

Receive the Holy Spirit

The birthday of the Church is Pentecost Sunday, so first, Happy Birthday to you all. We became Christians on our baptism. What a joy to be a Christian. From baptism, our journey to eternal life started. Through baptism we received the Holy Spirit, then confirmed through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

One particular sign, once we received the Holy Spirit in Baptism, is the anointing with the oil of Chrism where the Church in the person of the priest, says, "as Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet and King, so may you live always as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life." This means that all the baptised form the common priesthood, and we participate in the mission of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King.

How? With the coming of Jesus, and his total sacrifice on the Cross, there was no more need to offer animals to atone for our sins; he made the total sacrifice. That's the reason we pray, 'Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.' He became the Sacrificial Lamb. I participate in his mission as priest, every time I give up something for a just cause, love of family, love of wife, husband, peace, justice. In so doing, I participate in the mission of Christ as Priest.

Jesus' mission as prophet: he went through the streets preaching, love, peace joy, forgiveness, compassion, prayer; every time I do practice such values at home, at work, at the club; wherever I am, I am participating in the mission of Christ as Prophet.

Jesus as king, he ruled by serving, 'I came not to be served, but to serve' he said. And in fact, he bent down to wash the disciples' feet; and did so in so many varied ways. Each time, I serve I am ruling, I am participating in the mission of Christ as King.

What a challenge! This might be very difficult to put into practice, but as Jesus promised, we have the Holy Spirit, who is our advocate, our counsellor, our joy who came on that Pentecost Sunday, in the upper room, and he has never left us, and from there he came to each one of us. And he shares his gifts to us: wisdom, to be responsible for my actions; understanding, God chose me to make the world a better place; counsel, to make the right choices; knowledge, to know that God loves me and I reciprocate his love; fortitude, the courage to do what is right even when others laugh at me; piety, to say my prayers with reverence; fear of God, to live with wonder, awe, gratitude in His presence.

In my chaotic and unresolved issues around me, how can I know which one is which, what is worldly and what is godly, divine. The fruits of the Spirit are recognizable: wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is love; wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is joy; wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is peace; wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is patience; wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is kindness; wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is goodness; wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is faithfulness; wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is gentleness; wherever the Holy Spirit is, there is self- control.

The Holy Spirit within me enables me to be fully myself. I will no longer be possessed by things that hold me prisoner, by people who have kept me in a state of dependency, by powerful people who order me about. I will no longer be driven by my desires, no longer be the slave of my passions. I will be free to do what my heart truly desires to do, namely, the good for which God has created me.

Fr Ray DP

