

Pentecost Sunday May 23, 2021

When our kids were young, and one of them had committed an offence, Pete would question them to see who the culprit was. Well, those kids stood together not willing to snitch on their sibling. Pete's solution was to make them stand still beside the kitchen wall, but not lean on it, until someone told the truth. Funny thing was, the kids knew they were free to go, as soon as someone owned up to the deed. The kids would confer with each other and decide whose turn it was to take the resulting "time out!" Ah yes, there was much riding on telling the truth!

In the scripture choices for today, Pentecost, we are offered several choices for readings at Mass. All of the readings have to do with the Holy Spirit. There is so much good reading I would suggest that, if you can, you read all of the choices given. One line in particular stayed with me, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come." (John 16. 12-13)

Where can you find the Spirit of truth? Listen in your heart. Jesus comes to us gently, lovingly, quietly in the stillness of our hearts. Listening to Jesus takes practice. There are many distractions in our world, many things that compete for our attention. Take ten minutes and listen to Jesus. This is called prayer. "Whatever you do with your life, go on listening to the voice of Jesus in your heart. This listening must be an active and very attentive listening, for in our restless and noisy world God's so loving voice is easily drowned out." (Henri Nouwen)

Jesus says "when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth." What does this mean "all the truth?" How do we obtain "all the truth"? Not as hard to do as you might initially think. This is to stand in the absolute authority of Jesus. He is our absolute authority in everything. By looking to the Spirit of truth, all will be made known to us. Just as Jesus told his disciples that there were many things he wanted to tell them but they would not be able to bear it right now, so too does the Holy Spirit reveal all things to us in due time as we are able or ready to receive it.

We do not have to remember every word ever spoken by Jesus or memorize the bible in order to speak in the truth of the Spirit. Use the faith that you have. No need to be looking for something greater or to wait until you are an expert. Use what you have within you; speak what you know to be true. Speak from your heart.

We have all been given gifts of the Spirit, no two of us are alike in this respect, and we are expected to use our gifts according to our individual abilities. As human beings, we have a tendency to rely on our own knowledge and talents instead of allowing the truth of the Spirit to guide us, lead us, and use us for the good and benefit of others.

So, to walk in the Spirit of truth, is to be ready and willing to correct, to right the wrongs, to stand up for those who have no voice of their own, to share our material gifts as well as spiritual gifts. In other words, don't just tell the truth. Speak it. Live it. Show it. Love it!

Reflection by Julie de Gouw, Pastoral Minister