

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

JOHN 20:19-23

Some years ago, Pope Francis revealed he was wearing a cross that had belonged to an Iraqi priest slain for his faith.

"It is a cross this priest had in his hands when he was stabbed for refusing to renounce Jesus Christ," the pope told a gathering of young monks and nuns. "This cross, I wear it here," he added, indicating his chest. "Today, we have more martyrs than in the first centuries (after Christ)."

Martyrs like that Iraqi priest choose to die rather than renounce their Christian faith. Filled with the Holy Spirit, they are happy to suffer for their faith. The Spirit gives them the courage to witness to it, even unto death.

We don't face the same risks as Christians in other parts of the world, but all Christians — no matter where we live — are called to witness to the faith by virtue of our baptism. Our baptism is strengthened by the sacrament of confirmation, which the Catechism of the Catholic Church says "gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross."

We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at confirmation. That same Spirit that was poured out on the apostles at Pentecost, and that was poured out on that Iraqi martyr, is given to us, too. The Spirit gives us the courage to witness to the faith, whatever the cost.

After the passion and death of Jesus, the apostles covered behind locked doors, full of fear. Their fear had cut them off from the world. Then, Jesus appeared in their midst, and their fear turned to joy.

Jesus breathed on them, breathed the breath of God on them, filled them with his life, with God's life — with confidence, hope, conviction, power. They became new people, ready to proclaim God's message to the ends of the earth, even to give up their lives for it.

That's what Jesus commissioned his followers to do before he left them, what he asks of us, too. Filled with the Holy Spirit, we are to be his witnesses in our time and place. ■



REFLECT

At Pentecost, the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit and, with it, the gift of tongues. What was that gift? Was it that they suddenly able to speak everything from Swahili to Swedish? Or was it something different?

What they were given at Pentecost was the ability to communicate in a new language — the language of the Holy Spirit, the language of love, a language that transcends any barrier of race, tongue, or nationality. We don't need to be polyglots to speak the language of Pentecost. What we need instead are several gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The first is courage. The apostles had been full of fear since the events of Holy Week. But upon receiving the Holy Spirit, they become new people. They go out into the streets, unafraid to preach the Good News.

That's the first thing people noticed — their courage. Eventually, those same disciples would give their lives for the Gospel.

We also have received that same gift. Courage is the language we are called to speak.

The second gift is joy. The change in the apostles after Pentecost was obvious.

They became joyful people. They knew God loved them, and the Holy Spirit was with them, so nothing could get them down. No matter what obstacles they faced, they were filled with the Spirit of joy — and people noticed.

It's a gift we have been given too, and that we must use. If we truly believe what we say we believe, then we must let it shine through — even in the face of church scandals, economic difficulties, and personal or family setbacks. There is no greater contradiction of our faith than to be dour, angry, or unsmiling. Joy is the language we are called to speak.

The third is love. Love was the defining characteristic of the first followers of Jesus. It's what outsiders noticed about them and what attracted outsiders to them. Their unconditional love showed itself especially in compassion and service to the poor.

It's a gift we have been given too, and that we must use. It's easy to talk about love; practicing it is far more challenging. Love is the language we are called to speak.

When we speak the Spirit-filled language of courage, joy, and love, we become a mini Pentecost. ■

SAY

Repeat the response from today's psalm: "Send forth your Spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth."

LEARN

Pentecost is the birthday of the Church. It is the day we celebrate the beginning of the Church's mission, the birth of a new community.

DO

Recall your Confirmation day. Thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Ask the Spirit to help you speak the language of courage, joy, and love.

PRAY

In the second reading, St Paul reminds us that there are many ways in which we can serve God. Ask the Lord to help you make the best use of your gifts.

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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28th May 2023
Pentecost Sunday

Weekend masses

Sat 6:00pm Dechomet 7:30pm Leitrim
Sun 9:00am Gargory 11:00am Dromara

Weekday masses

Mon 9:00am Leitrim 7:30pm Dechomet
Tues 9:00am Dromara
Wed 7:30pm Leitrim
Fri 7:30pm Dromara

Anniversaries

Leitrim

Sat 27th Owen, Philomena, Janet & Christopher Rice

Dromara

Sun 28th Vincent & Desmond O'Hare
Rosey Williams
Jerome Fitzsimmons
Deceased Members of O'Hare Family
(Dree & Muninabane)
Fri 2nd Kevin O'Hare
Deceased Members of Branniff Family
Sun 4th Dylan O'Hare

Dechomet

Sat 3rd Aisling O'Donnell & Pat Doyle

SMA Dromantine

Family Fun Day Sun 11th Jun 1:30-5:30pm

Grand Draw, Country & Western Music, Vintage Tractors, Bouncy Castles, Obstacle Courses. Stalls, Food, Refreshments and much more!

Adm £5 donation per car. Everyone Welcome.

Free Guided Tours of Newry Cathedral

Wed 14th Jun 7pm
Wed 5th Jul 2pm; Wed 19th Jul 7pm
Wed 16th Aug 2pm; Wed 30th Aug 7pm
Meet at the main door of the Cathedral

SVDP: Drom 07738838191/Drumg 07825419067

Safeguarding Contact: P Carville 07789917741

Collections Parish	Dromara	Drumgooland
	£525	£1,326

Cemetery Sunday

Thank you to all who attended the services last Sunday and to all who helped make them flow so well.

Deep gratitude is owed to those who provided places to park, to the stewards who helped people park and get away safely.

Thank you to all who read, sang, led the rosaries, collected or supplied the P.A. systems.

The collections on the day were very generous:
Dromara £870
Dechomet £586
Leitrim £2,697

Congratulations to all the children who made their First Holy Communion over the month!

Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary

Sr Mary Gallagher will speak at the masses weekend **27th/28th May** to promote mission awareness.

Dromara Parish Council Meeting

Mon 5th June at 8pm

Gala Concert - Music for a Summer's Evening

Fr Eugene O'Hagan and Margaret Keys
Sat 10th Jun at 7:30pm in St Malachy's Church, Castlewellan. Tickets £20, available from Eventbrite.ie or call 078 1258 8010

Lough Derg

Three Day Pilgrimages running from
Thur 1st Jun until Mon 15th August
Admission €80 *Concessions available for students, seniors & groups*
Further information from:
www.loughderg.org
info@loughderg.org
+353 (0)71 98 61518

Gargory Altar Rota

June - Rita & Clare

I will be away on retreat 12th - 21st June