condemn or condone? Lift up or tear down? Spawn hate or love?

God sends his Spirit to us that we might bring the world to the feet of his Son. In Jack London's masterpiece, *The Call of the Wild*, a dog, Buck, half St. Bernard and half shepherd, 150 pounds of pure muscle, was owned by a man, John Thornton. Thornton was very humane to Buck, and Buck developed an undying loyalty to Thornton.

One evening in the Eldorado Saloon, Thornton was lured into making a \$1,000 bet that Buck could break a 1,000-pound load from a frozen standstill and move it 100 yards. It was a foolish wager; no dog ever did such a feat.

But Thornton believed in Buck. He knelt beside the great dog and whispered in his ear, "As you love me. Buck ..." And Buck did the impossible. If we love Christ, we, too, can do the impossible.

Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming.

Daily Readings

Monday, June 9

2 Corinthians 1:1-7;
Psalms 34:2-9;
Matthew 5:1-12

Tuesday, June 10

2 Corinthians 1:18-22;
Psalms 119:129-133, 135;
Matthew 5:13-16

Wednesday, June 11

Acts 11:21B-26, 13:1-3;
Psalms 98:1-6;
Matthew 5:17-19

Thursday, June 12

2 Corinthians 3:15-4:1, 3-6;
Psalms 85:9AB, 14;
Matthew 5:20-26

Friday, June 13

2 Corinthians 4:7-15;
Psalms 116:10-11, 15-18;
Matthew 5:27-32

Saturday, June 14

2 Corinthians 5:14-21;
Psalms 103:1-4, 8-9, 11-12;
Matthew 5:33-37

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