

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily
Sunday, May 23, 2021
Pentecost
Cycle B

It is said that friends have a way of reviving our hope that no other person, spouse, family, or workmate can ever do. A few years ago, I remembered a friend of mine. We were friends since high school. One day his wife messaged me on Facebook when she knew I was about to visit home in the Philippines. She said, "Father can you talk to my husband when you come home next month? I'm so afraid of what will happen to him. Since our daughter passed away, he seldom talks to me and he doesn't want to get out of the house. I'm afraid that he may commit suicide". So the first thing I did when I arrived at that time was to talk to him. I listened to all his frustrations and regrets and gave him some words of consolation. Being his good friend, he didn't hold back anything, even cried aloud in front of me. That's all I can do for him, being there for my friend. The next day his wife called and thanked me. She said that her husband had changed since we've talked. His confidence and hope were rekindled.

Today, as we celebrate Pentecost, I believe that a fresh approach to this feast is to perceive it as the Feast of God, the Friend of all. The Gospel teaches us that there are three Divine Persons in One God. The first person is God the Father because he is the origin and destiny of all. The second Person is the Son, our brother Jesus in whom we have become sons and daughters of the Father. We meet the third Person today – the Holy Spirit. How does Jesus present him? Jesus says, he is the Paraclete. He is the Consoler. He is the Spirit of truth.

In other words, the Holy Spirit is all that we need in a friend. A Paraclete is a defender in times of difficulty. A Consoler is one who assures us that everything will be all right. And a true friend always brings us to the truth, either to inspire us or to challenge us. When the truth comes from the lips of a friend, even if it hurts, we are inclined to follow the truth.

There is a little difficulty in speaking of the Holy Spirit. Unlike the Father and the Son, we do not have a concrete picture of God the Holy Spirit. Spirit, by its very name, means breath of air, gush of wind, unseen, invisible. But what is invisible is more powerfully felt. Again, that is what a friend does for us. He is not always seen around us like family members or officemates or classmates are. But a friend is always there for you. He is reliable in every moment and every circumstance, even if he is not physically around. Just remember how the words of your friends affect your life with inspiration and hope.

As we conclude Easter, the Father and the Lord Jesus have one final gift to the Church and to each of us. They send us the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us a Friend. We will survive all crisis – health, financial, family, social – because we have a Friend in God. The Holy Spirit is with us in an unseen yet powerful way.

Remember this all your life: In God we have not only a Father and a Son. We also have a Friend. Be open to him and trust him with everything that happens in your life today. In every moment of life, day in and day out, cry out to the Holy Spirit. He is the Paraclete, the Consoler, the Spirit of Truth. In other words, he is all we need in a Friend.

Amen