



Your comments are welcome!

FMUmission@aol.com

135 West 31st New York, New York 10001

www.hnp.org/fmu

1-888-372-6478

Dear Friend of the Missions,

With June we come to the end of spring and the beginning of summer. The Church Year is filled with feasts and festivals: Pentecost Sunday is June 5. The Feast of the Holy Trinity is June 12, and the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of the Lord is June 19 (which is also Fathers' Day). Friday, June 24, is the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, and the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary is June 25. We, Franciscans, celebrate the Solemnity of St. Anthony on June 13. The Solemnity of St. John the Baptist is June 24 and the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul, the patrons of the Church of Rome, is on June 29. Pray especially for Pope Benedict during this month, for all our fathers, grandfathers, godfathers, and stepfathers--those who are living and those that have died. We continue to pray for peace in our world, and, as we keep St Anthony's Feast, pray for those who are hungry, that bread and other food may come to the poor. Thank you for your generous support of our missions, your prayers and generosity make a big difference. Be assured of our prayers. If you can, you might want to check out the monthly meditation on line; Brother Octavio lays them out with beautiful pictures. Enjoy the summer!



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Pentecost: inflamed with intense love

By Fr. Russell Becker, OFM

Thus says the Lord: I will pour out my spirit upon all of humanity. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old shall dream dreams, your young shall see visions; even upon the servants and handmaids, in those days, I will pour out my spirit. And I will work wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood, fire and columns of smoke ...then everyone shall be rescued who calls upon the name of the Lord. (Joel 3:1-5).



Pentecost brings the Easter Season to a close, but we have to remember that every ending is a new beginning. It identifies the time in which we live: the time of the Spirit. Jesus promised his disciples that he would send them an Advocate who would remind them of all that he had said and done. This Spirit would empower them to do works that would be far greater than his. It is through the power of the Spirit that the disciples took up the mission which Jesus began. Now the Good News would be preached to the ends of the earth.

For us, the Spirit is a Spirit of Possibilities. We are given the power to break out of the ordinary and become extraordinary men and women who are empowered to carry on the mission which we have received from the apostles. By the power of the Holy Spirit,

God awakens in us the prophet and the mystic. We become people of action and people of vision

People of Action: "The glory of God is humanity fully alive." (St. Ireneus).

The prophecy of Joel promised that the sons and daughters of Israel would prophesy. Prophecy does not mean looking into the future, it means acting in the present. The prophets were people who were alive to their times. The joys and sorrows, the successes and failures, the moments of faithfulness and the moments of sinfulness of the people were the center of the prophets' lives. They were sensitive to injustice, and heard the cries of the poor. They were outraged by the people's sin, and pained by the people's suffering. Into this situation they announced the good news of salvation and actively worked to change their world.

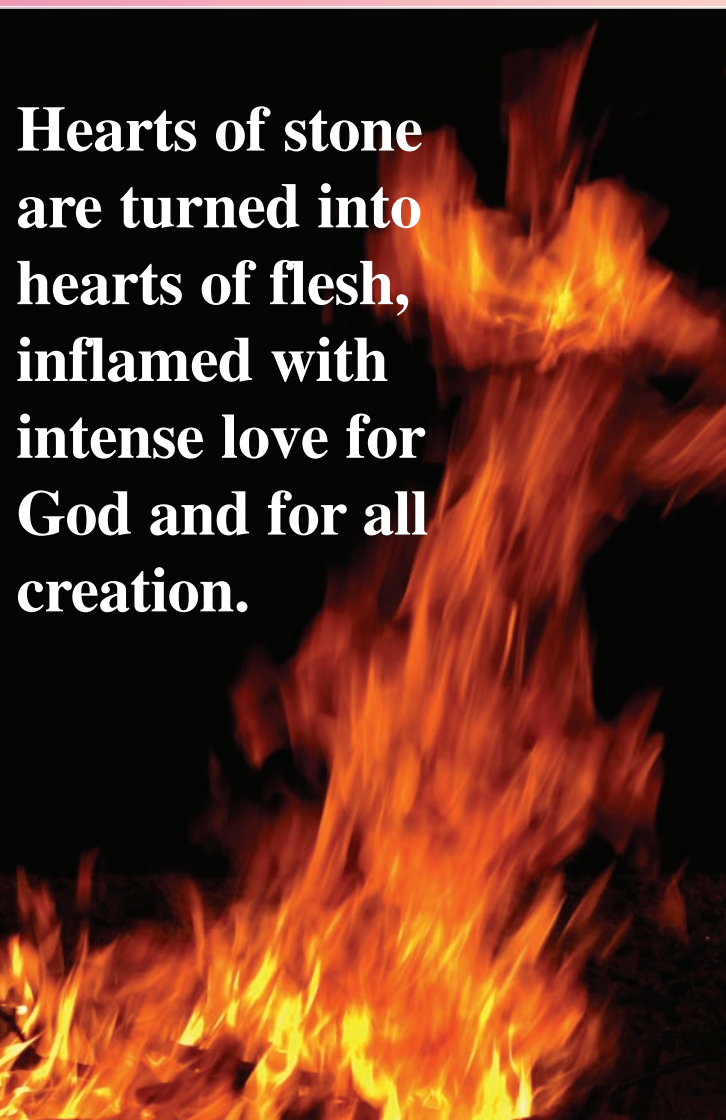


The Spirit awakens the prophet in us so that we might carry on that mission which Jesus left us. The Spirit is a spirit of fortitude and courage which empowers us to act in our world to help establish God's reign; a reign of justice, holiness and truth. Prompted by the Spirit, the early Church took on the task of creating the new heavens and the new earth. They have done their part, it is our turn to do ours. We are called to be the prophets of this age. On that first Pentecost, it is not mistake that the Spirit drove the apostles out of the upper room and into the streets to preach and carry on the mission. Hopefully the Spirit will be able to do the same for us

People of Vision: "The glory of humanity is the vision of God." (St Ireneus)

No action is possible without a vision. The prophet Joel gave hope to the people by promising that dreams would be dreamed and visions would be seen. The people had been brought low by their own unfaithfulness. Exiled and persecuted, they had no hope. It was as if they were dead. But the Spirit brings new life. Hearts of stone are turned into hearts of flesh, inflamed with intense love for God and for all creation. The Spirit illuminates our hearts and





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gives us clear vision to see things as they really are. We should be men and women who can see divine life present and active in our world and in our brothers and sisters.

This divine life is a thread which holds all things together. In the Spirit, communion is restored not only between God and us but among all creation. It is the Spirit who helps us to pray, and in prayer we are more closely united to God and to one another. This is the vision of the mystic, a

vision offered to us all by the Holy Spirit.

The glory of God is humanity fully alive; the glory of humanity is the vision of God. Alive to our vocation, blessed with a vision, we take up where our ancestors in the faith have left off. Let us ask once again that the Spirit come so that we may be able to prophesy, dream dreams and see visions.

Come, true light. Come, life eternal. Come, hidden mystery. Come, person beyond all understanding. Come, rejoicing without end. Come, light that knows no evening. Come, unfailing expectation of the saved. Come, raising of the fallen. Come, all powerful, for you unceasingly create, refashion and change all things by your will alone. Come, for your name fills our hearts with longing and is ever on our lips. Come, my breath and my life. Come, my joy, my glory, my endless delight. (St. Symeon the New Theologian).

For Reflection

1. How does the Spirit touch your life? Do you pray for the gifts?
2. Does your life in the Spirit include works of mercy and compassion?
3. How can you share in the mission of the Church?

**Please pray
for our missionary friars
on their birthdays:**

June 02: Archbishop Roberto, O.F.M. (Puerto Rico)

June 16: Fr. Paul Williams, O.F.M. (Southern U.S.)

June 21: Archbishop Luis Sainz, O.F.M. (Bolivia)

June 23: Br. Emerson Rodriguez, Delgado, O.F.M. (Peru)

June 29: Br. Daniel Murray, O.F.M. (Peru)

*Please also pray for our missionaries and
former missionary friars who are ill:*

Fr. Champion Lally, O.F.M. (Japan)

Fr. Clement Healy, O.F.M. (Jamaica)

Fr. Thomas Fox, O.F.M. (Brazil)

Fr. Finian Riley, O.F.M. (Africa)

May the Spirit fill them with blessings, energy and peace!

Photos by Octavio Duran, OFM

