



PENTECOST – JUNE 9, 2019

It is the feast of Pentecost. It is the birthday of the Church. At the time of this event in the history of salvation (almost 2000 year ago) the church of Jesus was one. There are now over 30,000 different Christian denominations in our country. More people are leaving the Church each day because of scandals of one kind or another. Some of the scandals include corruption in the ranks of the catholic clergy, including clergy in high places. Is it time for you to leave?

Frank Sheed wrote many years ago, “There isn’t anything a pope or bishop can do that would make me want to leave the church. But there are some things a pope or bishop can do that would make me want him to leave.”

The Catholic Church is still the church established by Jesus. When it’s broken by sin and corruption, that’s not a reason to leave. That’s a reason to stay, to fix it and to make sure it remains the church of Jesus, not the church of some human being with a messianic complex.

You have often heard it said that our mission from Jesus is one and our ministries are many. Each of our different ministries is empowered by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, whose feast we celebrate today. With the power of the Holy Spirit, the church can be fixed again as it has been in the past. The laity have always been an essential part of the “fixing”. That includes the people who report the corruption – with an absence of malice.

St. Paul lists some of the gifts of the Spirit in his first letter to the Corinthians in chapter 12. These gifts are distributed throughout the world and can be found in our parish too. They are the “tools” we need to fix a “broken church”. We need to stop blaming the devil and get to work. The devil does the tempting, but he doesn’t do the deed.

By Gods design, some of you have the gift of wisdom, some have the gift of knowledge. Some of you have the gift of faith, some have the gift of healing. Some of you have the gift of mighty deeds, some have the gift of prophecy, i.e. speaking on behalf of God. Some of you have the gift of discerning spirits, some have the gift of speaking in tongues. And some have the gift of interpreting tongues.

These gifts are not only found among the clergy. They are given by the Holy Spirit to whomever the Spirit chooses. All the gifts are given for the good of the community as a whole. Our parish is such a community and is not neglected by the Holy Spirit.

I believe with conviction that God has gifted you in special ways. I believe that you are an important part of His plan in the History of Salvation. I believe that you have a purpose in life, given to you by God Himself. I believe it is no accident that you are a part of our parish.

Recall our Lord’s parable of the weeds growing among the wheat (Matt 13:24-30). Jesus says, “Don’t pull up the weeds. You could do harm to the wheat.” He tells us that he will take care of the weeds at harvest time. Trust him. It is still his church.

For a few moments in silence, reflect on how you will survive the “weeds” of our time in the Church of Jesus. You can do that without leaving the Church. Our Lord needs you to stay and help with the healing.

