

**6th Sunday of Easter (A)**  
**O Holy Spirit, Aid us to Remain and to Grow in the Love of Jesus.**

Acts 8:5-8,14-17; Psalm 66:1-3,4-5,6-7,16,20; 1 Peter 3:15-18; John 14:15-21

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In the third article of the Nicene Creed,  
we proclaim: "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life."

The Holy Spirit is the principle of life for the Church, ministries, and all the Baptized, leading us to the Truth—Jesus—whose physical absence is made present by the Holy Spirit. As he promised, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot accept because it neither sees nor knows him" (John 14:16).

The Holy Spirit, our Advocate, stands by us, comforts us, strengthens us, and guides us in understanding Jesus' teachings. The Holy Spirit prosecutes the unbelieving world, opposes Satan's work, and reveals the meaning of the gospel (cf. Jn 14:26), while Satan spreads deception and falsehood (cf. Jn 8:44). The Holy Spirit's role is foundational to the Church, keeping us faithful to the Apostles' teachings (cf. CCC #768, 889-92).

Some call the Holy Spirit a coach always by our side: teaching and correcting us when we make mistakes, encouraging us when we feel low, pushing us to be our best, and defending us. These descriptions feel right. The early disciples, like Philip, Peter, and John, showed the presence and message of Jesus' saving works—and their bravery in facing the enemies of the Gospel was unmatched (cf. Acts 8:5-8, 14-17; 1 Peter 3:15-18).

We heard inspiring stories of the early disciples' courage and the gifts that the Holy Spirit gave them. The central challenge for us today is clear: how should we respond to this incredible gift?

Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (Jn 14:15). To respond to the Holy Spirit, we must remain rooted in Jesus' love, allowing it to move us beyond emotion into purposeful action. This includes recognizing Jesus in the most vulnerable—the poor, the sick, the marginalized, sinners, and the voiceless—and acting as agents of healing and reconciliation in a fractured world (cf. Mat 25:46).

When we follow Jesus' commandment of love, our faith goes beyond following rules but becomes a friendship that grows in obedience and faithfulness. This leads us closer to him and the Father. "Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and reveal myself to him" (Jn 14:21). This can lead to a life of unimaginable joy!

Our Lord Jesus remains in his Church, most intensely in the liturgy—ministering through priests, speaking through Scripture, and sanctifying through the Sacraments. The Holy Eucharist may seem small and humble, yet it holds immense love—it is Jesus, who sacrificed His life for us. When received with humility and faith, it transforms us into witnesses of His divine love. Jesus assures us of his eternal presence: "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. In a little while, the world will no longer see me, but you will see me because I live, and you will live" (Jn. 14:18-19).

Fr. Pedro Arrupe, SJ, a man of great spiritual depth committed to justice, who witnessed and helped large numbers of survivors after the atomic bomb explosion in Hiroshima, and who was elected the 28th Superior General of the Society of Jesus in 1927, shared his wisdom on how to remain and grow in the love of Jesus. He said, "Nothing is more practical than finding God, than falling in love in a quite

absolute, final way. What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination, will affect everything. It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning, what you do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends, what you read, whom you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude. Fall in Love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.”

Let us pray to the Holy Spirit,  
for there is much more to listen to, know, and learn when we remain in Jesus’ love.

“Come, Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created.  
And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit,  
did instruct the hearts of the faithful,  
grant that by the same Holy Spirit  
we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations,  
through Christ Our Lord, Amen.”

Fr. Manny Hewe, Pastor