

## THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is promised and given. The Spirit is to teach us and to remind us. The Spirit is sent by the Father in the name of Jesus Christ. All of this is the truth stated in today's Gospel. This Advocate is to be our companion as we navigate our lives in these times. How is our relationship with the Holy Spirit? How in touch are we with the experience of the Spirit?

I heard something the other day that caught my attention as having some wisdom and significance. "Your comfort zone can be a very dangerous place." If we stay in our comfort zone, we will stay on the plateau. We most likely use it as an excuse to stay the same for many years and live with the same complaints, the same attitudes, and possibly never grow. The Holy Spirit is to lead us out of our comfort zone. It is to stretch us and challenge us. Is this happening in our lives?

To grow and stretch enough to leave our comfort zone takes courage. It involves trusting that the next experience or opportunity is just as important as the foundation of what we hold on to for our sense of security. Courage is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Being courageous doesn't mean we are fearless. It means that fear does not paralyze us.

Some of the most courageous times in my life have come not from travel but from overcoming self-doubt. Persevering in unconditional love, even when it is hard to find the good in another because of the hurt and pain they cause takes courage. When I think of the Last Supper and Jesus washing the feet of the disciples, it strikes me how it is easy to wash the feet of those who agree with us, support us, and love us. It is not so easy to wash the feet of those who make life difficult, are challenging, or are disrespectful to us. A comfort zone is a dangerous place. It comes easily for us to protect it and never want to leave it. To be open to the Holy Spirit means we must do the uncomfortable for the sake of the Kingdom.



Fr. John