

Pentecost – Homily – 05/31/2020

We heard in the first reading today, “When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together.”

We also heard another very important detail in the today’s gospel as to why the disciples of Jesus were all huddled together in one place. They were hiding behind locked doors for fear of the Jews – they were afraid.

From the time of the ascension of our Lord to the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost the disciples of Jesus were scared.

I think this is pretty understandable. They had given up everything to follow Jesus and then he was arrested, crucified and died. He did rise on the third day and began appearing to them but then he left them again at the Ascension.

These had to be pretty stressful times for Jesus’ followers.

But it all changed after Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descended upon them and they were immediately transformed into courageous soldiers of Christ.

And they proclaimed the gospel in spite of all the adversity they met. They ultimately sacrificed their lives to make the message of salvation known to people they had never even met before – people like you and me.

But it didn't happen until after Pentecost. The Holy Spirit descended upon them and they were immediately transformed into courageous soldiers of Christ.

No doubt we live in stressful times. But what generation hasn't had its share of stress?

All the death of World War I and then the continued pandemic of the Spanish Flu followed shortly thereafter by the great depression and then World War II...Korea, Vietnam, several wars in the Middle East, you name it our brothers and sisters have seen it and beat it.

Today we cannot cower in fear. I'm not saying that we throw all caution to the wind. Of course we need to take precautions and depending on our age and any underlying conditions we may even have to take extreme measures.

I'm not here to shame anyone. We all have to assess the risk and make our own decisions and then live with them.

But we still have future generations – children, grandchildren and great grandchildren – some that we have never even met – who are counting on us to be brave soldiers of Christ.

We can't be the ones to allow thousands of years of sacrifice to be lost in just a few months.

We have been baptized into Christ and at our confirmation we received the power of the Holy Spirit from on high to face anything that may come our way.

Nobody said it was going to be easy. I hate it as much as anyone. I have to pray against natural fear just like any normal person. I've never been naturally disposed to bravery.

But when I see a baby, I have to ask myself – is he not worth risking my life for? Is that little girl not worth maybe even dying for?

Because if we do it with Christ and for Christ then we will live forever and so will many more of those future generations who will look back and say they didn't give up – they believed in me, they believed in Jesus.

I'm reminded of the term used to describe those Americans who grew up during the Great Depression, fought in World War II, or whose labor helped win it - The Greatest Generation

Whether that term is really applicable to that generation alone I would argue that we have had many great generations.

Regardless, what's most important right now for us is not how history will look back upon us and judge us but how God, having bestowed upon us all the power of the Holy Spirit, will look upon us at our final judgment.