

Monthly Reflection:

June 2022

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor

Luke 4:18



At the beginning of his public life, Jesus boldly announced that the 'Spirit of the Lord is upon me'. He was claiming that the prophecy spoken of by Prophet Isaiah was fulfilled in Him. He was indeed empowered by the Father for His mission to 'preach the good news to the poor'! As we prepare for the Pentecost, let us sharpen our awareness of the Spirit of the Lord who is upon us, who in turn deepens our conviction to respond to His call by continuing this mission.

The Spirit of God persuades us to proclaim the good news of salvation to the world, primarily to the poor. He urges us to open the doors of our ministry to those who have nothing to offer in return - to the captives, the oppressed, and to the blind. It is easy to serve the wealthy or the powerful since they can reciprocate in one way or the other. However, without the Spirit of the Lord, it is impossible to serve those who have nothing to offer in return.

It was this Spirit that led Mother Teresa to the slums of Kolkata and Fr. Damien to the island of lepers in Molokai. When asked what the future holds for the Missionaries of Charity after her, Mother Teresa replied, "As long as this community serves the poorest of the poor, it will last". Risking one's life under the guidance of the Spirit to bring the gospel to someone who has nothing to offer in return is no less an amazing miracle than raising the dead. This miracle has taken place throughout history whenever the Spirit of the Lord has touched men and women of faith.

The Spirit indeed has a preferential option for the poor! Not only for those who are poor materially but also for the poor in spirit. In Mathew 11:5, we see Jesus alluding to the preaching of the Gospel to the poor as proof that he is indeed the promised Messiah (The Anointed One).

At this time of Pentecost, as we pray for a rekindling of the Spirit, let us also examine whether it motivates us to preach the Good News to the poor. This Spirit compels us

to give Jesus, especially to those who cannot offer us any honour, money or recognition in return. We see this working of the Spirit when St. Paul says, "... thus making it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on another man's foundation..." (Rom. 15:20).

It is easy to shine out as a Jesus Youth community, yet the Spirit also challenges us at times to be lone lighted candles in the dark corners of the world. God delights in pouring out His Spirit upon us, who in turn sets us on fire for mission. May the glow of this light warm the homes, campuses, parishes, workplaces, villages, and towns through us, thus continuing the mission of Jesus in this present age.

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