

Wednesday 6th Week of Easter
 Acts 17:15, 22–18:1
 Psalm 148:1–2, 11–14
 John 16:12–15

In today's Gospel reading from John, Jesus anticipates how the Holy Spirit will facilitate the essential work that would be entrusted to the Church, which is to lead Jesus' followers into all the truth. We know in John 14 Jesus he is the One who is the Way to the Father. However it would be left to the work of the Holy Spirit to lead the Apostles along the way to the Father. It would be the Holy Spirit who by guiding the Church would speak in such a way so as to glorify Jesus through instructing the Apostles into the fullness of the Truth.

It is worth pausing for a moment to consider what Jesus meant when he said the Holy Spirit would guide them into all the truth. What does a guide do? A guide assists someone in following a path so that they can reach their desired destination.

We can all appreciate how a GPS provides this kind of direction for us. Since coming to St. Peter's I have relied repeatedly on my GPS when going to the various schools associated with our Parish. Each road and turn is identified so I can arrive at my desired destination. The Holy Spirit was and is to the Church what the GPS is for drivers. He keeps us on track and focused so we can reach our desired destination -heaven while keeping us on the narrow path of the Truth while traveling through this world.

That such a guide is needed is a theme that runs throughout John's Gospel. The Holy Spirit is given to the Church to continue the teaching mission of Jesus. The work of the Spirit counteracts the work of Satan. The Holy Spirit discloses the full meaning of the gospel as Jesus expresses in John 14:26:

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.¹

Satan on the other hand spreads deception and falsehood throughout the world as Jesus clearly teaches in John 8:44.

Satan does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies²

Without the guidance of the Holy Spirit we are at best like people who are trying to go through life without any guide at all, or at worst being terribly misdirected. Many live like a person driving aimlessly through the streets trying to find his or her destination unaided. At worst, and this is more to the point, without the Holy Spirit guiding us we will be misdirected and

¹ *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition.* (1993). (Jn 14:26). Washington, DC: National Council of Churches of Christ.

² *The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition.* (1993). (Jn 8:44). Washington, DC: National Council of Churches of Christ.

misguided by the deceiver and liar, the devil who wants us to get lost in this world and end up in that other destination, hell.

The Holy Spirit is so important for us and He continues to work in and through the Church.

Think about it this way. We would never have learned of Christ except through some ministry of the Church. This is not a controversial opinion but a simple historical fact. We know Christ only because the Church has witnessed to us about him: by passing down through the centuries the gospel (“good news”) of the historical events of Christ’s life, death, and Resurrection witnessed by the apostles; by teaching true doctrine about him; by living his supernatural life, his love, and his Spirit; and by celebrating his sacred rites, making him really present in the sacraments. Christ lived on earth two thousand years ago. Who brings him across the millennia to us? Who makes us contemporaries with Christ? The Church.

Back in the Upper Room of the Night of the Last Supper Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would give glory to Jesus by guiding his disciples so that we would know the Way to the Father.

Thanks be to Jesus for the Gift of the Holy Spirit. He isn’t so much our Global Positioning System. Rather working in and through the Church He is our Eternal Positioning System.