

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Year A)  
5-10-2026 Homily

I. Introduction

Years ago, there was a country doctor in rural Oklahoma who was known for his dedication to the poor. Many of his patients had no transportation, so he would often drive out to their rundown shacks and homes to treat those who were sick and injured. One day the doctor himself became ill, and when his condition worsened, he entered a hospital. There he learned that he had terminal cancer. The doctor immediately thought of his family: there was so much he wanted to tell them. He could talk freely to his wife, of course, telling her everything in his heart while there was time to do so, but his young children weren't ready to understand. What he did, therefore, was to record a series of tapes his children could play when they reached their teenage years. One of these tapes talked about choosing a medical career, just in case any of them wanted to follow in their father's footsteps. This tape said: "Are you willing to get out of a warm bed on a cold night and drive twenty miles to see a sick person, knowing that he can't pay you and that maybe he could just as easily wait until morning to be treated? If you can answer 'yes' to that question, you are ready to study medicine" (Mark Link, S.J., *Illustrated Sunday Homilies*, Year A, Series II, p. 41).

The doctor's situation was similar to the one facing Jesus in today's Gospel. The Lord was speaking to the apostles at the Last Supper, knowing that His time with them was very limited. There was so much He wanted to tell them, but in just a few hours His Passion would begin. Therefore, Jesus promised to send an Advocate—the Holy Spirit—who would guide them in the way of truth and love. This promise remains true today. We must realize that, because we've chosen to follow Jesus, life isn't always easy, enjoyable, or convenient; we can expect to face sacrifices and challenges, and perhaps even criticism and opposition. Even so, we can be filled with hope—for through the Holy Spirit, we are made ready for whatever God asks of us.

II. Development

Today's readings talk about how the Holy Spirit helps us to follow Jesus, particularly in terms of witnessing, enduring, and obeying. In the 1st Reading from the Acts of the Apostles, the deacon Philip went to Samaria and preached about Jesus, even though there was a chance that, as a Jew, the Samaritans would reject him. His courage in witnessing to the truth brought many to believe, and then the apostles Peter and John also came and prayed over them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. In the 2nd Reading St. Peter warns us that just as Christ suffered though innocent, we may be mistreated because of our faith: we might be made fun of, looked down upon, or be discriminated against. Nevertheless, we must endure and remain faithful as Jesus did, using the strength the Holy Spirit gives. Remaining faithful, as the Gospel tells us, means obeying the Lord's commandments. Jesus says, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. And I will ask the Father and He will give you another Advocate to be with you always. . . ." With the Holy Spirit's help, we can live as Christ's followers and discover the path to everlasting life.

*Insert for Mother’s Day*

Just as the country doctor gave a wonderful illustration of service and commitment, so we see that same dedication every day in simple but inspiring ways—through the example of mothers, who always put the needs of their families ahead of their own. Good mothers make many sacrifices for their children—for instance, saying “yes” when it would be so easy to say “no,” mediating disagreements among siblings, cleaning up messes they didn’t make, resisting the temptation to say “I told you so” when their children ignore their advice and make mistakes, rejoicing in the successes and accomplishments of their sons and daughters and consoling them in their failures and disappointments, and discovering once again—through the eyes of their children—the beauty and wonders of the world around them. Just as good mothers pray for their children and imagine what they’ll be like when they grow up, and perhaps even fantasize about how they’ll make a difference in the world, so are all followers of Jesus called to give their lives in service of God and His Church, using the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to help make this world a better and holier place.

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III. Conclusion

Someone once described the mission of the Church in terms of the Holy Spirit; he said:

- Where the Spirit reigns, believers relate to the Word—that is *faith*.
  - Where the Spirit reigns, believers relate to each other—that is *community*.
  - Where the Spirit reigns, believers relate to God—that is *worship*.
  - Where the Spirit reigns, believers relate to the needy around them—that is *service*.
  - Where the Spirit reigns, believers relate to the world—that is *evangelization*.
- (R. Kent Hughes, *1001 Great Stories*, p. 207—modified).

These five words sum up the mission we have been given by Jesus: faith, community, worship, service, and evangelization—and it’s the Holy Spirit Who helps us remember and act upon this mission. Through the Spirit, we are able to witness to our faith, bear our burdens, and obey God’s commands; through the Spirit, we are able to do what’s right even when it isn’t easy, popular, or convenient. Whenever we are faced with a problem, or unsure what to do, or discouraged because of a difficult or unpleasant situation, our first impulse should be to pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance and strength. We need only say aloud, whisper, or think a simple prayer, such as “Holy Spirit, please help me,” or “Spirit of God, give me the right words to say,” or “Holy Spirit, show me what to do,” and then proceed in humble confidence, knowing that Jesus is with us and that we are pleasing to our heavenly Father.

Unlike the doctor in rural Oklahoma many years ago, Jesus did not leave us a series of tape recordings to guide and inspire us. Instead, He promised to send us His Spirit—and if we’re open to this gift, we’ll have the strength and wisdom and courage we need to live always as His followers.