

Pentecost Sunday

May 19, 2013

Readings

Acts 2:1-11

1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13 or Romans 8:8-17

John 20:19-23 or John 14:15-16, 23b-26

Calendar

May 19: Pentecost

May 20: Victoria Day in Canada

May 25: Africa Day

May 25: Vesak or Visakah Puja - "Buddha Day"

(The year's major Buddhist festival, it marks the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha.)

Quotes

"The Spirit changes us! ... Let us trust in God's work! With him we can do great things; he will give us the joy of being his disciples, his witnesses. Commit yourselves to great ideals, to the most important things. We Christians were not chosen by the Lord for little things; push onwards toward the highest principles. Stake your lives on noble ideals, my dear young people!"

Pope Francis, April, 28, 2013

"The Church herself will never cease putting questions, trusting in the help of the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth."

Pope John Paul II

"Let us, then, pray with all fervor for this peace which our divine Redeemer came to bring us. May Christ banish from the souls of all whatever might endanger peace. May Christ transform all people into witnesses of truth, justice and love. May Christ illumine with light the minds of rulers, so that, besides caring for the proper material welfare of their peoples, they may also guarantee them the fairest gift of peace.

Finally, may Christ inflame the desires of all people to break through the barriers which divide them, to strengthen the bonds of mutual love, to learn to understand one another, and to pardon those who have done them wrong. Through Christ's power and inspiration may all peoples welcome each other to their hearts as brothers and sisters, and may the peace they long for ever flower and ever reign among them."

Pope John XXIII, Pacem in Terris 171

"Finding one's own voice, however haltingly, imparts the power of the Spirit crying out. The boldness to hear the claim of conscience and follow its deep impulses even in the face of loss; the courage to taste righteous anger and allow it to motivate critical resistance to evil; the willingness to utter the prophetic word – these occurrences inscribe the movement of the Spirit's compassion into the ambiguity of the world."

Elizabeth Johnson CSJ, She Who Is, 126

"On this feast of the Spirit and the Church, let us thank God for having given to his people, chosen and formed in the midst of all peoples, the precious good of peace, of his peace!"

Pope Benedict XVI, Pentecost 2008

Thoughts for your consideration

Today, as we celebrate the power of the Spirit in the church, the scriptures remind us that the Spirit is a social Spirit – a Spirit that leads us to solidarity with each other, the whole world, and all its people. The Spirit does more than make individuals feel good or different. The Spirit breaks down barriers between peoples. The Spirit changes behavior and moves us into community. The Spirit calls us into action.

The coming of the Spirit transforms the Christian community.

Locked doors are opened.
Fear is replaced by courage.
Peace is proclaimed.
The power to forgive sins is present.
Those who were afraid now speak up boldly.
Thousands hear the message in their own language.

The coming of the Spirit is reflected in our social values.

In a world of racism and xenophobia and fear of immigrants,
the Spirit speaks to people of every nation under heaven.
In a world of fear and doubt and confusion,
the Spirit inspires people to open the doors and speak out
especially about issues of justice and peace.
In a world of selfishness, competition, and control,
the Spirit gives out gifts that are shared for the benefit of all
especially those who are poor or in need.
In a world with war, violence and terrorism,
the Spirit proclaims a message of peace and reconciliation to all.
In a world of economic problems,
the Spirit reminds us that the things of the world are meant to be shared by all
and are to be used for the common good.
In a world where the environment is abused and overused,
the Spirit calls to reform how we live and to use the earth with care and love.
In a world of ideology and prejudice,
The Spirit calls us to think about things in a new way.

The gifts of the Spirit are for liberation. The Spirit is an inclusive spirit who desires to set everyone free. Maybe the greatest manifestation of the spirit is when people have the grace to identify with the needs and struggles of the world, to listen to those who are poor or oppressed, and to speak up for justice. As Elizabeth Johnson says above: "Finding one's own voice, however haltingly, imparts the power of Spirit crying out."

Questions for Reflection in your Faith Sharing Group

When have you had the ability or the courage to speak up in a difficult situation?
What happened? What were the results? What did you learn?

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The Spirit speaks to people of every nation under heaven.
How is the Spirit call us to be more inclusive and welcoming?

Story

There was an Italian man who decided to sell everything he had to immigrate to the United States during the turn of the 20th century. He barely had enough money to buy a ticket to a ship to the United States. Because he didn't have much money left, he went and bought some cheese and crackers to eat during the journey to the United States. So everyday, for breakfast, lunch and dinner, he ate his cheese and crackers. While he was eating this, everybody else was in the ship's dining hall. He could smell the aroma of lobster, filet mignon, cabernet sauvignon and other delicious food. He was getting sick and tired of eating just cheese and crackers. On the sixth day of the journey, he went to the captain and said, "I'll do anything you want. I'll do the dishes. Clean the bathroom. Sweep the floor. Anything! Just let me have one meal in the dining room." Then, the captain, looking perplexed, said to him, "But sir, the meals are included with the ticket."

http://www.alphausa.org/Mobile/default.aspx?article_id=1000048610

Actions – Links

The U.S. Catholic Bishops support comprehensive immigration reform. Various bills are pending in congress. Two sites that can be helpful are:

Justice for Immigrants: <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/>

Christians for Comprehensive Immigration Reform: <http://www.faithandimmigration.org>

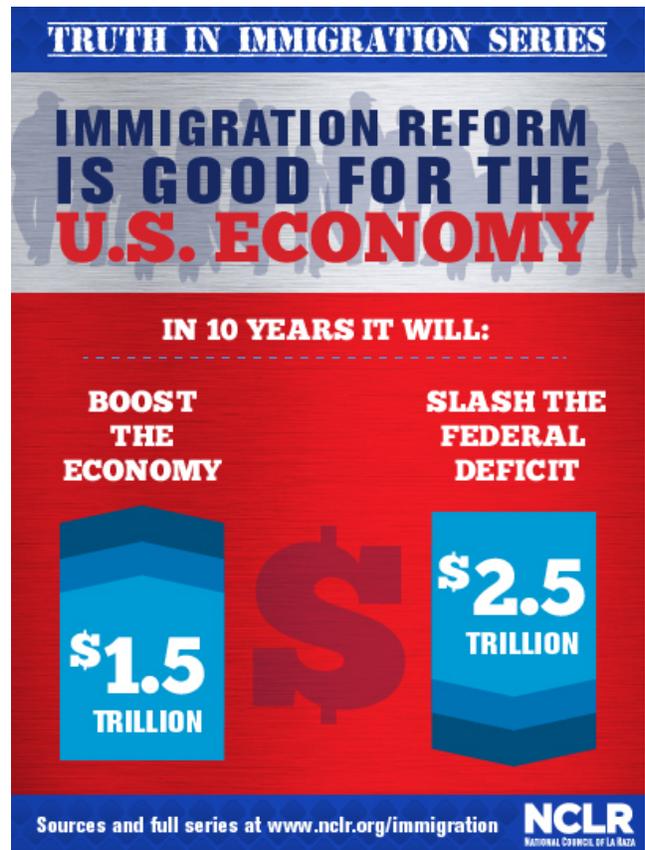
Find a summary of the five principles in Catholic Social Teaching and Immigration Reform at:

<http://www.loyno.edu/jsri/sites/loyno.edu.jsri/files/CSTandMigration-Summer2009jsq.pdf>

“Crazy Facts”

“Comprehensive immigration reform generates an annual increase in U.S. GDP of at least 0.84 percent. This amounts to \$1.5 trillion in additional GDP over 10 years. It also boosts wages for both native-born and newly legalized immigrant workers. ... Mass deportation reduces U.S. GDP by 1.46 percent annually. This amounts to \$2.6 trillion in lost GDP over 10 years, not including the actual cost of deportation.”

From The Economic Benefits of Comprehensive Immigration Reform by Raúl Hinojosa-Ojeda



<http://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/serials/files/cato-journal/2012/1/cj32n1-12.pdf>

Prayers of Intercession

Response: Come, Holy Spirit.

For the gift to speak up on issues of justice and peace, we pray....

For the wisdom to discern the end to the war and violence, we pray....

For the help we need to address the needs of refugees and immigrants, we pray....

For the perseverance we need to keep working for health care for all in our own land, we pray....

For the courage to live simply and in ways that respect our environment, we pray....

For transparency and integrity in all our governments and in all our public officials, we pray

For the strength to always work together for the common good of all, we pray....

Prayers

Come Holy Spirit. Come! Fill the hearts of your people.

Come Holy Spirit that we may be aware:

- aware of the people around us, especially the poor and oppressed
- aware of the children, the young people, all the people striving to grow into their dignity as children of God
- aware of visitors, immigrants, and refugees
- aware of the world around us, especially the environment with its plants and animals, with its land and water, with its air and space, with all its mystery
- aware of the structures of power, especially those that keep people poor or powerless or confused or unfree
- aware of the violence and the threats of violence, which are not the way of Jesus
- aware of ourselves and our bias and stereotypes and all our unfreedom
- aware of all the possibilities for freedom and joy and life.

Come Holy Spirit. Come! Fill the hearts of your people.

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THE GRACE TO SHOUT *William Cleary, Psalm Services for Group Prayer*

Today we ask the grace to shout when it hurts, even though silence is expected of us,
and to listen when others shout though it be painful to hear;
to object, to protest, when we feel, taste, or observe injustice,
believing that even the unjust and arrogant
are human nonetheless and therefore worthy of strong efforts to reach them.

Take from us, Guiding God, the heart of despair and fill us with courage and understanding.
Give us a self that knows very well when the moment has come to protest.

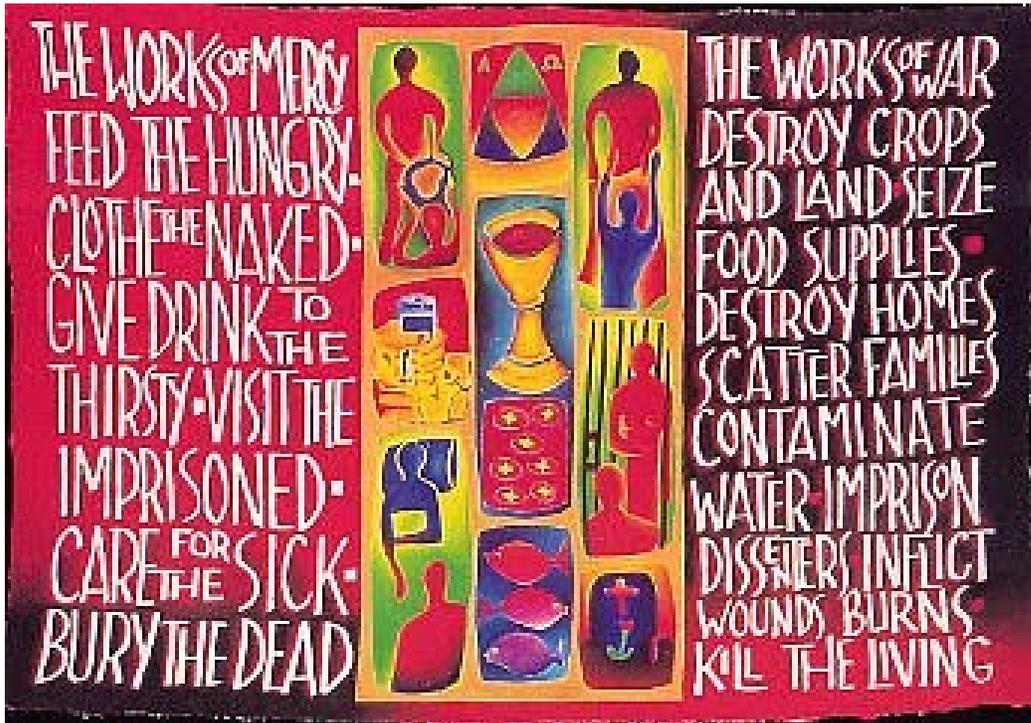
We ask the grace to be angry when the weakest are the first to be exploited
and the trapped are squeezed for their meager resources,
when the most deserving are the last to thrive, and the privileged demand more privilege.

We ask for the inspiration to make our voice heard
when we have something that needs to be said, something that rises to our lips despite our shyness.

And we ask the grace to listen when the meek finally rise to speak and their words are an agony for us.....

Give us the freedom to see. Give us the wisdom and courage to speak.

Image



<http://thesignofthecross.blogspot.com/2010/07/catholic-social-teaching.html>