Spirituality
Pencil Preaching





by Pat Marrin

View Author Profile
patrickjmarrin@gmail.com.

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“The Advocate, the Holy Spirit … will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you” (John 14:26).

Acts 14:5-18; *Jn 14:21-26*

The Easter Season ends on June 5, 2022, with Pentecost. The newly baptized (and all of us) have been reflecting week by week on the mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus as the central, spiritual dynamic of the Christian life. Our readings from Acts show the church growing as Paul and Barnabas carry out their missionary journeys. They are empowered to preach and heal as Jesus did. Their activity is informed by the deep theology we find in the discourses of the fourth Gospel that Jesus shared with his disciples at the Last Supper.

Jesus’ instructions are meant to prepare them, and now us, for the coming of the Holy Spirit. It is as if we have been assembling a stained-glass window containing the many-colored facets of Jesus’ teaching, but the full design has remained hidden until the light of the Spirit brings it to life. The more we see the big picture, the more we grasp the expansive mystery of God’s plan to transform the world

This is undoubtedly what happened in the early church as its faith communities met to share the ancient scriptural texts that were coming alive for them in the light of Jesus. The Jewish liturgical calendar also lent its feasts, symbols and patterns to the emerging fulfillment by Jesus of Passover, Exodus, Booths, Pentecost and other annual ritual feasts.

The heart of the mystery was God’s love revealed in Jesus. More than just a religious teaching, divine love was the transforming power to change the disciples, who in turn, were sent to change the world. As The Father had loved Jesus, so had he loved his disciples. They in turn were to love one another, the sign to the world that Jesus had come from God. Their witness would in turn radiate into the world like a fire that purifies and transforms hearts and lives.

The Holy Spirit, the Advocate, would make this happen, and the church would experience the indwelling of God, Father, Son and Spirit, as the source of its life. Everything the disciples had experienced with Jesus during his earthly life would now make sense in a new way by the power of the Spirit. His followers were now to be his living, active presence in the world.

The church exists today as the presence of the Spirit manifested in its local communities and their ministries as the love of God in Jesus. If we see and feel this mystery in our personal lives, in our Sunday worship and weekday activities, if we feel the love of God flowing into us and through us to others, then the season of Easter has been successful in forming us in the Christian spirit. This is our dynamic life as church, and those who participate in it know the joy of the Gospel.

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