

# Holy Spirit, Renew The Face Of The Earth - by Sr. Margaret Dorgan, DCM

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## HOLY SPIRIT, RENEW THE FACE OF THE EARTH

"Bless, the Lord, O my soul! O Lord, my God, You are great indeed....You make the clouds your chariot. You travel on the wings of the wind. You make the winds your messengers and flaming fire Your ministers" (Ps 104: 1,3,4).

The psalmist singing these words looked on his world and praised God for what he saw in everything nature displayed around him. Did he realize in some measure that he was also foretelling the event of that Pentecost day many centuries later when wind and flame would herald the coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles "gathered in one place"? "Tongues as of fire appeared which parted and came to rest on each of them" (Acts 2: 1,3). The wonder of the Spirit's coming was evident to all who were there. They experienced warmth and energy, and it aroused them to proclaim the Good News.

We who are linked to the apostles have our own personal visitations from the Holy Spirit—not as visible and dramatic as what took place then. The One sent by the Father through the Son has already come to us in baptism, to dwell within us and invigorate us too for future action. What we have been given is described by Blessed John Ruusbroec, "This is an eternal and heavenly way of life born of the Holy Spirit and always renewed in love....We possess a living life, which has been in God from all eternity, before anything was created" (*John Ruusbroec*, Paulist Press, p.236). The reality abiding in us is beyond our ability to comprehend, just as what took place within the disciples exceeded their understanding. But they recognized a new power that sent them forth in Jesus' name. Our human life is an ongoing unveiling of what God implanted in our inmost being. We live in mystery which becomes an even deeper mystery as we begin to grasp something about it. The more we fathom the more we realize how fathomless are the depths of the infinite which draws us.

Eternal life is not like a mathematical equation we can work out through a series of mental steps. The Holy Spirit breathes upon us in a multitude of ways, gradually disclosing a portion of the limitless love that embraces us.

The apostles took on a task beyond their own capacities. We too see problems whose solutions appear beyond our capabilities, but we know we must move forward. The breath of the Spirit encourages us. Often we are assigned a task to do for God and we shrink the way Moses did as described in the book of Exodus. Moses offered sound human reasons why he should not be expected to plead before Egypt's Pharaoh for God's people. He protests, "I have never been eloquent....I am slow of speech and tongue." The Lord's answers quickly, "Go! It is I who will assist you in speaking and will teach you what you have to say" (Ex 4: 10, 12). How often do we demur with excuses when we are offered an opportunity to further the kingdom of

God among us. We declare we're not equal to the challenge. Somebody else would be better. Yet frequently it is only too clear God is saying "Go!"

We do need discernment and advice, but when others tell us we would be good for the task, let us turn to the Holy Spirit, the One who comes with light to make us see more clearly what is involved. The Spirit enkindles the heart, melting its resistance and giving it a willingness not present before.

Isaias tells us "The spirit from on high is poured out on us....Justice will bring about peace. Right will produce calm and security." God assures us, " My people will live in a peaceful country" (Is 32: 15,17,18).

Pentecost is a feast of hope which stretches forward to fulfillment. The church founded by Jesus will not be without trials. We say "O Lord, have pity on us. For You we wait. Be our strength each morning, our salvation in time of trouble" (Is 33:2).

The Holy Spirit is with Jesus' followers in every adversity, speaking to us individually to help us in the task of witnessing to the Kingdom of God. Ours is a wounded humanity not yet shining with the full glory we are destined for. The Spirit assists in our deficiencies. Lines of Isaias speak to us with special poignancy as we see the pain of prisoners in Iraq graphically displayed before our eyes these weeks. We want to be able to make the prophets' words our own: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me....God has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly...to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners...to comfort all who mourn" ( Is 61: 1,2). This is no easy task. We who are far away from scenes that arouse so much pity, beg the Holy Spirit to pour out the grace of compassion on the hearts of all involved in conflict.

We pray, "Look down from heaven and regard us....O Lord, hold not back, for You are our Father....Would that You might meet us doing right, that we were mindful of You in our ways" (Is 63:15,16; 64:4).

**Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Your love.**

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