

Parish Novena to the Holy Spirit
Day Six: Thursday 28th May 2020



The Gift of Knowledge

The Book of Proverbs is from the Old Testament and contains a treasury of wise and sensible sayings, especially in regards to knowledge.

***'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;
fools spurn wisdom and discipline.'*** (Prov 1:7)

***'The heart of the discerning gains in knowledge,
the ear of the wise man searches for knowledge.'*** (Prov 18:15)

***'The heart of the discerning makes knowledge its search,
the mouth of fools feed on folly.'*** (Prov 15:14)

Knowledge is important or as another famous worldly turn of phrase goes, 'Knowledge is power!' Universities, academies, centres of higher learning are all places where knowledge is imparted to willing minds. As we are all finding in this present lockdown, a lot of knowledge is at our fingertips with the quick push of a button. The internet, search engines, 'Alexa' and other information-based technologies are allowing us to access information quickly and efficiently to help expand our knowledge. However, human knowledge is often corrupted. We have all heard of the recent 'fake news' scandals that distort information; manipulated texts and images, cut and pasted to suit the message of a particular group or political authority; and sadly, knowledge is not only fragmented on global and international scales but locally. The gossip who tells lies and half-truths to others and besmirches the character of others. Knowledge is good and powerful only if rooted in truth and that is why we need the Holy Spirit.

A simple explanation of the Holy Spirit's gift of Knowledge is that it allows a believer to relate the Scriptures and the life of Jesus in the Gospels as well as the Tradition of the Church to all aspects of their own personal life. There is a story about of the monk and mystic, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux which helps us to delve a little deeper into this gift of the Spirit.



Saint Bernard was asked by some novices what would he rather possess Truth or Jesus Christ? Bernard responded immediately that he would choose Truth. The novices was scandalised! How could their abbot pick the Truth over possessing Jesus Christ, the Son of God! Bernard further explained his answer to them with a quote from the Gospel:

***'Jesus said: I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.
No one can come to the Father except through me.'* (Jn 14:6)**

Jesus and Truth are synonymous said Saint Bernard. The Lord himself clearly showed this when he told the disciples, ***'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.'*** To know Jesus, to really know him and sincerely follow him means that the truth we base our lives on must be rooted in him and him alone. How we shape and form our lives must be in imitation of him. How we think, speak and act must be as another Christ if we want others to see and live by the truth.

***'...If you make my word your home
you will indeed be my disciples,
you will learn the truth
and the truth will make you free.'* (Jn 8:31b-32)**

Truth will set us free from the chains of lies and the prison of ignorance. Jesus who is the Truth, sets us free from the boggy mire of sin, from the grasp of the father of lies. Again, we see in the Book of Revelation this reality:

'Then I heard a voice shout from heaven, 'Victory and power and empire for ever have been won by our God, and all authority for his Christ, now that our persecutor, who accused our brothers day and night before our God, has been brought down.' (Rev 12:10)

When we allow the Holy Spirit's gift of Knowledge to work through us, when hold on to the Lord and follow not just his footsteps but his words and actions and make them our own. When we try to live in perfect symmetry with the Son of God then our true knowledge begins to grow and bear fruit. No matter what events, tragedies, joys and sorrows come our way, then the Spirit's gift of knowledge helps us in bringing Christ, bringing Truth to the situation.

Veni Creator Spiritus

***Come, Holy Spirit, Creator come,
From your bright heavenly throne!
Come, take possession of our souls,
And make them all your own.***

***You who are called the Paraclete,
Best gift of God above,
The living spring, the living fire,
Sweet unction, and true love!***

***You who are sevenfold in your grace,
Finger of God's right hand,
His promise, teaching little ones
To speak and understand!***

***O guide our minds with your blessed light,
With love our hearts inflame,
And with your strength which never decays
Confirm our mortal frame.***

***Far from us drive our hellish foe
True peace unto us bring,
And through all perils guide us safe
Beneath your sacred wing.***

***Through you may we the Father know,
Through you the eternal Son
And you the Spirit of them both
Thrice-blessed three in one.***

***All glory to the Father be,
And to the risen Son;
The same to you, O Paraclete,
While endless ages run.***

Amen.

In the silence of our hearts let us turn to God the Spirit and ask for a renewal of the gift of Knowledge. Let us use the gifts of Fortitude, Wisdom and Counsel to further deepen this divine knowledge and incorporate it into our own lives. Have we encountered issues, subjects and topics of conversation that have contradicted the Truth of Jesus and what he taught? Do worldly arguments about life, relationships and secular morality seem plausible? Have we ever made the effort to increase our knowledge of Jesus the Way, the Truth and the Life? Have we ever sought out and made time to read, listen and learn from different sources of Jesus' Truth in the Church? Is our knowledge of the Sacraments at a certain level? Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Confession. Do we use it or make excuses and give human reasons that it is not necessary because of this or that? By denying the validity of His Sacraments can we see that we deny Truth and walk away from Him?

***'If we say we have no sin in us,
we are deceiving ourselves
and refusing to admit the truth.'*** (1 Jn 1:8)

'Do all you can to present yourself in front of God as a man who has come through his trials, and a man who has no cause to be ashamed of his life's work and has kept a straight course with the message of the truth.' (2 Tim 2:15)

***'The Word was made flesh,
he lived among us,
and we saw his glory,
the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father,
full of grace and truth.'*** (Jn 1:14)

Come, Holy Spirit

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

V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R. And you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray:

O God, who taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the gift of the same Spirit we may be always truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

God Bless and keep praying.

We continue our Novena journey tomorrow reflecting on the Gift of Piety.

Fr. O'Brien