

ENCOURAGEMENT

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THE HOST APOSTOLATE

WWW.THEHOSTAPOSTOLATE.ORG

14, GOATBECK TERRACE,

LANGLEY MOOR,

COUNTY DURHAM DH7 8JJ

thehostapostolate@gmail.co

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT

Over the many issues of ‘Encouragement’ many topics have been covered and so, about the middle of the month, I start reflecting on what the next issue is going to be about. It is often a bit exciting, like an unfolding story. Mostly a word pops into my head and I know that it is guided by the Holy Spirit. Other times it comes through others, even by a chance comment, and just occasionally, I ask a trusted friend. This time I could only think that it is Pentecost at the start of the Month... but I thought that I had covered this a few times. However the thought persisted and a Special Pastor said ‘so.. do a different take on it...’ it instantly felt right and many ideas flowed.

It never ceases to amaze me that while we introduce each prayer with the sign of the Cross we reference the Holy Spirit of God so very rarely. We Speak of the Father and Jesus but the Holy Spirit is side-lined in our consciousness. Indeed, it is often an aspect of faith that is ignored or left to the so called ‘Charismatics’ who often receive ‘bad press’ and are noted for their hand waving/raising excess and not for a genuine search for that very SPIRIT THAT ENLIVENS US ALL.

It is not that there is not sufficient reference to The Holy Spirit throughout Scripture both the Old and the New Testament or that the work of the same Spirit is not in evidence through the Holy Books. Indeed, the Spirit of God flutters through the pages and sets our heart alight. We just have to read the Psalms or learn from the Prophets to realise how central is that action of God in the very words that we can read. The books are called ‘the inspired word of God’ for that very reason that they are not merely the words of Man but are directed by the Holy Spirit and therefore Truth.

The *Ruah* of God, the Spirit of God, that indescribable force that heals, transforms, leads and breathes life into all things is made evident through



our readings week in and week out. We hear of Ezekiel and the Story of the ‘dried bones’ waiting for the breath of the Spirit. “I prophesied to them as God commanded me, and the breath (the Ruah) came into them, and they lived...” Even earlier we hear of the Spirit that hovered over the deep to bring life to all things (Genesis). And was not the breath of the Spirit breathed upon Adam to bring life... and while we may be able to recite the ‘Gifts of the Spirit (Wisdom, Understanding Counsel, etc.) or the way in which they are acted out in the gifts or calling i.e. Apostles, Prophets, Teachers, Healers, do we realise that they are mentioned in Isaiah...

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;

Isaiah 11:2-3.

Of course we hear of the action of the Spirit in the New Testament, again as life giver, when we hear of the Conception of Jesus Himself by the power of that Spirit working in Mary through her ‘yes..’ and the again in the Baptism of Jesus by John where the Spirit manifested Itself. John had said “As for me, I baptise you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire (Luke 3; 16) If the miracles of Jesus were not sufficient evidence we also have the many reference to the Holy Spirit by Jesus himself. “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you”.(John 14:16) At the last supper after Judas had

left we have the most beautiful saying of Jesus about the Holy Spirit and the abiding presence of God... Did Jesus not breathe on the Apostles after the Resurrection bestowing peace to them and saying 'Receive the Holy Spirit'.

After the Ascension Jesus promised to send the Apostles and the disciples the Holy Spirit. Did not the Spirit impart the most wonderful gifts to the disciples and Our Lady in the Cenacle room. What happened there was truly magnificent and brought many people to Jesus. It filled them with that Holy Fire of love that are signs of the Spirit.

Perhaps the action of the Spirit is explained and manifested greatly by St. Paul in the 'Acts of the Apostles' and letters to the Churches. It would take many 'Encouragements' to mention even a dozen but they are there to be pondered on and read. St Paul himself accepted and experienced the power of the Holy Spirit and most importantly acted on it. His zeal now for the Truth and Jesus becomes evident.

St. Paul acts within and in the gift that he has received. Perhaps the most revealing of these is when he says boldly 'I want you to know that no one who is led by God's Spirit can say "A curse on Jesus!" and no one can confess "Jesus is Lord," without being guided by the Holy Spirit' (Corinthians 12:3).

St. Peter too is a changed man, receiving the Gentiles into the followers of Jesus by Baptising them...

Often at Pentecost we hear the word of the Gospel but do we really treasure the Spirit of God that enables us to do so much more than we can ever imagine by the gifts that are bestowed. Of ourselves we can do nothing without the power of God that lives in us and has been given both at Baptism and again at Confirmation... too often a forgotten Sacrament. Confirmation is just that, an affirmation of what has been granted to us as believers and is our strength in weakness and a love that enables us to think of others before ourselves.

It is often in the things that we take for granted or perhaps say.. ' I don't know how I got through that' or... I don't know how I know that... or an intuition that proves itself correct, or even a sudden thought of someone who needs our help, and wonderfully when a word in the Gospel enlightens us, that the Holy Spirit is ever revealed to us if only we were aware of

this truth... Maybe this Pentecost we could pray for enlightenment and in thanksgiving for this help and Grace and say with sincerity, 'In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.' Halina Holman

Pope Francis

...In addition to calling on Jesus when in the midst of a storm, Christians must invoke the Holy Spirit regularly. Someone may say, 'Father, how do you invoke the Holy Spirit, because I know how to pray to the Father, with the Our Father; I know how to pray to Our Lady with the Hail Mary; I know how to pray to Jesus with the Prayer to the Holy Wounds, but what about the Spirit? What is the prayer of the Holy Spirit?" Prayer to the Holy Spirit is spontaneous; it must come from your heart. In moments of difficulty you must ask, 'Holy Spirit, come, You must say it in your own language, in your own words. 'Come, because I am in difficulty; come because I am in darkness, in the dark; come because I do not know what to do; come because I am about to fall. This prayer will help us walk in the Spirit, in freedom and in joy," because when the Holy Spirit comes, there is joy, true joy. Rome

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, Come! Dwell in my heart. Illuminate my mind. Direct my footsteps. Be my guide.



Feast Days in June

3rd St. Charles Lwanga & companions

5th Pentecost Sunday

6th Mary, Mother of the Church

9th Our Lord Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest

11th St. Barnabas, Apostle

12th The Most Holy Trinity . Sunday

13th St. Anthony of Padua

19th Corpus Christi . Sunday

20th St. Alban, Martyr

22nd Ss. John Fisher & Thomas More

23rd The Birth of John the Baptist

24th Sacred Heart of Jesus

25th Immaculate Heart of Mary

26th Thirteenth Sunday in Ord. Time

29th Ss. Peter & Paul, Apostles (Holy. D. Ob.)

[GeGetFunding](#): Our Appeal for a minibus to take girls to school in Pakistan (Fr. Ejaz): Link on our Website... Urgent!