

Year 10 Mass

(The Holy Spirit)

On the death of some well-known personality we are impressed when we see on the telly or hear on the Radio a speech they once gave while still alive. It gives us a rather strange sensation to listen to them from beyond the grave as it were. The person may be dead but their words are still alive.

Well, it's the Holy Spirit who brings alive the words which Jesus said twenty centuries ago and make them relevant for us in the here and now. The Spirit brings the past into the full light of the present. At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came on the apostles in the form of a mighty wind. Also on the first Easter Sunday evening the risen Jesus appeared to the apostles and breathed on them saying 'receive the Holy Spirit'. We often use the same language when things get a bit boring in our lives whether it be at home, school or even church. We get tired of the same old routine. We say: 'what is needed here is for someone to breathe new life into this or that situation'.

This breath of the Holy Spirit will keep our spiritual lives from seizing up as well. A re-awakening is called for so that we can hear the voice of the Lord speaking to us as a year 10 student and experience his almost tangible closeness. The age old gospel comes to life and we are prompted to live it more radically. Being sorry for our sins goes without saying if we are to experience the Holy Spirit in all its fullness. We keep the Holy Spirit especially at bay if we are conceited or envious, as we heard from today's reading.

Some churches think they have a monopoly of the Holy Spirit just because they swing and swoon a bit more in church, at the same time working themselves up into a kind of 'happy clappy' emotionalism. This can more often than not masquerade the presence of the Holy Spirit. A true sign of the presence of the Spirit is when we feel close to Jesus in our ordinary everyday

lives. He becomes a real living person who loves me and guides me through each day. We also enjoy talking to God more in prayer. We are no longer just 'saying prayers' or talking to ourselves. Our hearts are more into what we say to God.

Without the Holy Spirit, however, God is far away. Christ stays in the past as a mere historical figure. The Gospel comes across as a dead letter with little or no relevance for me in the here and now. The Catholic Church is just another institution among many, going through the motions. The Mass is dull and boring. Morality is a slavish adherence to rules rather than setting me free to love everyone both friend and foe alike as Jesus loves me.

If any of this rings true for us, then a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit can help re-ignite my faith in Jesus as a real living person. So, let us pray: 'Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your divine love. Renew the face of the Earth'.