

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were sitting around discussing the deplorable state of the world. The Father finally concluded, "I don't see any way around it. One of you guys is going to have to go back." Both the Father and the Holy Spirit looked at Jesus. "Oh no. Don't look at me," he exclaimed. "Been there. Done that. Didn't work out too well as you might recall." So, the Father looked at the Holy Spirit and said, "Well, I guess it's your turn." Then the discussion turned to where it the world to send the Holy Spirit. After much discussion Jesus finally said, "Hey, what about Rome?" The Holy Spirit replied, "Hey, that's a great idea. I've never been there!"

Have ever felt this is a low point in our Churches history? That our faith leaders are not men and women filled with the Holy Spirit? Or in your personal lives, do you feel tepid, lukewarm?

The phrase that stands out to me this weekend is "They were behind closed doors." They were behind closed doors and Jesus appeared to them. Behind closed doors describe the men gathered in there- frightened, intimidated, confused, discouraged, not sure what to do??? And then this amazing phenomenon – the Holy Spirit comes down upon them. Everything changes that day. They poured out into the streets of Jerusalem preaching Christ and urging total strangers to repent and to believe in the name of Jesus. From behind closed doors to the open streets, these men now display courage, understanding, wisdom, knowledge, devotion, wonder and awe, right judgment – what do these words remind you? They are the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit- which means they were men whose lives were now taken over by the Holy Spirit.

From behind closed doors to the open Streets describe what Holy Spirit can do. Their fear and intimidation were transformed into a sense of invincibility.

- ✚ Instead of running from the public, they ran toward them.
- ✚ Instead of hoping not to be seen, they exhorted total strangers to repent
- ✚ Instead of being frightened by insults, warning, and threats, they stood face to face with their accusers and did not blink.
- ✚ Even when called before the supreme council of the Jews, this handful of uneducated and untrained men stood like steers in a blizzard. They would not back down. Such invincible courage.

Where does one get such boldness today? Where do we go to be impassioned in our faith? We need a new Pentecost in our Church. We need to let the Holy Spirit to lead us.

Let us talk about the amazing event or festival that took place in Jerusalem. The disciples were preaching in the streets- over three thousand people from all over the world- And they said:

"Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans?
Then how does each of us hear them in his native language?
We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites,
inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia,
Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia,
Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene,

It seems significant that first miracle in the New Testament Church is the miracle of inclusion and outreach. It is the miracle of hospitality. All are welcome. Each one hears the Gospel in

his/her native tongue. That is what the presence of the Holy Spirit does to you? The Holy Spirit creates an inclusive community of disciples. I want you to know I appreciate every effort that Christ the King makes to create an inclusive community here and we could do much more.

The word Catholic comes from two Greek words, kata and holos. The most accurate translation of these words when put together katholos – is welcoming everyone. St. Ignatius of Antioch was the first bishop to use “catholic” of Christian community. At the beginning of the second century, Ignatius was arrested in Antioch for being a Christian and brought to Rome to be fed to the Lions in the Coliseum. As he traveled, he wrote a kind of “thank you” letter back to the Christian communities who had offered him hospitality along his journey to martyrdom. In his letter to the Smyrnaeans he wrote, “Where Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church. The surrounding text indicates the meaning that that when the spirit of Jesus prevails in a community, it is complete – the whole church is there. We can presume that Ignatius had experienced Jesus’ catholicity in the hospitality offered to him by the smyrnaeans.

Inclusion and outreach – catholicity- were certainly the spirit of the historical Jesus. He sought out and preached to all classes of people, of every ethnic background. Just his table fellowship was an unmistakable sign – in the social context – of his hospitality and inclusion: the damning accusation against him was that he “ate with tax collectors and sinners” Jesus created an inclusive community of believers in his time. The Holy Spirit, working through the apostles,, created an inclusive community of faith. Let us pray that we allow the Holy Sprit to work among us, opening our hearts to boldness in our faith. May the Spirit of Jesus prevail in our community.