



There should be some sort of outreaching by all of us that others will glorify God and come to know Christ not only by seeing us as persons, but by whatever means or instrumentalities are at our disposal. We are to witness by who we are, by what we say, and also by our suffering. This is where the word martyr is so critical. We are

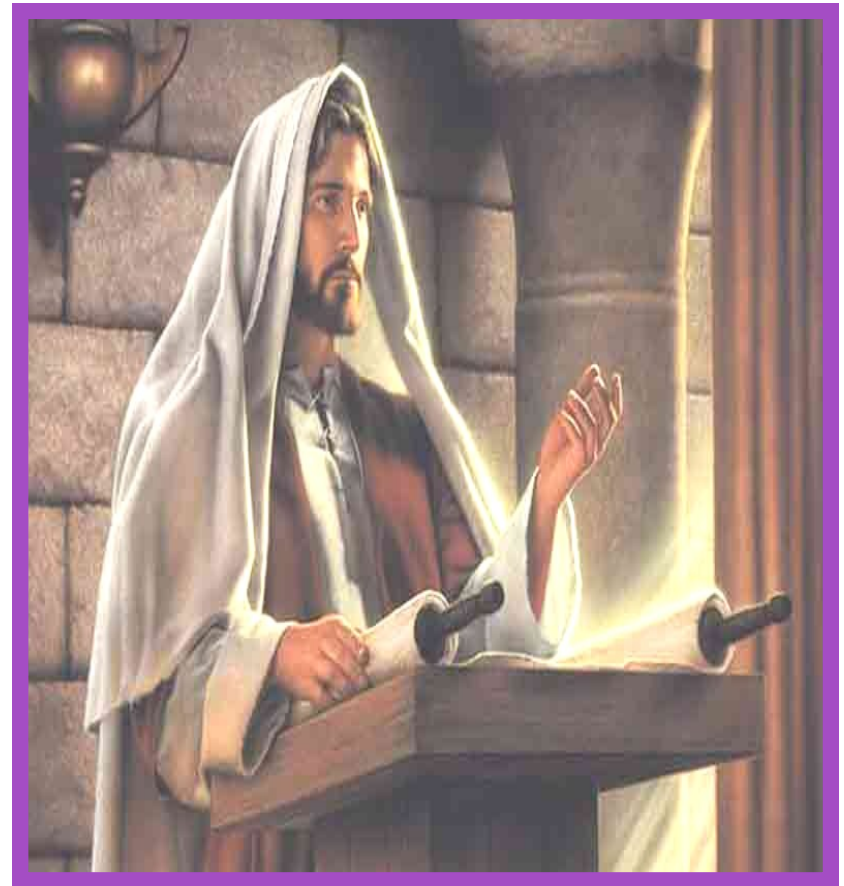
expected to suffer for our faith if we wish to witness to Christ. The graces are there. By prior definition, such a gift benefits the one to whom it is given only if he appropriates and uses it. The problem with most of us is not that we don't have enough graces or gifts- though God knows we always need more- the real problem is to put to use the graces we have already been given. What good are all the treasures of heaven which Christ has conferred on us-His most beloved children and people of God-unless we use them? Here lies the difference between those who are good Christians but re-main until death in mediocrity and those who strive for, and reach, sanctity. It is up to us! And, strange as it may seem, when God sees we appreciate the grace we have by using it, He gives us more. This is the secret of holiness-using the gifts that God gives in order that, having received, we may glorify the Giver.

Father Hardon, a noted theologian, is the author of *The Catholic Catechism* and *The Catholic Family in the Modern World*.



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S E R M O N O N
THE HOLY SPIRIT AS POWER
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH
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JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!

PENTECOST SUNDAY
(WHITSUNTIDE)

THE HOLY SPIRIT AS POWER **by Fr. John A. Hardon, S.J.**

We speak of the Holy Spirit in many different ways: as Love, as Gift, as the Paraclete, as the Advocate. All of these titles are biblical and identify some of the pro-found attributes of the Spirit promised by Christ before his Ascension into Heaven. But there is one that we especially need to recognize today and that is the Spirit as Power. What does this Spirit as Power really mean? Let us analyze it in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which pertain to the will. Piety as a gift of the Holy Spirit aids and supplements the virtue of justice. This gift corresponds to the virtue of justice, making us prompt to act by disposing us to show reverence for God as a most loving Father and for all human beings as children of God. Consequently, this virtue of piety corresponds to the instinct we have and the virtue we should practice toward our natural parents, and the respect and reverence for God precisely as the Creator. This gift of piety, raised to the supernatural order, inclines us to not only worship God but to honor His children who are related to us by grace. It inclines us to consider others not as competitors in the struggle of life, but coequals under God, our common Maker, regarding them as our brothers and sisters through the saving merits of Christ's Passion. Fortitude as a gift perfects the virtue of fortitude. It adds to the virtue of courage the important commodity of enabling us to carry to successful conclusion the most difficult tasks that are undertaken in the service of God. There are two forms of courage implied in this gift of fortitude: the gift to undertake arduous tasks and the gift to endure long and trying difficulties for the divine glory. A commendable type of courage anticipates grave obstacles while undertaking a course of action or a state of life or a new venture in the spiritual life or any apostolate, but the obstacles, vaguely foreseen, are faced with a quiet trust in Providence that inspires willingness to suffer in the prosecution of the plan. Another form of courage augments this dauntless spirit and continues what someone else initiated and-finding oneself weary from unexpected trials, persecution and external failure-it still continues on to the end. When Christ died on the Cross it seemed an external failure. Faith alone tells us it was the greatest internal success of all human history. Both of these types of courage are necessary for salvation and certainly for sanctification.

Fear of the Lord, the third gift of the Spirit as Power, strengthens the virtue of hope. It impels us to a pro-found respect for the majesty of God. Its correlative effects are to protect us from sin through dread of of-fending the Lord and by giving us strong confidence in the power of God's help. In filial fear, which is selfless, we dread to offend God, Whom we love. This is a sense in which the highest love of God is compatible with the fear of the Lord.

Christ promised not only His disciples, but us, that we would receive "power when the Holy Spirit comes on you." This power is not only for ourselves but for others that we, being strengthened, might witness to Him Who strengthens us. When Christ said, "You will be my witnesses," St. Luke, writing in Greek, used another word-"You will be my martyrs." We are bidden to wit-ness as martyrs. How? By the way we live, which is the most eloquent witness we can offer.

One of the problems today is that some Catholic families are being estranged from the Faith by their own priests. The cavalier way in which some priests deal with the liturgy, their indifference to the Church's doc-trine on faith and morals, and even their open hostility to the Vicar of Christ have estranged many of the faith-ful. Not a few have taken refuge with the followers of Archbishop Lefebvre. It is imperative that these people be reunited with the Vicar of Christ. We must pray. But we should also put them into contact with priests who are loyal to our Catholic heritage. A practical recommendation: write to Father C. Frank Phillips, C.R, Pas-tor at St. John Cantius Church in Chicago. His address is 825 N. Carpenter Street, Chicago, IL 60622.