

KSC 2019 FORMATION PROGRAMME THE HOLY SPIRIT IN OUR TIME

Session Three: Theme: Encourages Expression

Spiritual gifts are not innate, natural talents, like an ear for music or the ability to draw, but rather they are empowerments that the Holy Spirit gives to do things that were not possible by mere natural effort apart from the Holy Spirit. In the Acts of the Apostles we clearly see one of the changes of Pentecost brought about in them was that they performed miracles, healed people, preached, and spoke in tongues, which previously they had not been able to do apart from Christ.



Step 1: Opening prayer: from the Order's Prayers

Step 2: READINGS ON THE THEME

The fact is that, from the moment of Pentecost, we disciples of Jesus have always lived with a mission to make Jesus known and loved each in his/her own time. This can be very difficult for a number of reasons and, not least of them, is that we can become so distracted by those matters which occupy most of our time and concerns. The challenges facing the Apostles at the time of Jesus' crucifixion were different from our own time in many ways. But very basically if most of our limited time, thoughts, energies and worries are focussed on 'making ends meet', on being assured of food and shelter, on providing for the basics of life for ourselves and those who depend upon us, on responding to the need to ensure we can pay our bills, of responding to the needs of others in our community as they face their challenges, etc, there can be little time left for focussing on our relationship with God and that can lead to a certain sense of a superficial (almost merely academic) connection with the Lord Jesus and his other disciples. Yet in that context history demonstrates an abiding desire that keeps on emerging and that is to carry out the mission entrusted to us.

In his recent best-selling book "God is Good for You" author, journalist and political commentator Greg Sheridan puts it in these words: "Here is yet another ragged paradox for Christians to grab hold of. Jesus taught clear truths of a supernatural kind. And through both his own example and his teachings – such as the golden rule: 'Do unto others as you would have them do to you' (Matthew 7:12) – he would seem to make an institution like slavery completely unacceptable. But while Jesus was clear about the principles, he seems to have left it up to his disciples to work out how to apply those principles in real historical circumstances. The morality is fixed; people's efforts to apply the morality to diverse and unfolding historical situations have always been pretty imperfect. But over time the moral teachings did influence, even shape, not only individual behaviour, but civic culture as well." (God is Good for You; Greg Sheridan, Allen & Unwin, Sydney 2018 page 99)

History also demonstrates that when the Christian Community – whether its church or civic leaders – embraces human power as a means of furthering the mission it fails dismally. The focus for any authority or foundation for our mission and purpose for being must always rest squarely on the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Our interface with the world as disciples of Jesus depends upon our personal intimate relationship with Jesus and that is the free gift of the Holy Spirit.

Step 3: Allow a few moments reflective silence.

Step 4: SCRIPTURE READING

“Those who are living by their natural inclinations have their minds on the things human nature desires; those who live in the spirit have their minds on spiritual things. And human nature has nothing to look forward to but death, while the spirit looks forward to life and peace, because the outlook of disordered human nature is opposed to God, since it does not submit to God’s Law, and indeed it cannot, and those who live by their natural inclinations can never be pleasing to God. You, however, live not by your human inclinations, but by the spirit, since the Spirit of God has made a home in you.” (Romans 8: 5 – 9)

“On the other hand the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control; no law can touch such things as these. ... Since we are living by the Spirit, let our behaviour be guided by the Spirit and let us not be conceited or provocative and envious of one another.” (Galatians 5: 22, 23 25, 26)

Step 5: REFLECTION (5 Mins)

Step 6: SHARING (10 Mins)

Clearly as Knights we have seen many examples of both particularly in the day to day works of the Order over time.

From experience, list those times in your own life or in the lives of others when you have felt that it has not been clear that the Holy Spirit was at work.

Then identify times when it is clear that the Holy Spirit has been at work.

Comparing those times are you able to identify your reaction and why you reacted that way?

Step 7: CONCLUSION

We pray together;

God grant me:

The Spirit of Wisdom that I may despise the perishable things of this world and aspire only after the things that are eternal

The Spirit of Understanding to enlighten my mind with the light of Your divine truth

The Spirit of Counsel that I may ever choose the surest way of pleasing God and gaining heaven

The Spirit of Fortitude that I may bear my cross with You and that I may overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose my salvation

The Spirit of Knowledge that I may know God and know myself

The Spirit of Piety that I may find the service of God sweet and amiable

The Spirit of Fear that I may be filled with a loving reverence towards God and may dread in any way to displease Him.

AMEN.

Step 8: *The meeting proceeds*

Step 9: CLOSING PRAYERS – FROM THE ORDER’S PRAYERS