

Homily for Pentecost Sunday
65th Anniversary of Our Lady Queen of Peace

Introduction

Each Sunday when we proclaim our Profession of Faith, we say: "We believe in the Holy Spirit...the Giver of Life". We also know the Spirit as "vivifier", "energizer". Also, in our traditional prayer to the Holy Spirit we have begged her: "come fill the hearts of your faithful; rekindle in us the fire of your love; send forth your Spirit and we shall be created."

I

What we celebrate today are examples of this life-giving Spirit at work, and a towering answer to that prayer "fill the hearts of your faithful rekindle in us the fire of your love".

II

We celebrate 65 years of a wonderful parish community; begun by a courageous group of Afro-Americans (represented here today by Mrs. Thadenea West), guided from the beginning by members of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit who have been steeped in the theology, and spirituality, and pastoral sensitivity that is the Holy Spirit, the Creator-Spirit.

So much of what Our Lady Queen of Peace has become is thanks to those pastors who have so faithfully served this community.

III

So our overriding sentiment today has to be one of gratitude, of thanks giving; to the Holy Spirit for her [so often feminine qualities are ascribed to the Third Person of the Trinity] guidance and inspiration to you, the members of this parish and those who have gone to God before us and to the Congregation of the Holy Spirit for gifting us with such remarkable pastors.

IV

Another part of that traditional prayer to the Holy Spirit, as you know, says: "Send forth your Spirit and you will renew the face of the earth". The story, the task, the destiny of Our Lady Queen of Peace continues; it is not yet finished; it is a work in progress. We are called by the Spirit to "renew the face of the earth":

- by continuing to grapple with our own internal divisions
- by continuing to welcome newcomers with open arms
- by continuing to understand that Our Lady Queen of Peace is not here for ourselves

by continuing, therefore, to build a society of freedom, mercy, unity, dignity, justice, peace and love within this parish community and beyond it.

Conclusion

But today, we celebrate, we give thanks.

And so, perhaps the most appropriate way to conclude these few remarks on this special occasion is to ask our music ministers to lead us in a hymn which they often sing:

"Surely the Spirit of God is in This Place".