Pentecost 2024

# MDP of God

Have you ever been lost? Especially as a child – have you ever had the experience of feeling that you were all alone and didn’t know which way to go?

There were a few times when I was a kid and got lost

The one time I was with a bunch of friends- *and it wasn’t real scary* – after all, I wasn’t alone

We weren’t sure where we were or how to get home, *but there was a sense of safety in numbers*

Another time I was lost – I was all alone

I didn’t know where to go – what to do – who to ask for help

It was a scary time= *it didn’t last long*

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I think we can have those kinds of experiences in our spiritual lives

We can feel like Jesus has left us without a roadmap to Him

We can feel like He’s not with- like He doesn’t care – like we’re all on our own

In fact there are a lot of people today *who feel that Jesus has abandoned us* – that He doesn’t give us *sure guidance* – that we’re on our own and have to figure life out for ourselves without Him

**Our readings and our feast today make clear that that’s not true**

In our first reading we heard how the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost

It’s possible that some of them were wondering- “Jesus why aren’t you with us? Jesus, why did you leave us here by ourselves? – Jesus how are we supposed to carry on your work like you said we were, when you’re not here to guide us?”

**But then the Holy Spirit came upon them** *and they knew they weren’t alone* – they weren’t abandoned- they would have His power with them

And to understand the significance you need to know a story from the Old Testament – and that’s the story of the Tower of Babel

In the Old Testament story we’re told how the whole world spoke one language- *but all of a sudden* ***because of sin*** – they can’t talk to each other – they’re divided into peoples and cultures who can’t understand each other—*and often don’t like each other*

**The whole message is that sin divides**

In our first reading we heard how through the power of the Holy Spirit various people can understand the Apostles [every nation-language]

*The work of Jesus* **is meant to unite us** – the power of the Holy Spirit is meant to bring people together

So with the coming of the Spirit the Apostles went out with confidence and proclaimed the saving message of Jesus- *because they know they’re not alone*

Folks--*we need to know the same thing* – Jesus has not abandoned us – He hasn’t put us here and said, “Figure it out for yourself--You’re on your own”- *He hasn’t left us without sure help and sure guidance in our lives*

My friends, having been given the Holy Spirit the Apostles had to go out and proclaim the truth that came from God

In the same way you and I have received the Spirit in our baptism and in our Confirmation [every Mass we’re commissioned to go out…]

# And like the Apostles *we need to live by the Spirit*

Our 2nd reading today (Galatians 5:16-25) makes that clear

St Paul makes it clear that we need to live in the Spirit – and that if we’re not living by the Spirit- *if we are living in certain sins*--- He says, “**I warn you as I have warned you before, those who do such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God**.”

Paul there is talking about what we call Mortal sin – sin that destroys our relationship with the Lord – sin that cuts us off from God’s saving grace

He says when we’re living in the Spirit we will live with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness **and self- control**

*He’s saying that with the Spirit we can be holy----* that we need to be avoid sin if we’re living under the Spirit

I don’t want to dwell on this- but the idea of mortal sin is the teaching of the bible – to enter into mortal sin is a rejection of the power of the Spirit in our world and in our lives

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There are many people today who believe that we can’t know what’s right and what’s wrong – that we can’t know what God expects of us and what God forbids us to do --- there are many who believe those are purely subjective decisions that we have to decide for ourselves

But the bible is clear – *that God has expectations of us* – He tells us right from wrong --- and we have a choice to live in the Spirit or to live outside of God’s grace

Jesus makes a promise in today’s Gospel that we as Catholics believe He kept

Jesus says there is much more they need to know but they can’t bear it yet- and He says He will send the Spirit to lead them to all truth

*I want to point out* [**this is so important**]that this is a promise *that is only made to the Apostles* – **it’s not to the crowd**

He’s not saying every individual will have the sure guidance of the Holy Spirit when they personally have questions about what’s right and what’s wrong- what God wants and what God forbids

*This is a promise to the Church itself* – that when the Apostles *or their successors* join together to decide a doctrinal or moral issue – that the Holy Spirit will guide them ***so that we can know the truth with absolute surety***

No gray – no maybe this maybe that – no uncertainty as to what He wants

## And again my friends, there are many people who don’t believe that

There are many who feel that Jesus abandoned us – that He doesn’t give us sure guidance – that He basically says to us, “Figure it out for yourselves”

*But the bible is clear* – **we’re not alone** – He hasn’t abandoned us – *He has sent the Holy Spirit so that we can know the truth* ---**Truth that will set us free**

And that truth comes to us in the sure teaching of the Catholic Church [catechism of the Church—*to know for sure the doctrines of the faith* **and the moral teachings of God**]

Unlike those times when I was a little kid and was lost – when I didn’t know where to turn or where to go

When it comes to our faith – *we don’t need to be lost* [a lot of people are..]

We have Jesus’ Word on it

He is with us – the Holy Spirit is with us – We can know what He’s revealed – how He wants us to live – what is right in His sight and what is wrong in His sight

So many people today are hurting –are confused---are just lost because they don’t believe Jesus kept His promise---so they’re wandering in the darkness—[*they’re following their feelings instead of the truth that would set them free*]

Let’s open our hearts to His Holy Spirit and live according to the Spirit now and all the days of our lives