

Homily

Pentecost

4 June 2017

We all seem to speak very different languages. We all belong to very different tribes and social groupings. We all have very different stories to tell. But is anyone listening? Is anyone trying to understand the other viewpoint? Is anyone trying to build consensus?

How do we use our language, our words? Are the words that we speak the words of forgiveness, reconciliation and peace, or are they the words of division, defensiveness and even aggression?

And what effect are these words, all these soundbites, all this social media and technology having on the face of the earth? What is happening to our planet? What damage are we doing?

“Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.” When the apostles first preached the good news of Jesus everybody heard the message in their own language. When Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit upon his disciples, he gave them the power to forgive sins. “*Peace be with you,*” he said.

The only way to *renew the face of the earth*, and this is the message we need to reiterate over and over again, is by openness to the Spirit, openness to the Holy Spirit of God, openness to one another. It’s only by the Holy Spirit that our different languages, our different tribes and backgrounds, can begin to be woven together into one family, one communion.

And it’s not just a matter of reiterating the message over and over, it’s about living the message, becoming the message, by becoming that true temple of the Holy Spirit, by being that person taken up in prayer, by being that person completely transparent to the love of God, by being that Spirit-filled community that gathers round the holy altar of God to celebrate the Eucharist, to proclaim forgiveness and to create communion.

“Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.”

Fr Michael