

Pope Francis: The work of the Holy Spirit – newness, harmony, and mission - From Webpage of FLL

In the Mass for the Feast of the Pentecost, Pope Francis reflected on three words linked to the working of the Holy Spirit: newness, harmony and mission.

1. Newness always makes us a bit fearful, because we feel more secure if we have everything under control, if we are the ones who build, program and plan our lives in accordance with our own ideas, our own comfort, our own preferences. This is also the case when it comes to God. Often we follow him, we accept him, but only up to a certain point. It is hard to abandon ourselves to him with complete trust, allowing the Holy Spirit to be the soul and guide of our lives in our every decision. We fear that God may force us to strike out on new paths and leave behind our all too narrow, closed and selfish horizons in order to become open to his own. Yet throughout the history of salvation, whenever God reveals himself, he brings newness and change, and demands our complete trust: Noah, mocked by all, builds an ark and is saved; Abram leaves his land with only a promise in hand; Moses stands up to the might of Pharaoh and leads his people to freedom; the apostles, huddled fearfully in the Upper Room, go forth with courage to proclaim the Gospel. This is not a question of novelty for novelty's sake, the search for something new to relieve our boredom, as is so often the case in our own day. The newness which God brings into our life is something that actually brings fulfillment, that gives true joy, true serenity, because God loves us and desires only our good. Let us ask ourselves: Are we open to "God's surprises"? Or are we closed and fearful before the newness of the Holy Spirit? Do we have the courage to strike out along the new paths which God's newness sets before us, or do we resist, barricaded in transient structures which have lost their capacity for openness to what is new?

2. A second thought: the Holy Spirit would appear to create disorder in the Church, since he brings the diversity of charisma and gifts; yet all this, by his working, is a great source of wealth, for the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of unity, which does not mean uniformity, but which leads everything back to

harmony. In the Church, it is the Holy Spirit who creates harmony. Only the Spirit can awaken diversity, plurality and multiplicity, while at the same time building unity. Here too, when we are the ones who try to create diversity and close ourselves up in what makes us different and other, we bring division. When we are the ones who want to build unity in accordance with our human plans, we end up creating uniformity, standardization. But if instead we let ourselves be guided by the Spirit, richness, variety and diversity never become a source of conflict, because he impels us to experience variety within the communion of the Church. Journeying together in the Church, under the guidance of her pastors who possess a special charisma and ministry, is a sign of the working of the Holy Spirit.

3. A final point. The older theologians used to say that the soul is a kind of sailboat, the Holy Spirit is the wind which fills its sails and drives it forward, and the gusts of wind are the gifts of the Spirit. Lacking his impulse and his grace, we do not go forward. The Holy Spirit draws us into the mystery of the living God and saves us from the threat of a Church which is gnostic and self-referential, closed in on herself; he impels us to open the doors and go forth to proclaim and bear witness to the good news of the Gospel, to communicate the joy of faith, the encounter with Christ. The Holy Spirit is the soul of mission. The events that took place in Jerusalem almost two thousand years ago are not something far removed from us; they are events which affect us and become a lived experience in each of us. The Pentecost of the Upper Room in Jerusalem is the beginning, a beginning which endures. The Holy Spirit is the supreme gift of the risen Christ to his apostles, yet he wants that gift to reach everyone. As we heard in the Gospel, Jesus says: "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to remain with you forever" (Jn 14:16). It is the Paraclete Spirit, the "Comforter", who grants us the courage to take to the streets of the world, bringing the Gospel! The Holy Spirit make us look to the horizon and drive us to the very outskirts of existence in order to proclaim life in Jesus Christ. Let us ask ourselves: do we tend to stay closed in on ourselves, on our group, or do we let the Holy Spirit open us to mission?

Pilgrimage with Christians - Yang

Recently I was invited to a pilgrimage in Turkey with about 70 Christians. My Catholic friends reminded me that traveling with people of different faith traditions could be uneasy but I didn't let this affect my decision. Living in a multi-culture and multi-religion environment of the 21st century I have come to understand the significance of Christ's prayer before His Passion: "that all may be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you; I pray that they may all be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me" (Jn 17:21).

St. Athanasius of Alexandria (293-373) depicted the image of this oneness in Christ's outstretched arms on the cross: with one arm He might draw His ancient people and the other, the gentiles and hold both together in Himself, as He had promised: "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself." (Jn 12:32)

Therefore the division among the Christians is against Christ's will and hurts the precious cause of evangelization. How can we evangelize the Gospel of reconciling with God without being committed to the reconciliation among ourselves? But how to restore this unity and who should do it? Pope Francis teaches us to come out of ourselves - to reach out to others, taking the first step towards our brothers and sisters."

Thus I signed up for this pilgrimage of "Following St. Paul's Footsteps", designed to visit the sites on the routes of St. Paul's first and second missionary journeys in Turkey from 47 to 50 A.D. I learned a lot during the 15 days in terms of ecumenism. I was inspired by my fellow Christians' strong faith and evangelical zeal. Whenever we arrived at a site, we would read the Bible and pray together in front of the onlookers. We were not ashamed of Jesus; we were not ashamed of the Gospel. I also found some evangelical teachings resonate with that of the Church Magisterium, such as on the Trinitarian God and the human, divine natures of Jesus.

However there were times when differences did surface which obviously resulted from the century-old prejudices, indifference and lack of knowledge that have clouded the truth in our faith. However this also posted an opportunity for re-evangelization among the Christians which I would regard as a "Catholic moment" that takes place when chaos and turmoil start to test one's faith, knowledge,

courage and the capacity of heart. But I also realized that the thorough Church teaching has sufficiently prepared her children for this.

On the 4-hour ferry to the Patmos Island where St. John wrote the Revelation, I was humbled and privileged to introduce to my fellow pilgrims the Church teaching on the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, her Immaculate Conception and Assumption. "We all love Jesus," I said, "But it seems that we Catholics love more -- we love His whole family: Joseph, Mary, saints and angels."

Being the only Catholic on the pilgrimage I didn't make any enemies, but acquired many friends who are happy to see that the Catholics are not only theologically sound but also living a healthy, optimistic life of faith. With Jesus praying for us we can rebuild and restore the oneness in love and unity as long as we truly embrace His commands: "Love God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself"(Lk 10:27). As our Pastor Fr. Ray pointed out in Sunday's homily, how many times we overlooked the second command of the Great Commandments: love your neighbors! Taking the good Samaritan as our role model, we shall open ourselves to the Lord to let Him create a clean, loving heart towards our Christian brothers and sisters. We wouldn't grumble even if being prejudiced against, because the living presence of Christ in our ecumenical outreach is worth all the struggles and strife.

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教宗: 聖神的工作 - 更新、和諧和使命 - 轉載生命恩泉網頁

教宗在五旬節主日的彌撒講道中用以下三方面反省聖神的工作：更新、和諧和使命。

1. 新的事物總是令我們有些擔心，如果我們能控制一切，我們根據我們的喜好和意念，去建立、策劃一切，我們會比較有安全感。我們跟隨天主，接受天主，只去到一個程度。我們很難把自己以完全的信賴交托給天主，讓聖神指引我們生活中的每一個決定。我們害怕天主強迫我們走新的路，要我們放棄我們狹窄、封閉的視野而對祂開放。但在救恩史中，天主每逢顯示給人，就要他們改變，完全的相信祂：諾厄要建方舟，被人恥笑；亞巴郎要因為一個承諾而離開自己的地方；梅瑟抵抗法郎領自己的民族出埃及；宗徒們由害怕到勇敢的傳福音。這不是為求新而求新，或去找尋新的東西令我們不沉悶。天主的更新帶給我們生命真正的喜樂，真正的平安，因為天主愛我們，只想我們好。讓我們問自己，我們害怕天主的驚喜嗎？

2. 聖神因為帶來多元化的神恩，有時看來為教會製造混亂；但祂是合一的神，不等於單調和一元的，而把一切領到和諧。在教會，聖神製造和諧。只有聖神能在激起多樣化的神恩，而又帶來團結。當人們嘗試製造多元價值，帶來的是分裂。當我們根據人的計劃去製造團結，帶來的卻是有如被複製般的劃一。但如果我們讓聖神帶領，大家的不同卻不會變成紛爭，因為祂令我們在教會的共融體驗大家的不同。在充滿神恩的牧者的帶領下與教會一同走在旅途上，是聖神在工作的標記。

3. 最後，一些神學家說我們的靈魂就像一艘帆船，聖神就是風，令它向前，那陣陣的風是聖神的恩賜。沒有祂的推動和恩寵，我們不能前進。五旬節聖神降臨是一個開始。聖神是復活基督賜給宗徒一份極大的禮物，但祂想這禮物能傳給每一個人。耶穌在福音說：「我也要求父，他必會賜給你們另一位護慰者，使他永遠與你們同在」（若望福音 14:16）。聖神給我們勇氣把福音向外傳揚！讓我們問自己：我們寧願封閉自己和我們的團體，還是向聖神開放，接受這份使命？

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天主經的反思(上)

孫耀華

以下是我從天主經得來的啓示和一些反省題目：

“我們的天父”

“我們的天父”不是“我的天父”。從“我的”變做“我們的”，不單是耶穌其中一個反傳統，超時代（radical）的啓示，而且是從部落文化跳躍到世界大同的蛻變。如果能夠凡事把“我的”變成“我們的”，人同人，家同家，國同國，就有了一個共同的修和基礎。

想想：如果今日中東的兩大回教教派，以色列人和巴勒斯坦人，非州各部族，甚至各個宗教教派，能夠把“我的”利益，“我的”信仰擴大到“我們的”利益，“我們的”信仰，世界還再會有紛爭戰亂嗎？

如果各個國家能夠把頭上一片天看做全體人類的氣候，地球污染，全球暖化的效應或者可以馬上延緩。

如果夫妻能夠把“我的”感受，“我的”需要，轉變成“我們的”感受，“我們的”需要，婚姻關係一定能夠變成如魚得水，正如聖經上講的“二人成爲一體”。

當我們一稱創造者爲“父”，我們便無形中承認所有稱呼天父的人都成了主內的兄弟姊妹。無論種族、文化、階級、年紀、學問、財富、教派、性別.....等等先天或後天的不同，因爲這關係的轉變，已不再是把人隔離，甚至分化人的理由。

反省：什麼阻礙我們從“我”跳躍到“我們”這個意識？（財產？安全感？偏見？無知？家族主義？國家民族的觀念？排他的宗教觀？狹窄的個人主義？利益？）

"願祢的名爲聖"

什麼是“聖”？天主的名字是什麼？所有超越凡俗的，忘我的，利他的，崇高的，理想的，長遠的，公義的，慈悲的，真的，善良的，美麗的（音樂，藝術，詩歌），平安的，這些高貴的品質都是神聖的，都是天主的名號。我們受造物好像是盲人摸象，沒有辦法用一個名字去形容這個博大精深的天主，但我們可以從萬事萬物中，從人類和宇宙的歷史中，看到神自己向我們顯露的本質(self-revelation)。

天主的召叫(聖召)就是要我們在不同崗位上去“成聖”自己。梵二大公會議之前叫這個使命做“救自己的靈魂”。我自己很喜歡神修大師湯神父 Thomas Merton 對神聖的解釋：

Sanctity is a matter of being more human: this implies a greater capacity for concern, for suffering, for understanding, for sympathy, and also for humor, for joy, for appreciation for the good and beautiful things of life.

我嘗試翻譯如下：

成聖即是多一點人性：隨即而來的是對人對事要多一點關懷、對痛苦多一點接受、多一點體諒和多一點同情、多些幽默、多些喜樂、對世上美好的東西多一點欣賞。

這個演繹把“神聖”和“凡俗”合而爲一。成聖也不一定要拋頭顱，灑熱血，而是活出對所有生物的尊重、關懷和保育。

反省：我們如何能夠在“凡俗”的生活中活出神聖的一面？怎樣用平凡的生活來榮神益人？

"願祢的國來臨"

希望自己和其他人（1）明白和（2）接受上述超凡入世的價值就是天主的國度。

耶穌在福音多次說，天國已經臨在了。其實在二千年前我國已經有“人間天堂”這些理想。（見禮運大同篇的“天下爲公，世界大同”的理想國）天主經不過是重申宣認我們追求一個人間天堂的決心和表示我們的渴求。

期望是有點被動的。如果沒有人把天國的理想建立在我們的社群中間，天國不會自動來臨，所以唸這句時我們要勉勵自己向這個尚未成功的革命繼續努力！

反省：自由、平等、博愛，這三個法國大革命的口號，在今日各個政權落實了多少？什麼叫做屬於福音精神的政治取向？



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