

PENTECOST - May 24th 2015

SPIRIT OF TRUTH WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH – Biblical Commentary by F. Alberto Maggi OSM

Jn 15. 26-27; 16.12-15

Jesus said to his disciples "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.

"I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you".

For Pentecost Liturgy suggests this passage from John's Gospel where Jesus talks about the work and the reality of the Holy Spirit. The evangelist writes *"when the Counselor comes"*. It is the same expression usually used to define Jesus, "the defender". Well, the work of the Spirit is that of defending the community from every kind of attack and eliminate the source of suffering at the root. Jesus wants therefore to reassure his community "When the Counselor comes", this power, this energy of God, *"which goes out from the Father"*, the one he calls *"the Spirit of the truth"*, will guide the individual into the truth and will let him understand two very important realities: 1) who God is, the truth about him – God is love; 2) the truth about man, who he is. Man has an incredible dignity, he is called to be the son of this God, *"He will testify about me"*.

It's exactly this loving power and ability that Jesus will communicate to his disciples on the cross in John's Gospel; welcoming this loving power will enlarge the existence of the individual and will guide him towards the sphere of God's love; he will be able to understand many things.

And the evangelist reports Jesus saying *"and you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning"*. Where have we been from the beginning? From the very beginning Jesus has been beside the oppressed, not the oppressors; he's always been on the side of victims, never with persecutors; so Jesus clearly exhorts his community to be always on the side of the

last. Through this attitude of always remaining on the side of the last, the power of the Spirit will come out.

Jesus warns *“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear”*, for only the one who is able to guide his life entirely towards others’ sake can get on the same wavelength with this increasing love that the Lord conveys. But he also assures that *“when he, the spirit of truth comes”*, here comes again this expression testifying that the Spirit guides man, *“he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you – this is very important - what is yet to come”*.

The work of the Spirit is a continuous proposal of the message of Jesus, it’s not a new message or a new revelation that explain what is yet to come, future things. The Holy Spirit guides towards the future. The Spirit never repeats the past; there’s always a temptation for men to regret the past, the old times - which are nice just because they’re passed and forgotten – and to regret the past instead of projecting themselves into the future, the coming time.

Well, when we regret the past, the Spirit is useless, it is not able to work, for the Spirit of God is the one that – Scriptures say – *“making everything new”*. So, opening to the new lets the Spirit come out. What does this mean? This means that whereas the community is devoted to the new needs of mankind, new abilities of reaction and answer will be discovered. Through these new responses to mankind’s needs the Spirit of truth comes out.

This is the main dynamism of Christian life: always being oriented toward the new, and ready to provide new answers, not ancient ones. Giving old responses to today’s needs is useless; we must create, invent and define new ones for mankind’s sake.