

Pentecost 2010



# **WELCOMING THE SPIRIT**

How the Holy Spirit's gifts  
help us to live the Beatitudes

*Come, Holy Spirit...  
fount of life, fire of love  
and make our hearts  
overflow with your love.*



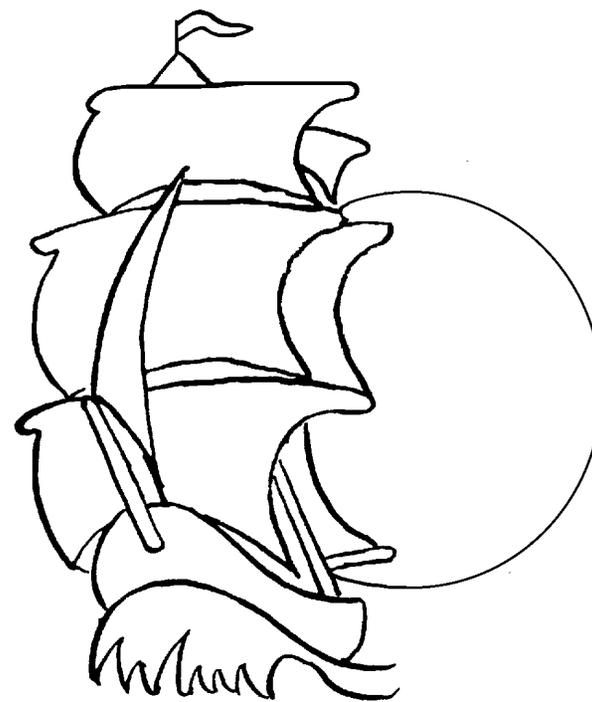
«Therefore, put on the armour of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground. So stand fast with your loins girded in truth, clothed with righteousness as a breastplate, and your feet shod in readiness for the gospel of peace. In all circumstances, hold faith as a shield, to quench all (the) flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

With all prayer and supplication, pray at every opportunity in the Spirit. To that end, be watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the holy ones.»

(Ef. 6.13-18)



*If we add some sails to a boat without engine and that is pushed only by the rowers with the oars, everything become more easy.  
We are the rowers; the oars represent our effort to live the human values; the sails are the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the wind is the Spirit!!!*



*N.B.:* Only the last beatitude it is not take under consideration until now.



**“Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”**, is in fact considered the most perfect and it is not associated with only one gift in particular; in the great difficulties, in fact, it is necessary to use all these gifts.

### *The fruits of the Holy Spirit*

They are the virtuous acts of our soul, enlightened and under the influence of these gifts, that is able to perform usually and easily. They are presented by S. Paul (**Gal 5,22**), only like an example of what we can do after we have received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are: **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self control.**



## WISDOM

### Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God

Could seem a trick of words, but the gift of Wisdom, of “Known”, is related to the word “Taste”. Wisdom in fact is the taste of the beauty of the divine things, it is to taste God, to arrive to love and contemplate Him through living and intimate experience with Him. It is not only temporary enthusiasm, but something that remains as intense joy and intimate love.

Wisdom can rise in us only like a gift of God through His Spirit, it is a gift given freely to us from God, and has its origin and its aim in God himself. God loves me, and I love God. This is a relationship that can not rise only from our efforts, but it is gifted to us: the love of God that is poured into our heart.



Through the gift of Wisdom, also, we arrive to choose Jesus and the Gospel as the center of our choices, and help us to evaluate the different situations of our life. God in His high Wisdom has for each and every one of us a project. He shows it to us along our life pouring into us his own Wisdom...

*If a Wise person is the one who really loves God and is attracted and is in love with Him, he is able to create an environment of Wisdom, of charity, of peace. For this reason he is a son of God, really son, because he is able to taste the beauty that comes in dependence on God; because he makes experience of the love of God the Father.*



## UNDERSTANDING

### Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God

The meaning of understanding comes from a latin word "intus legere", read inside, that means to penetrate, to understand, to have a deep knowledge, to see beyond the appearances; it is to open the eyes on the Truth. This gift could show itself at different levels:

- 1) It can be the capacity to know themselves, without the necessity to use any mask in front of our eyes; it is the capacity to use all the talents that we know to have and face critically the things that are wrong in us;
- 2) It can be the capacity to know others;



- 3) Can be related to the Scripture: understanding is the spiritual intelligence, the capacity to read the Bible, to penetrate His Word; it can be the capacity to read between the lines and enjoy it, get a nourishment for life.

*The gift of understanding is strictly linked with the purity of heart: the more that someone has clean and pure eyes, the more that he/she also has the capacity to see deeply and far, until he can see God.*



## FEAR OF GOD

### Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

The fear of God is not to be afraid of Him, but is the respect and esteem towards Him, because we are conscious of His majesty. The fear of God implies to give value to God: if there will be a sort of fear, this is the one to lose His friendship or to offend Him. We feel ourselves very little in front of Him, and so we feel for Him a respectful love as sons. We recognize with humility our dependence from Him and from His will.

The attitude of the poor in spirit is to recognize to be little in front of God, and to know that all what we have is a gift from Him, and we don't boast for this reason, because these things couldn't be something our own.



*The poor in Spirit in their simplicity place their trust only in God, because they don't feel themselves autonomous and independent (e.g.: little children, the ones who spontaneously ask for help, they need others and so they are closer than others to this mystery of Communion)*



## PITY

Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the land

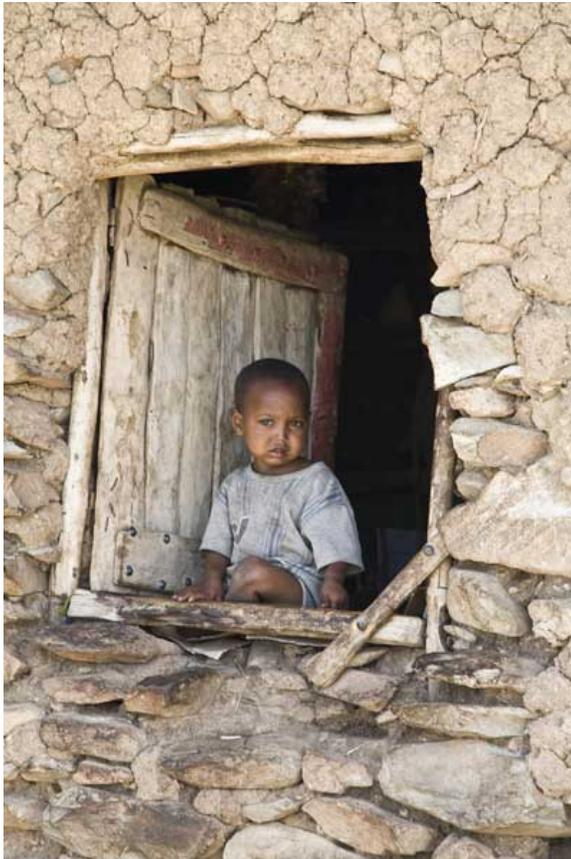
Generally we use the negative connotation of the word “pity” (e.g. “what a pity!”). In reality, in theology this term is strictly linked with the latin significance of

“pietas”, that means the lovely relationship with the family, the parents, the sons and daughters.

The gift of Pity, is the familiar relationship with God the Father, relationship of trust, love, humility and kindness. The fatherly kindness of God towards us, becomes in us kindness of son towards Him, and a kindly and delicate awareness towards others.

*Our heart, full of bounty and kindness of God, is healing by every kind of harshness of words and judgments. The “pietas” towards the Father requires the “pietas” towards*

*our neighbours; so it will become the capacity of good fraternal relationship. It is connected with the meekness of the ones that are not fighting to conquer the land, but received it in inheritance, because they are sons.*



## COUNSEL

Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy

This gift acts in us in two different directions: it enable us to become “counsellors” for others, and at the same time makes us aware that we need to receive “counsels”:



1) The gift of Counsel is the capacity to give advise, not only the simple and human ones, but with a capacity to discernment in the light of Faith; it is the capacity to communicate, better the capacity to transmitt the experiences of Faith that we are living and taste. It is the basis of spiritual communication, it is the gift that

should characterize formators, educators, catechists, parents and all the people that want to “pass on” Jesus to others.

2) Our life is a continuous series of choices. The Spirit of Counsel is given to us like a gift to become a help, or better, the Help in our choices. To listen His suggestions we must be able to recollect ourselves in a prayer, that must be an interior silence; this can enable us to “put aside” egoism, envy, pride, human way of thinking... We feel these suggestions growing from the deep, and they give us peace, joy and security. We understand our weakness, fragility, and limitations and so recognize the need of Jesus’ advise.

*This gift is linked with the beatitudes of the merciful ones, because the attitude of them start from the capacity to feel the needs of others; from this comes out the compassion (means the will to live together with them in their difficulties) and the concrete commitment to help them. Mercy from others, that means the compassion that others have regard to us and their commitment to help us, open our heart when we are in the doubt.*



## STRENGTH

**Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied**



The term “strength” can be better expressed with other terms like: decision, constancy, perseverance, commitment, coherence, courage, tenacity.... Also this gift has two different dimensions, one

passive and one active:

- 1) Passive: it is the strength to resist against the attack of evil, not to give in to evil;
- 2) Active: is the strength to attack; to fight against evil, in favour of the good.

The ideals proposed to us by the Gospel (diametrically opposed to the ones of our society), also if we use all the human capacity that listed before, are unattainable.

If we want to live really the Gospel, we must be first of all humble and ask His help through the gift of Strength; it can help us to have always the courage of love and of forgiveness, of truth, the capacity to witness our Faith, to have always trust in God and the strength to overcome every fear in doing the good.

*In Biblical sense, the hunger and thirst of righteousness are those that fight to realize the project of God, following their internal desire that this project can be fulfilled. They are the ones that have more need than the others to receive and to use the gift of Strength, to be able to persevere in doing good..*



## SPIRIT OF KNOWLEDGE

**Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted**

In our language “knowledge” means especially human knowledge of technical and scientific kind, supported by research, documentations, knowledge fruit of experiments, etc. Through this kind of knowledge we arrive to control and dominate the world. In biblical language “knowledge” is the capacity to know the world, without to dominate it, but to recognize that God is the Creator. So we can arrive to recognize the presence of God in the created things, in Nature and in History. So, it happens that in front of a wonderful landscape, we can taste its beauty, but at the same time we contemplate the Creator, who is more beautiful in comparison to created things, because He is the origin of this beauty.

Also the scholars of biology, science, physics, psychology... arrive to contemplate in their studies, the beauty of the One who creates cells, atoms, psyche, etc..



So, science is the light to see in the things and in the persons the beauty and the power of God; but it is, in a biblical sense, the knowledge that comes from love (e.g.: mothers know instinctively also without study): a heart that loves, is capable to know better any mind. With this gift the heart opens itself to the trust in Him and accepts also things that it is not able to understand (trials, sufferings, tragedies...)

*The ones who mourn are not sad people, but are the ones that are able to face sufferings for the sake of doing His will and because they are looking for authentic reality beyond the temporary difficulties.*

