

Preaching series: Expecting the Holy Spirit

1. Power (to move from a fan to a follower)

A YouTube clip of a Michael Bublé concert shows him inviting a fan onto the stage who had an incredible voice, to perform a duet with him. The crowd loved it. Other performers such as Ed Sheeran, Katie Perry, Foo Fighters, Beyoncé, and Adele not only sing and perform at concerts, they invite fans to sing/play. Performers sharing the stage with ordinary fans what life is about at the deepest level: moving from being a fan to a follower.

This is the 1st of 6 homilies on “expecting the Holy Spirit”. Each week will look why and how we should expect to receive the Holy Spirit. The first week is about how the Holy Spirit brings “power” to move from a fan to a follower.

In the Gospel today, Jesus said to his disciples “You are witnesses [fans].” They were fans, but were still fearful. In the next line – which we don’t see today - Jesus tells them how they are going to move from fans to followers: “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; stay in the city until you have been clothed with **power** from on high.”

The Holy Spirit gives power to move from fan to follower. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters in Genesis. The Holy Spirit filled particular people, for particular purposes, at particular times, e.g. Bezalel. To Ezekiel, God said “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you...” To the prophet Joel, God said “In the last days, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters ... Your old men ... your young men ... servants – men and women alike.”

The power for all people to move from fearful fans to fervent followers was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. Pentecost is the birthday of the church. The church wasn’t born at the Last Supper/first Mass. The church wasn’t born on Good Friday. The church wasn’t born even on Easter Sunday! The church

was/is born on Pentecost. Identifying as a Catholic doesn't make you a follower of Jesus. Receiving the Holy Spirit turns fans into followers.

What is your locked room? What is the room where you won't allow Jesus in: e.g. the way in which you're living your relationship, your marriage; or your loneliness, your feelings of unworthiness?

What is the room in which you're too afraid to go out and be a disciple of Jesus: e.g. afraid of what people might think of you at school, work, friends, family?

Pray three words this Easter: Come, Holy Spirit. Pray with expectancy that when you pray, He will come. Come with **POWER**.

Jesus said "wait ... to be clothed with power from on high." How long can you wait each day, 1 minute, 5 minutes, 15 minutes, 30 minutes, 1 hour?

As we pray 'Come, Holy Spirit', others will see us transformed into being like Jesus. They will think 'if they can do it, so can I!' People to come to Jesus through us.

Prayer

Father, thank you that I can move from a fan to a follower of Jesus.

Come Holy Spirit. Clothe me with power from on high.

Help me to break out of my room, to get on Jesus' stage, for the salvation and transformation of the whole world, amen!