

## Homily. Pentecost Sunday. Year. C. 4/5 June 2022.

You've heard of school spirit, team spirit, even National spirit? Yes, I know it's been a while since we've had much of that here in Australia, but think of the spirit of the Ukrainian people and you'll get my drift. Well, Pentecost is our great yearly celebration of the Holy Spirit, which just like school, team and National spirits is the Spirit that makes us into the Church and keeps those like us who believe in Jesus going every day.

Our Holy Spirit is a gift from God. It's the gift into us who believe and have faith in Jesus of the same spirit that lived in the Lord Himself. We often portray the Holy Spirit as a dove because that's the way it was experienced and seen at Jesus Baptism and in the Acts of the Apostles, our 1st reading. Like a gentle dove it brings us God's peace and love, God's comfort in our troubles and wisdom in our trials and tribulations.

The Holy Spirit is also presented as fire, like the tongues of fire that came on the disciples, turning them into Apostles. This fiery Spirit then sent them outwards into the world to bring people God's Good-News of new life in Christ. Our red colour represents this fire, the burning energy of the Spirit of God's Holiness, which gets the Church moving and serving others in loving sacrifice for the cause of what is right, true and just.

Another way the Holy Spirit is imagined and presented is as breath. In the beginning God breathed over the chaos and darkness. Then God's breath took words, saying; Let there be light, and light there was! Gods breathing into words brought order, meaning and purpose out of nothingness and creation happened. As the Gospel of St. John said to us, the Risen Jesus

breathed on His disciples. He gave them God's breath of life, God's power to keep bringing creation, order and light out of the emptiness, chaos and darkness of our world.

All of this means that what we're celebrating here today is God now living in you and me, giving us peace and comfort, energy for our mission and God's own creative breath of life that helps us to oppose and overcome all darkness and death by making things both holy and whole once again.

No wonder, then, that Pentecost is called the birthday of the Church, for by our faith in Jesus we who believe in the message and way of Jesus Christ are reborn in His holy peaceful dove, formed in His holy fiery energy and moved by His Spirit breathing holy hope and life into us.

Soon, in the Eucharist, we will call down the Holy Spirit to make the bread and wine into Jesus. Then, at communion, we will take Him and His Holy Spirit deep inside of us so that we, the Church, become the skin He lives in. Now, by God's gift, we are the dove, fire and breath, God's Spirit active today through us, but always for others. So, Happy Birthday everyone! May our birthday celebration help us to never forget who we really are, where we really come from and why we are keep on living each day.