

Homily – Vigil of Pentecost

June 8, 2019

We come together in unity despite our diversity. Pope Francis has pointed out that the Holy Spirit “generates diversity, for in every age he causes new and varied charisms to bloom. Then [the Spirit] brings about unity; he joins together, gathers and restores harmony.” As creatures we are tempted to seek diversity without unity. “We take sides and form parties. We adopt rigid and airtight positions. We become locked into our own ideas, and ways of doing things, perhaps even thinking that we are better than other or always correct.” The opposite temptation is “that of seeking unity without diversity” – seeking uniformity where everyone has to think and act alike. The Spirit generates diversity and brings about unity! We come from different generational and cultural backgrounds, but we are united in faith – in part because five years ago we dedicated our Archdiocese to the Holy Spirit. *Ven, Holy Spirit, Ven!*

My dear friends, we are gathered in faith and fellowship, and in solidarity with our sisters and brothers in hospitals and nursing homes; in orphanages, prisons, and detention centers; the homebound, the elderly children, young adults, those alienated and

marginalized by poverty or substance abuse! We gather in communion with Pope Francis and with all our fellow Catholics around the world, especially those who are suffering persecution for the faith – including those in Sri Lanka.

The world in which we live does not witness to gospel values. There is little search for truth, little enthusiasm for the good, little market for the beautiful. The kingdom of God is a place of justice and peace, mercy and compassion, truth-telling and loving. The gospel boldly proclaims God's enduring, unconditional love for all of us and challenges us to live our lives in accord with the word of God – in accord with the readings we just heard proclaimed.

We need to stand up against the sins of racism and bigotry. We need to tirelessly proclaim that every human person is created in the image and likeness of God and has innate dignity and value. We may lose heart in the face of today's bad news about racism, hatred, bigotry, and violence. We may become discouraged and lukewarm to the dreams of the gospel. But the Holy Spirit changes hearts – beginning with our own hearts – our attitudes, our thoughts, our prejudices that underlie our actions. The Holy Father urges us not to

“try to find shelter from the mighty wind of the Holy Spirit!” Let us join Pope Francis in his prayer:

Holy Spirit, violent wind of God, blow upon us, blow into our hearts and make us breathe forth the tenderness of the Father! Blow upon the Church and impel her to the ends of the earth, so that, brought by you, may bring nothing other than you. Blow upon our world the soothing warmth of peace and the refreshing cool of hope. Come, Holy Spirit, change us within and renew the face of the earth!”

Ven, Holy Spirit, ven! Ven, Holy Spirit, ven !!