

1.2 – EMPOWERED TO EVANGELIZE

Talk Handout

I. From Whom do we receive the power to evangelize? The Holy Spirit!

A. The Holy Spirit is the crossfire (bond) of love between the Father and the Son.

“We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, with the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified, he has spoken through the prophets.” (Nicene Creed)

- The Spirit is not an impersonal force, but a Divine *Person* to relate with.

B. Jesus sends us the Holy Spirit who is *another* Advocate

“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth. He will guide you into all the truth.” (Jn 14:16)

- **Advocate** (Gk. *Parakletos*) = “Someone who stands at the side of another” to defend and encourage

C. Jesus and the Holy Spirit share a Joint Mission

“When the Father sends his Word, he always sends his Breath. In their joint mission, the Son and Holy Spirit are distinct but inseparable. To be sure, it is Christ who is seen, the visible image of the invisible God, but it is the Spirit who reveals him.” (CCC 689)

D. The Holy Spirit is the Life-Giver

Creation of Universe - “In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while *ruah* (the spirit / a mighty wind / wind of God) swept over the waters.” (Gen 1:1) [Heb. *Rúah*, Gk. *Pneuma* = “air in motion”- translated as *spirit, breath, wind*]

Creation of Man (*natural*) - “Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being.” (Gen 2:7)

New Creation (*supernatural*) - “It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail.” (Jn 6:63)

II. The Role of the Holy Spirit in Evangelization

A. The Holy Spirit is the Principal Agent of Evangelization

“It must be said that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization: it is He who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel, and it is He who in the depths of consciences causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood.” (Pope Paul VI, *EN*, 75, cf. Vatican II, *Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity*)

“Without the Spirit, evangelization is like a stagnant river, charity like fire without heat, the Word something indeclinable, the Eucharist an impenetrable mystery, the other will never be a neighbor, the world a hell, paradise a forgotten reality, the Church a mother without love.” (Salvatore Martinez, *Renewal in the Spirit*, ZENIT, May 31, 2004)

B. The Holy Spirit is Active in Every Stage of Evangelization (See chart on next page)

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CYCLE OF EVANGELIZATION

Stage	Actions of the Holy Spirit
<p style="text-align: center;">1 Witness</p>	<p>- Transforms us into effective witnesses of the Gospel</p> <p>“All of us, gazing with unveiled face on the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same likeness, from one degree of glory to another, as from the Lord who is the Spirit.” (2 Cor 3:18)</p> <p>“He alone stirs up the new creation, the new humanity of which evangelization is to be the result.” (EN 75)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">2 Proclaim</p>	<p>- Places words on the lips of evangelizers.</p> <p>“It is He who explains to the faithful the deep meaning of the teaching of Jesus and of His mystery... The Holy Spirit places on his lips the words which he could not find by himself.” (EN 75)</p> <p>- Backs the preaching of the Gospel with ‘demonstrations of power’ (1 Cor 2:4)</p> <p>“For our gospel did not come to you in word alone, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with much conviction.” (1 Thess 1:5)</p> <p>“The Holy Spirit brings the word to life; he brings the power and authority of heaven to stand behind the message.” (Peter Herbeck, <i>Words and Deeds</i>, Renewal Ministries Newsletter)</p> <p>- “Causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood” (EN 75)</p> <p>“...the Holy Spirit predisposes the soul of the hearer to be open and receptive to the Good News and to the kingdom being proclaimed.” (EN 75)</p> <p>“God sheds his light into the darkness of the human heart, a darkness that has blinded that heart to the truth about God and His plan for their lives.” (Peter Herbeck, <i>Words and Deeds</i>)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3 Discipleship</p>	<p>“Transforms us so that we begin to live an entirely new kind of life” (St. Cyril of Alexandria)</p> <p>- The Spirit gives us the power to change, awareness & distaste for sin, a yearning for the things of God.</p> <p>- Enlightens our minds and hearts with the Truth of the Gospel</p> <p><i>Light analogy</i> - “Our eyes cannot fulfill their task without light... Our ears cannot react without sound vibrations... They demand objects of experience in order to function. It is the same with the human soul. Unless it absorbs the gift of the Spirit through faith, the mind has the ability to know God but lacks the light necessary for that knowledge.” (St. Hilary, <i>On the Trinity</i>, Off. of Rdgs, Friday 7th week of Easter)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">4 Community</p>	<p>- Gives new life to all who believe through the Church</p> <p>Initiation - “By virtue of our Baptism, the first sacrament of faith, the Holy Spirit in the Church communicates to us, intimately & personally, the life that originates in the Father and is offered to us in the Son.” (CCC 683)</p> <p>Fellowship - The Holy Spirit is the source of our communion in Charity in the Church (cf. CCC 953) “The effectiveness of our mission is determined by the quality of our life together.” (Fr. Bob Bedard) Do people experience this love for one another in our parish communities?</p> <p>Church - “The Church, a communion living in the faith of the Apostles which she transmits, is the place where we know the Holy Spirit: in the <u>Scriptures</u>... <u>Tradition</u>... <u>Magisterium</u>... <u>sacramental liturgy</u>... <u>prayer</u>... <u>charisms</u>... <u>ministries</u>... <u>signs of apostolic and missionary life</u>... <u>witness of saints</u>.” (CCC 688)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">5 Mission</p>	<p>- “Prepares men and goes out to them with his grace ... to draw them to Christ” (CCC 737)</p> <p>- “Impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel” (EN 75)</p> <p>- Helps us discern strategies for evangelization in our present world</p> <p>“Through the Holy Spirit the Gospel penetrates to the heart of the world, for it is He who causes people to discern the signs of the times – signs willed by God – which evangelization reveals and puts to use within history.” (EN 75)</p>

III. How We Are Empowered

A. We have received the Holy Spirit

- **In Baptism** you were called to share in Christ's prophetic office - to announce the Gospel and God's kingdom. You received the *virtues* (faith, hope, love, and all the other virtues), the seven *gifts of the Holy Spirit*.
- **In Confirmation** you were sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit in order to spread and defend the faith.
- **In the Eucharist** you are strengthened in the grace of the Holy Spirit and sent forth in mission to the world.

B. The Need for Something More

- If we have received the Holy Spirit, why do our lives look and feel exactly the same?
The Apostles had the same problem, hiding in fear, back to fishing (John 19:19, 20:26, 21:3)
- Jesus said to wait for "the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak; for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the holy Spirit" (Acts 1:3-5).

The Day of Pentecost

"When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. ... Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them, '...this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: "It will come to pass in the last days," God says, "that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh."'"" (Acts 2:1-17)

"Something more" = the *Baptism in the Holy Spirit*, transforming the Apostles from confused and frightened men hiding for their lives into bold witnesses with 3000 converts on their first day.

C. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

1) What is it?

The Baptism of the Holy Spirit is a stirring up of the life of the Holy Spirit that is already within us through the Sacraments, but needs to be *unleashed*.

Ex. Gift received but unopened

Ex. Syrup at the bottom of a glass of milk

2) What are the effects?

- 1) "A new awareness of the reality and presence of Jesus Christ in one's life."
- 2) "Presence of the spiritual gifts once again in the lives of Christians"
- 3) "Power for sanctification... the Holy Spirit's action eliminating sin & bringing a person's life in order."

(Fr. Francis Martin, *Baptism in the Holy Spirit - A Scriptural Foundation*, pp 47-48)

"John Paul II defines it as [a] 'cause of an ever more profound experience of the presence of Christ.' The effusion of the Spirit makes present and reactivates our baptism, unleashing the Holy Spirit. It is a call to permanent conversion, as on the day of the Pentecostal descent of the Spirit in Jerusalem. It is a new awareness of the Lordship of Jesus in our life, that Jesus who is Lord, and only through the Spirit can he be loved, adored, proclaimed, witnessed and shared." (Salvatore Martinez, *Renewal in the Spirit*, ZENIT, May 31, 2004)

"Whether the experience is sudden and dramatic, or cumulative and quiet, the result is the same: you begin to seek God, to live as a disciple of Christ, and to open yourself to being used by the Holy Spirit. This is the soil that allows the seeds of the charisms to come into full bloom."

(Eryn Huntington & Sherrey Anne Weddell, *Discerning Charisms*, The Catherine of Siena Institute, p. 12)

3) Can you receive it just once?

There can be many sendings of the Holy Spirit: “As they prayed, the place where they were gathered shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31).

4) A normal part of Catholic life

Dispensationalism = The idea that the charisms of Holy Spirit only for early Church and that they are no longer necessary and so God does not give them anymore. This has been firmly rejected by the Catholic Church.

“From the reception of these charisms, even the most ordinary ones, there arises for each of the faithful the right & duty of exercising them in the Church and in the world for the good of men and the development of the Church, of exercising them in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who ‘breathes where He wills’ (John 3:8).” (Vatican II, *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity* 3)

→ See Handout 1.3 – *Baptism in the Holy Spirit in Church History*

D. The Present Need for a New Pentecost

- The great outpourings of the Holy Spirit → Times of a great need for evangelization.

The Church is facing great crisis of faith (secularization, atheistic ideologies, sexual revolution).

- Call for a new evangelization

“God is opening before the Church the horizons of a humanity more fully prepared for the sowing of the Gospel. I sense the moment has come to a new evangelization and to the mission ‘ad gentes’. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty to proclaim Christ to all peoples.” (John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* 3)

“To be Christians means to be missionaries, to be apostles. It is not enough to discover Christ – you must bring Him to others! You must have the courage to speak about Christ, to bear witness to your faith through a lifestyle inspired by the Gospel. The harvest is great indeed for evangelization and so many workers are needed. Christ trusts you and counts on your collaboration.” (John Paul II, WYD ‘89)

IV. Awakening in the Holy Spirit

A. There are many ways to have an awakening in the Holy Spirit

Ex. Life in the Spirit Seminar, Marian consecration, Cursillo weekend, Eucharistic Adoration, prayer meeting, etc.

B. Scriptural Model for Empowerment

1) Go to Prayer

“Wait for the promise of the Father about which you have heard me speak...” (Acts 1:4)

“All these devoted themselves with one accord to prayer...” (Acts 1:14)

“We exhort all evangelizers, whoever they may be, to pray without ceasing to the Holy Spirit with faith and fervor and to let themselves prudently be guided by Him as the decisive inspirer of their plans, their initiatives and their evangelizing activity.” (Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 75)

2) Receive the Holy Spirit

“Techniques of evangelization are good, but even the most advanced ones could not replace the gentle action of the Spirit. The most perfect preparation of the evangelizer has no effect without the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit the most convincing dialectic has no power over the heart of man” (Paul VI, *EN* 75)

3) The Spirit works through you in power

Signs & wonders - “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you...” (Acts 1:8)

Confidence - “God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power, love & self-control.” (2 Tim 1:7)

Fruitfulness - “I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.” (1 Cor 3:6)

C. Examples in Scripture

- 1) **Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan:** "After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven was opened and the holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.' ... Jesus began his ministry" (Luke 3:21-23)
- 2) **Pentecost:** "[The Apostles] devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women, and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers." (Acts 1:14) "And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim." (Acts 2:4)
"Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and proclaimed..." (Acts 2:14-36)
"Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles." (Acts 2:43)
- 3) **Ministry of the Apostles:** "As they prayed, the place where they were gathered shook, and they were all filled with the holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness." (Acts 4:31)
- 4) **Annunciation:** "But Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?' And the angel said to her in reply, 'The holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the most high will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.'" (Luke 1:34-36)

D. Ask and You Will Receive - Ask with the confidence and simplicity of a child

"Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit to those who ask him?" (Luke 11:9-13)

V. Conclusion

A. The new evangelization needs a new Pentecost

To evangelize effectively, we need to be empowered by the Holy Spirit, the principal agent of evangelization. We need to welcome the Holy Spirit in a new way and be open to all His gifts and charisms.

B. Mary is the perfect Model of docility to the Holy Spirit

"Among us, with raised hands, is praying the Virgin, Mother of Christ and of the Church. Together with her, let us implore and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, light of truth, strength of authentic peace. ... 'Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of thy faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of thy love: you who, in the variety of human languages, gather peoples in the one faith, alleluia.' Holy Spirit come!" (John Paul II, *Address at Pentecost*, May 30, 2004)