

Francis Gets to the Heart of the Matter



Pope Francis made the following observations of the importance of the Holy Spirit at morning mass in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

A cold and calculating heart that is closed to the Holy Spirit results in a faith that is “ideological”.

Knowing God and the commandments, and being good are not enough. One must also receive God’s gift of the Holy Spirit and let the Spirit “trouble” the heart.

Pope Francis asked: If people were to get a “**spiritual electrocardiogram**,” would it be flatlined because the heart is hardened, unmoved and emotionless or would it be pulsating with the prompting and prods of the Spirit?

Are we able to listen to the Spirit?

Are we able to ask for the Spirit’s inspiration before making a decision or saying or doing something?

Or are our hearts serene, without emotion: immobile hearts much like the doctors of the law had. They believed in God, they knew all the commandments, but the heart was closed, immobile, they didn’t let it become troubled.

Pope Francis concluded that a Christian cannot just listen to their head and calculated reason. They must learn to listen and discern what the Holy Spirit is saying to their hearts.

“A person who does not have this movement in the heart, who doesn’t discern what is happening, is a person who has a cold faith, an ideological faith,” he said.

The Pope challenged people to reflect on their relationship with the Holy Spirit and pray that the Spirit guide them in the choices they make.

Source: Adapted from an article in cathnews.com (31 May 2017)

Prayer

*Come, Holy Spirit, breathe down upon our troubled world.
Shake the tired foundations of our crumbling institutions.
Break the rules that keep you out of all our sacred spaces,
and from the dust and rubble, gather up the seedlings of a
new creation.*

*Come, Holy Spirit, enflame once more the dying embers of
our weariness.
Shake us of our complacency.
Whisper our names once more, and scatter your gifts of
grace with wild abandon.
Break open the prisons of our inner being,
and let your raging justice be our sign of liberty.*

*Come, Holy Spirit, and lead us to places we would rather
not go;
expand the horizons of our limited imaginations.
Awaken in our souls dangerous dreams for a new
tomorrow,
and rekindle in our hearts the fire of prophetic enthusiasm.*

(Diarmuid O’Murchu)

REFLECTION

> To what have you hardened your heart?