07/06/2020

His Eminence Metropolitan Gerasimos of San Francisco – Reflection for Pentecost 2020



Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

The day of Pentecost is often called the “birthday” of the Church because it was on this day that the first community of Christians was formed upon hearing the Gospel preached by the Apostles, especially the Apostle Peter. It is easy for us to acknowledge this as a historical reality. It is more challenging to recognize that the Holy Spirit is still with us, guiding our Church, the people of God, as we strive to observe all that Christ taught His followers.

Jesus Christ said to His disciples that He was sending the Holy Spirit to them as a Comforter, the Parakletos. The presence of the Holy Spirit among us is what gives life. This is further conveyed as we sing in the Matins of this Feast, “The Holy Spirit is light and life.”

We can see the effects of a spirit-filled Church. In the Acts of the Apostles, after the great homily of Saint Peter, we learn that 3,000 souls became followers of Jesus Christ. What happened next? The Book of Acts says, “***And they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers….All who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. … And the Lord added to their number day***

” (Acts of the Apostles 2:42, 44-47). In these few sentences we see the earliest signs of the establishment of the ministries of the Church: fellowship, worship, teaching, and charity.

These are the still important components of the Church to this day. All parishes have these qualities, but our parishes must work continually to cultivate and to strengthen them. One of the areas that will need to be expanded in the coming months is our charitable and philanthropic work. Before our eyes, we are witnessing the devastating economic impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. As a Church, we must do what we can to assist. We can offer financial support to the many charities assisting people in need. We can become partners with food banks. If everyone gives, even a little, we will accomplish much together, and thus increase the witness of our Church to the world, and like those first days recorded on the Book of Acts, we may “find favor with all the people.”

It is my fervent prayer that the Holy Spirit may be your constant guide, companion and protector! Hronia Polla! God Bless You!

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