

Lectio Divina. Pentecost Sunday. Cycle C

Manizales (Colombia), Sr. Elizabeth Caicedo C., June 05, 2022.-

GOSPEL

Jn 20, 19 – 23

19 ‘At dusk on that day, the first of the week, the disciples were with their doors closed, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came, stood before them, and said, "Peace be with you".²⁰ After saying this, He showed them his hands and his side. At the sight of the Lord the disciples rejoiced. ²¹ Jesus repeated, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you". ²² Then He breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive men's sins, they are forgiven them; if you hold them bound, they are held bound.

STUDY OF THE TEXT

What does the text say? Some clues to understand and deepen the text:

- The risen Jesus appears at night (v. 19), a moment of greatest darkness and danger (cf. Lk 24:29; Jn. 1:9).
- The disciples are gathered in a house, an aspect that indicates the passage of Christianity from the synagogue to the house. Let us recall that the Gospel of John was written at the end of the first century, a time of persecution. The followers of Jesus by this time had already been expelled from the synagogue.
- The sentiment clearly expressed in the text is fear, a collective fear of another clearly determined collective: the Jews
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- Jesus stands in their midst and announces peace to them, greets them with *Shalom*, a common formula for greeting among the Jews.
- Jesus is the one who brings peace; He is the one who has conquered death. He is the risen one.

- The Peace, reaffirmed by Jesus rekindles the lost trust and generates joy in the disciples. This encounter with Jesus takes place without reproach, without disapproval, without judgment despite having abandoned him, denied him.

- The wounds were usually shown as evidence in a court room; in this case, the purpose was to prove that it was the same person who had been crucified. The wound on the side and the traces of the nails are the only testimony given by the gospel that Jesus was nailed and not bound, as was customary.

-Jesus' invitation to the disciples to see his wounds was proof of the reality of the resurrection and of Jesus' identity. The risen and glorified Christ has not erased from his personality the earthly history of sufferings. He is marked by it once and for all, so that the risen one and the crucified can no longer be separated.

- After ratifying the peace (v. 21), Jesus gives his disciples a mission that will continue his. He sends them as the Father has sent Him. To accomplish this mission they need the Holy Spirit, so they can forgive sins as Jesus did.

- Peace is simply the gift of the risen one. In this peace is implicit the great reconciliation that embraces the whole world, and that Jesus has operated with his death "for the life of the world".

MEDITATION

What message does God have for me through the text?

Let us listen to the text, let us look at our personal, community, missionary reality and that of our countries and nearby contexts, and let us discover there the voice of God, the motion of the Spirit that moves us at this moment.

The internal tensions and external problems experienced by John's community mark the nuances of the gospel; the conflicting context of the gospel becomes evident in the persecution of the Roman Empire, the expulsion from the synagogue, the persecution by the Jews, the death of the eyewitnesses. What is the biggest conflict we live and face today in our context and in our local community?

Although the closeness of John to Jesus and his high Christology is outstanding in the fourth gospel, there are some negative aspects present in the text that we must recognize. One of those negative aspects is the extreme hostility towards strangers

that limits the love of brothers. That is why in the text, it is necessary to harmonize the Pentecost of John with the Pentecost of Acts of the Apostles and its context, where the Spirit breaks cultural and linguistic barriers. In John the greeting of Jesus and the communication of his Spirit, in the manner of Genesis (blow, infuse) allow them to overcome fear, to assume the mission entrusted by Jesus, to assume the diversity of a community of believers. This was the community of John.

Certainly, we too can feel locked up and fearful like the disciples. In our restlessness, the presence of Jesus brings us peace, renews life and shares in the Spirit of God, making all things new. What fears do I identify in my life? Which of them paralyzes me? How have I worked it?

In the Gospel of John, the gift of the Holy Spirit is associated with the forgiveness of sins. Forgiveness renews life, reconciliation rebuilds community; the Spirit gives us the strength to fight against injustice, oppression, violence and death. What are the concrete manifestations of God's love, which the Spirit invites us to express in openness, acceptance, forgiveness and inclusion of the people with whom we live and share the mission?

PRAYER

What do we say to God in response to His message?

To the Wind of the Spirit
that blows everywhere,
free and making others free
free and bringing Liberation,
victorious over the Law,
and on Sin and Death.

To the Wind of the Spirit
who penetrated into Jesus
and sent him to the poor
to announce them the good news
and freedom to captives.

To the Wind of the Spirit
who reigned at Pentecost
eliminating prejudices and interests

and the fear of the Apostles,
opening wide the doors of the cenacle,
so that the community of Jesus' followers may
can always be open to the world
free in his word,
consistent in his testimony,
unsurpassed in their hope.

To the Wind of the Spirit
that always sweeps away the fears of the Church
and that burns all powers
except the power of fraternal service

To the Wind of the Spirit
that casts into the ashes arrogance, hypocrisy and lust.
and feeds the flames of justice and liberation
and that it is the soul of the Kingdom
that we may be the Wind in the Wind, sisters and brothers.

(Pedro Casaldáliga. Written in Mato Grosso, Brazil, in 1983).

CONTEMPLATION

What is my commitment? Listening to the word implies identifying the motion of the spirit for me... Today I am called to name the call of the Spirit, to set myself on the path of conversion with the certainty that it is God who enables me to continue the march. Every motion of the spirit calls and sends to action.