

Dear Friends,

Pentecost, the fiftieth day after Easter, marks the start of the universal mission of the Church – a mission that overcomes human obstacles and has the Spirit as its driving force. In a recent homily in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthe, Pope Francis spoke of the force of the Spirit in the life of a Christian if the Christian is open to them Spirit. He said:

“Never speak, act or make a decision without first listening to the Holy Spirit, who moves, troubles and inspires the heart. A cold and calculating heart that is closed to the Holy Spirit results in a faith that is ‘ideological.’ Knowing God and his commandments, and being good are not enough. One must also receive God's gift of the Holy Spirit and let him ‘trouble’ the heart.”

“If people were to get a ‘spiritual electrocardiogram,’” he asked, “would it be flat lined because the heart is hardened, unmoved and emotionless or would it be pulsating with the prompting and prods of the Spirit? Am I able to listen him?” he went on to ask. “Am I able to ask for his inspiration before making a decision or saying something or doing something? Or is my heart serene, without emotion, an immobile heart, much like the doctors of the law had.”

"They believed in God, they knew all the commandments, but the heart was closed, immobile, they didn't let it become troubled. A Christian cannot just listen to their head and calculated reason. They must learn to listen and discern what the Holy Spirit is saying to their hearts, too, because the Holy Spirit is the master of discernment."

As he concluded his homily, Pope Francis asked people to reflect on their relationship with the Holy Spirit and pray that the Spirit guide them in the choices they make. As we celebrate Pentecost, the feast of the Holy Spirit, let us discern anew the Spirit's presence in our own lives, praying

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful,
and reignite in us the fire of your Love!
Make us joyful witnesses to your presence in our lives and in the Church!
Lord, send us your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth...
Amen.*

Peace and blessings,
Father John