



The Feast of Pentecost:

By Bro. David Betz

During my time as a coordinator of Christian Initiation of Adults, whenever the Feast of Pentecost was the topic of the formation session, I would tell the candidates that we are people of the Spirit. It is the action of the Holy Spirit that enables us to believe in Jesus and his Paschal Mystery. The Spirit gives us the ability to have this faith since we are not the first generation of Christian believers such as the apostles and the early disciples of Jesus. It is the Spirit that allows us to be the descendants of this apostolic tradition. Our call is to be open to the Holy Spirit so that we can be as bold as the apostles in sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. And as members of the Family of Mary instilled by our Blessed Founders, this sharing of the Good News is demonstrated by proclaiming Jesus Christ, Son of God, become Son of Mary for the salvation of all.

So let us hear from one of our Founders, Blessed Adèle, as she reflects on the Holy Spirit at Pentecost in a letter she wrote to Agathe Diché on June 4, 1805. At this point of her young life, she was writing to other young women who were part of the Association or “Little Society”: a network of young women that she spearheaded after the French Revolution. Its purpose was to provide mutual encouragement and spiritual support among its members and to do various works to aid in the rechristianization of the people where they lived. Because they lived in different areas around Agen and the countryside, writing letters was a primary means to assist them in their endeavors.

“The divine Spirit, who descended on the apostles and who will descend upon us if our hearts are rightly disposed, is a spirit of light. We must beg this light to shine upon our path, our undertakings, and our actions. We need it all the more because we are so young. We need it to enlighten us as to the state which we are called. For this state, the Spirit has prepared special graces which would not be present in some other state not indicated for us.

Let us leave everything up to a Spirit who knows better than we do what is for our good. We must let ourselves be led by such an able guide and submit to the Spirit all our desires and plans. If we have a certain calling in mind, let us not think of it or speak about it, so that no human and natural motivation may give us a spurious penchant for that state.

When we are a little older, then we can examine our tastes, our inclinations, and the motives which could make us choose one vocation rather than another. But we will have to consult the Holy Spirit and the spiritual guide who has charge of our soul's progress; through the Spirit, God will make known his will.

Meanwhile, let us be satisfied with imploring the counsel of the Holy Spirit. Until God has placed us definitively in a given state, or we have definitively chosen the one in which we are presently engaged. I propose that we say daily the following prayer: "Come, divine Spirit, shower your divine light upon us and inflame our hearts with your holy love." Given our present circumstances, we shall probably continue saying this prayer for several years. So what? Let us be faithful to the practice and say the prayer with fervor. God, infinite goodness, will grant us the favor if we ask in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, for Jesus himself said, "everything you ask of the Father in my name will be granted to you." This is why we must conclude our prayer with 'through our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.'" (See Letters of Adèle de Batz de Trenquelléon, Ed. by Joseph Stefanelli, SM, Monograph Series-Document No. 41, Volume One-1999, North American Center for Marianist Studies, Dayton, OH, 1999, Letter #10, pp. 14 - 16.)