



Pope Francis: the gift of the Holy Spirit renews the earth

(**Lydia O'Kane**, Vatican Radio) Pentecost Sunday 24/5/ 2015

Pope Francis, against the backdrop of St Peter's Basilica and dressed in scarlet vestments, celebrated Mass on Pentecost Sunday. In his homily, the Holy Father began by focusing on Sunday's readings saying that, "the word of God, tells us that the Spirit is at work in individuals and communities filled with the Spirit.

Expanding on this theme of the Spirit, Pope Francis said that, in the Gospel, Jesus promises his disciples that, when he has returned to the Father, the Holy Spirit will come to guide them into all the truth. Indeed he calls the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of truth".

Today's world, Pope Francis stressed, "needs men and women who are not closed in on themselves, but filled with the Holy Spirit." Closing oneself off from the Holy Spirit, he said, means not only a lack of freedom, it is a sin. There are many ways one can close oneself off to the Holy Spirit, the Pope continued, "by selfishness for one's own gain, by rigid legalism – seen in the attitude of the doctors of the law to whom Jesus referred to as "hypocrites", by neglect of what Jesus taught, by living the Christian life not as service to others but in the pursuit of personal interests, and in so many other ways."

He underlined that the gift of the Holy Spirit "has been bestowed upon the Church and upon each one of us, so that we may live lives of genuine faith and active charity, that we may sow the seeds of reconciliation and peace."

The Holy Father explained to those gathered that, “the gift of the Holy Spirit renews the earth”. The Holy Spirit, he went on to say, “whom Christ sent from the Father, and the Creator Spirit who gives life to all things, are one and the same.” Therefore, the Pope said, respect for creation, is a requirement of our faith and the “garden” in which we live is not entrusted to us to be exploited, he added, but rather to be cultivated and tended with respect

Concluding his homily, Pope Francis prayed that strengthened by the Spirit and his many gifts, we would be able uncompromisingly to battle against sin and corruption, devoting ourselves with patient perseverance to the works of justice and peace.