

HOMILY

“Anybody who loves me...I shall love him and show myself to him.”

The words of Jesus in our Gospel today. He will “show” himself to us if we love him. What does this mean? How will he “show” himself to us? In our first reading from the Acts of the Apostles we see fulfilled the promise of Jesus in today’s Gospel: “...I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate..., the Spirit of truth...”; this Holy Spirit is given by the Apostles to the Samaritans in this first reading. After his Resurrection, and Ascension back to the Father, Jesus intends to “show” himself to us by this gift of the Holy Spirit.

In this first reading, Phillip, among the first deacons, is in Samaria after having fled from the persecution of Saul in Jerusalem. He is proclaiming “the Christ to them”. St Luke, the author of Acts, records this statement,

“The crowds with one accord listened eagerly to what was said by Phillip...”

Why this unity (accord)? Why this eagerness? The reading gives us the answer: the proclamation of “the Christ” is a proclamation with an unprecedented power: evil spirits are driven out and miraculous healing are taking place. Jesus has begun to “show” himself to them and us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Luke next tells us,

“So there was great joy in that city.”

When Jesus comes to us, “shows” himself to us joy is the result. For us, in our day, this joy is not startling. It is a normal, natural daily experience. It has been with us for so long—ever since we were baptized; or ever since we turned away from a sinful life; or ever since we turned away from indifference to the Lord this joy has been with us. But for the people of Samaria, the experience of this joy was “great” because it had never been with them before Philip proclaimed it. For the first time in history, the joy of the Holy Spirit was given to them. Their “great joy” is an encouragement for us. Let it remind us of how precious it is. Let it make us reflect on the first time this joy was made known in our own hearts. Let us consider that this joy is, now, today, the quite realization of our trust in his love for us. This quite, deep trust is Jesus “showing” himself to us.

*“Then Peter and John laid their hands on them
and they received the Holy Spirit.”*

Again from our first reading, in this statement, we are seeing the sacrament of Confirmation being administered by the Apostles after Baptism. Baptism brings us into the family of God, but Confirmation enables us to live out the Christian message with greater courage and conviction through the Holy Spirit. Many of us received Confirmation around twelve to thirteen years of age. Receiving the Holy Spirit at this moment may not be something we noticed. There can be multiple reasons for this: reasons like not having a prayer life at the time; like being uninterested at the time, doing it only because it was expected of us; etc. A lot of us however, subsequently, believed and turned to the Lord more fully as we grew and matured and realized our need of salvation. This turning to the Lord is Jesus “showing” himself to us.

“..I will...give you another Advocate...the Spirit of truth...”

We have already reflected on this promise of Jesus from today’s Gospel. It is the promise of the coming of God, the Holy Spirit. On this sixth Sunday of Easter, the Lord is now

Homily—Prayer of the Faithful—Sunday Readings—Novena to the Holy Spirit

6th SUNDAY OF EASTER

MAY 17, 2020

directing our gaze forward to the celebration of Pentecost Sunday in two weeks time. Then, we will celebrate the coming of this other Advocate, an Advocate like Jesus, equal to Jesus—One who, like Jesus, pleads our cause before the Father. Unlike Jesus when he was with the Apostles, this Advocate dwells in us through Baptism and Confirmation. This Advocate, the Holy Spirit, “*shows*” us Jesus.

This Friday, May 22, the Church begins its novena to the Holy Spirit in preparation for Pentecost Sunday. If we want Jesus to “*show*” himself to us let us join in this—the oldest novena prayer—and ask God, the Holy Spirit, to come and “*show*” us Jesus. You will find a copy of this 9 day novena prayer at the end of this document.

“Anybody who loves me...I shall love him and show myself to him.”



PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Leader:

Today we seek the prayerful support of
Mary our Mother, Health of the Sick and our Perpetual Help.

LECTOR: Risen Lord, Hear Our Prayer

In union with Pope Francis, who seeks the particular help of Mary during this pandemic, we join with him in asking you to deliver the world from this virus and the anxiety which it is generating:

We pray...

In your saving Mercy rescue our world from danger, restore to the human family a new experience and sense of unity so that we become a gentler and more compassionate people:

We pray...

Give to all who face financial stress at this time, those who have lost employment, or have no money for food and shelter, and for charities which seek to give them support the grace of your help to work together to relieve this suffering:

We pray...

Look after those who are now vulnerable to the pandemic: those in refugee camps, those in close living in poor districts of cities around the world, those in crowded prisons, in migrant worker housing, and those on ships and liners, may they not be forgotten by the rest of the world:

We pray...

Risen Christ visit the sick with healing power and new hope:
(especially) Candelabra Ferolino; Munchie Reyes; Aisha Miranda;
Rodolfo Macapagal; Marie James; _____

We pray...

Bless all who have died in your Christ (especially): those who have died from the virus; and also, Fr Norman Dodge; Fr Francis Johnson; _____

We pray...

In our silence now, let the light of your presence shine in us (PAUSE):

We Pray...

Leader:

Loving God,
relying on the prayers of Mary, our mother,
we ask you to embrace our world with tenderness,
and in this time of universal need
lift us from anxiety to hope, from isolation to community
and from confusion to faith.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SUNDAY READINGS

First reading

Acts 8:5-8,14-17 ©

They laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit

Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. As a result there was great rejoicing in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 65(66):1-7,16,20

Second reading

1 Peter 3:15-18 ©

In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong. Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

*Jesus said: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word,
and my Father will love him,
and we shall come to him.'*

Alleluia!

Gospel

John 14:15-21 ©

I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate

Jesus said to his disciples:

'If you love me you will keep my commandments.

I shall ask the Father,

and he will give you another Advocate

to be with you for ever,
that Spirit of truth
whom the world can never receive
since it neither sees nor knows him;
but you know him,
because he is with you, he is in you.
I will not leave you orphans;
I will come back to you.
In a short time the world will no longer see me;
but you will see me,
because I live and you will live.
On that day you will understand that I am in my Father
and you in me and I in you.
Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them
will be one who loves me;
and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father,
and I shall love him and show myself to him.'



NOVENA TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Forward:

The novena in honour of the Holy Spirit is the oldest of all novenas, it was first made at the direction of Our Lord Himself when He sent His apostles back to Jerusalem to await the coming of the Holy Spirit on the first Pentecost. Addressed to the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, it is a powerful plea for the light and strength and love so sorely needed by every Christian. To encourage this devotion to the Holy Spirit, the Church has enriched this novena with indulgences.

FIRST DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: Holy Spirit! Lord of Light! From Your clear celestial height, Your pure beaming radiance give!

Leader:

The Holy Spirit

Only one thing is important—eternal salvation. Only one thing, therefore, is to be feared—sin. Sin is the result of ignorance, weakness, and indifference. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Light, of Strength, and of Love. With His sevenfold gifts He enlightens the mind, strengthens the will, and inflames the heart with love of God. To ensure our salvation we ought to invoke the Divine Spirit daily, for "The Spirit helps our infirmity. We know not what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit Himself asks for us."

All:

Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, / You have condescended to regenerate us by water and the Holy Spirit, / and have given us forgiveness of all sins. / Grant to send forth from heaven upon us your sevenfold Spirit, / the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, / the Spirit of Counsel and Fortitude, / the Spirit of Knowledge and Piety, / and the Spirit of Holy Fear. Amen.

Leader: "Let us pray":

All: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father.

Leader: "St JohnXXIII"

All: "Pray for Us."

Leader: "The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit",

All: On my knees before the great multitude of heavenly witnesses, / I offer myself soul and body to You, / Eternal Spirit of God. / I adore the brightness of Your purity, / the unerring keenness of Your justice, / and the might of Your love. / You are the Strength and Light of my soul. / In You I live and move and am. / I desire never to grieve You by unfaithfulness to grace, / and I pray with all my heart to be kept / from the smallest sin

against You. / Mercifully guard my every thought / and grant that I may always watch for Your light / and listen to Your voice / and follow Your gracious inspirations. / I cling to You and give myself to You / and ask You by Your compassion / to watch over me in my weakness. / Holding the pierced Feet of Jesus / and looking at His Five Wounds / and trusting in His Precious Blood / and adoring His opened Side and stricken Heart, / I implore You Adorable Spirit, / helper of my infirmity, / so to keep me in Your grace / that I may never sin against You. / Give me grace O Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Father and the Son, / to say to You always and everywhere, / "Speak Lord, for Your servant is listening." Amen.

All: In the Name of the the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

SECOND DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: Holy Spirit! Come, / Father of the poor. / Come, / treasures which endure; / Come, / Light of all that live!

Leader:

The Gift of Fear

The gift of Fear fills us with a sovereign respect for God, / and makes us dread nothing so much as to offend Him by sin. / It is a fear that arises, not from the thought of hell, / but from sentiments of reverence and filial submission to our heavenly Father. / It is the fear that is the beginning of wisdom, / detaching us from worldly pleasures that could in any way separate us from God. / "They that fear the Lord will prepare their hearts, and in His sight will sanctify their souls."

All: Come, / O blessed Spirit of Holy Fear, / penetrate my inmost heart, / that I may set you, / my Lord and God, before my face forever. / Help me to shun all things that can offend You, / and make me worthy to appear before the pure eyes of Your Divine Majesty in heaven, / where You live and reign in the unity of the ever Blessed Trinity, / One God, world without end. Amen.

Leader: "Let us pray":

All: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be to the Father.

Leader: "St JohnXXIII"

All: "Pray for Us."

Leader: "The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit" (go to day one)

THIRD DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: Holy Spirit, / of all consolers best, / visiting the troubled breast, / do refreshing peace give us.

Leader:

The Gift of Piety

The gift of Piety begets in our hearts a filial affection for God / as our most loving Father. / It inspires us to love and respect / for His sake / persons and things consecrated to Him, / as well as those who are vested with His authority, / His Blessed Mother and the Saints, / the Church and its visible Head, / our parents and superiors, / our country and its rulers. / He who is filled with the gift of Piety finds the practice of his religion, / not a burdensome duty, / but a delightful service. / Where there is love, / there is no labour.

All: Come, O Blessed Spirit of Piety, / possess my heart. / Enkindle therein such a love for God, / that I may find satisfaction only in His service, / and for His sake lovingly submit to all legitimate authority. / Amen.

Leader: "Let us pray":

All: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be to the Father.

Leader: "St JohnXXIII"

All: "Pray for Us."

Leader: "The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit" (go to day one)

FOURTH DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: Holy Spirit, You in toil are comfort sweet, / pleasant coolness in the heat, / solace in the midst of woe.

Leader:

The Gift of Fortitude

By the gift of Fortitude / the soul is strengthened against natural fear, / and supported to the end in the performance of duty. / Fortitude imparts to the will an impulse and energy which move it to undertake without hesitancy / the most difficult tasks, / to face dangers, / to trample under foot human respect, / and to endure without complaint the slow martyrdom of even lifelong tribulation. / "He that shall persevere unto the end, / he shall be saved."

All: Come, O Blessed Spirit of Fortitude, / uphold my soul in time of trouble and adversity, / sustain my efforts after holiness, / strengthen my weakness, / give me courage against all the assaults of my enemies, / that I may never be overcome and separated from You, / my God and greatest Good. / Amen.

Leader: "Let us pray":

All: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be to the Father.

Leader: "St JohnXXIII"

All: "Pray for Us."

Leader: "The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit" (go to day one)

FIFTH DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: Holy Spirit, light immortal! / Light Divine! / Visit these hearts of Yours, / and our inmost being fill!

Leader:

The Gift of Knowledge

The gift of Knowledge enables the soul to evaluate created things at their true worth, / in their relation to God. / Knowledge unmask the pretence of creatures, / reveals their emptiness, / and points out their only true purpose as instruments in the service of God. / It shows us the loving care of God even in adversity, / and directs us to glorify Him in every circumstance of life. / Guided by its light, / we put first things first, / and prize the friendship of God beyond all else. / "Knowledge is a fountain of life to him that possesses it."

All: Blessed Spirit of Knowledge, / grant that I may perceive the will of the Father; / show me the nothingness of earthly things, / that I may realize their vanity and use them only for Thy glory / and my own salvation, / looking ever beyond them to You, / and Your eternal rewards. Amen.

Leader: "Let us pray":

All: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be to the Father.

Leader: "St JohnXXIII"

All: "Pray for Us."

Leader: "The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit" (go to day one)

SIXTH DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

All: Holy Spirit, / if You take Your grace away, / nothing pure in man will stay, / all his good is turn'd to ill.

Leader:

The Gift of Understanding

Understanding, / as a gift of the Holy Spirit, / helps us to grasp the meaning of the truths of our holy religion. / By faith we know them, / but by Understanding we learn to appreciate and relish them. / It enables us to penetrate the inner meaning of revealed truths / and through them to be quickened to newness of life. / Our faith ceases to be sterile and inactive, / but inspires a mode of life that bears eloquent testimony to the faith that is in us; / we begin to "walk worthy of God in all things pleasing, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

All: Come, / O Spirit of Understanding, / and enlighten our minds, / that we may know and believe all the mysteries of salvation; / and may merit at last to see the eternal light in Your Light; / and in the light of glory / to have a clear vision of You and the Father and the Son. Amen.

Leader: “Let us pray”:

All: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be to the Father.

Leader: “St JohnXXIII”

All: “Pray for Us.”

Leader: “The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit” (go to day one)

SEVENTH DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

All: Holy Spirit, / heal our wounds / our strength renew; / on our dryness pour Your dew, / wash the stains of guilt away.

Leader:

The Gift of Counsel

The gift of Counsel endows the soul with supernatural prudence, / enabling it to judge promptly and rightly what must be done, / especially in difficult circumstances. / Counsel applies the principles furnished by Knowledge and Understanding to the innumerable concrete cases that confront us in the course of our daily duty as parents, / teachers, / public servants, / and Christian citizens. Counsel / is supernatural common sense, / a priceless treasure in the quest of salvation. / “Above all these things, / pray to the Most High, / that He may direct your way in truth.”

Leader: Come, / O Spirit of Counsel, / help and guide me in all my ways, / that I may always do Your holy will. / Incline my heart to that which is good; / turn it away from all that is evil, / and direct me by the straight path of Your commandments / to that goal of eternal life for which I long.

Leader: “Let us pray”:

All: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be to the Father.

Leader: “St JohnXXIII”

All: “Pray for Us.”

Leader: “The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit” (go to day one)

EIGHTH DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

All: Holy Spirit, bend the stubborn heart and will, / melt the frozen / warm the chill. / Guide the steps that go astray!

Leader:

The Gift of Wisdom

Embodying all the other gifts, / as charity embraces all the other virtues, / Wisdom is the most perfect of the gifts. / Of wisdom it is written "all good things came to me with her, / and innumerable riches through her hands." / It is the gift of Wisdom that strengthens our faith, / fortifies hope, / perfects charity, / and promotes the practice of virtue in the highest degree. / Wisdom enlightens the mind to discern and relish things divine, / in the appreciation of which / earthly joys lose their savour, / whilst the Cross of Christ / yields a

divine sweetness according to the words of the Saviour: / “Take up your cross and follow me, / for my yoke is sweet and my burden light.

Leader: Come, / O Spirit of Wisdom, / and reveal to my soul the mysteries of heavenly things, / their exceeding greatness, / power and beauty. / Teach me to love them above and beyond all the passing joys and satisfactions of earth. / Help me to attain them and possess them for ever. Amen.

Leader: “Let us pray”:

All: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be to the Father.

Leader: “St JohnXXIII”

All: “Pray for Us.”

Leader: “The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit” (go to day one)

NINTH DAY

Leader: In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

All: Holy Spirit, / on those who evermore You confess / and You Adore, / in Your sevenfold gift, descend; / give them comfort when they die; / give them life with You on high; / give them joys which never end. Amen.

Leader: The 12 Fruits of the Holy Spirit

The gifts of the Holy Spirit perfect the supernatural virtues / by enabling us to practice them with greater docility to divine inspiration. / As we grow in the knowledge and love of God / under the direction of the Holy Spirit, / our service becomes more sincere and generous, / the practice of virtue more perfect. / Such acts of virtue leave the heart filled with joy and consolation / and are known as Fruits of the Holy Spirit. / These Fruits in turn render the practice of virtue more attractive / and become a powerful incentive for still greater efforts in the service of God, / to serve Whom is to reign.

All: Come, / O Divine Spirit, / fill my heart with Your heavenly fruits, / Your charity, / joy, / peace, / patience, / kindness, / goodness, / generosity, / gentleness, / faithfulness, / modesty, / self-control, / and chastity, / that I may never weary in the service of God, / but by continued faithful submission to Your inspiration / may merit to be united eternally with You / in the love of the Father and the Son. Amen.

Leader: “Let us pray”:

All: Our Father; Hail Mary; Glory be to the Father.

Leader: “St JohnXXIII”

All: “Pray for Us.”

Leader: “The Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit” (go to day one)