

## ***What Are We Doing and Why?***

*Ask, as you have already received! – Pentecost and Prayer for the Holy Spirit*

I **will** get back to the Liturgy of the Word as begun two weeks ago, and promised last week. But as happened before in this series of reflections, a different topic has told me it wants to be considered next! The ‘intruding’ topic this time is our prayer for the Holy Spirit, when that Spirit has already long been with us (and note, our prayer is not *to* the Holy Spirit; all Christian prayer is addressed *to* the Father, *in the name of Jesus, in the power of* the Holy Spirit). Our very creation is accomplished by the creative Spirit being breathed into us by God: *the LORD God formed man out of the clay of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life (Genesis 2:7)*; our re-creation is accomplished in Baptism and Confirmation when we receive the Spirit of Christ: *...by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life (Rite of Baptism at Easter Vigil)*; and in every celebration of Eucharist we share Communion with Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit: *Let your Spirit come upon these gifts of bread and wine to make them holy! (Eucharistic prayer)*. So, with such fullness of the Holy Spirit already within us, what are we doing and why when we sing and pray at Pentecost *Come, Holy Spirit!* Are we not praying here for what is already a done deal? There are two things to clarify here. The first is that the actual prayers of the Mass for Pentecost don’t pray that the Spirit be *sent*; rather, they speak of the Spirit already sent and with us: e.g. *...let the Spirit you sent on your Church...continue to work through the hearts of all who believe, and keep within us the vigor of your Spirit, and the Father has enlightened the minds of the disciples by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit...may that fire burn out all evil from your hearts and make them glow with pure light...may he strengthen your faith*. The second is how these prayers ask that the full fruit or effect of the Spirit be realized and expressed in our lives. Our common way of thinking and praying does make it sound like we need the Spirit to come, but the prayer of the Liturgy itself starts with the proclamation of the Spirit *already* given, and prays for that gift to have its full effect in our lives. So, what needs to happen is not for God to send the Spirit. Again, that is already a done deal. What needs to happen is for us to open more fully, freely, and fruitfully to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit already fully within and among us. The Spirit doesn’t need to show up and get active, we do!

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about. Contact our Council for Catechesis at [tkautza@saintmaryhc.org](mailto:tkautza@saintmaryhc.org)