

Holy Spirit pushes people to repent, change, love, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – The Holy Spirit shows everyone where to begin, what paths to take and how to walk the great journey of life, Pope Francis said.

“Let us sit at the school of the Holy Spirit, so that he can teach us all things,” the pope said in his homily June 5 during Pentecost Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica.

“Let us invoke him each day, so that he can remind us to make God’s gaze upon us our starting point, to make decisions by listening to his voice and to journey together as church, docile to him and open to the world,” he said.

Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, dean of the College of Cardinals, was the main celebrant at the Mass, and Pope Francis delivered his homily from a wheelchair on a platform in front of the altar. The pope has had ongoing difficulty walking and standing because of a knee problem. During the Mass, he sat in a chair facing the altar in the area normally reserved for dignitaries; the Vatican pushed news photographers further back than usual for the ceremony.

“The Holy Spirit will never tell you that on your journey everything is going just fine,” the pope said in his homily. The Holy Spirit “corrects you; he makes you weep for your sins; he pushes you to change, to fight against your lies and deceptions.”

The Holy Spirit, however, will always offer a hand, comfort and constant encouragement because conversion calls for “hard work, interior struggle and sacrifice,” the pope said.

“The evil spirit, on the contrary, pushes you to always do what you think and you find pleasing. He makes you think that you have the right to use your freedom any way you want,” he said. But then “once you are left feeling empty inside,” the evil spirit “blames you and throws you down.”

“When you feel troubled by bitterness, pessimism and negativity,” he said, “it is good to remember that these things never come from the Holy Spirit. They come from evil,” which likes to fuel impatience, self-pity, complaints, criticism and the tendency to blame others for every problem, making people “edgy, suspicious and querulous.”

The Holy Spirit encourages people to never to lose heart and always to start over again, he said, “by jumping right in, without waiting for someone else to start. And by spreading hope and joy, not complaints; never envying others,” but rejoicing in their success.

The Holy Spirit wants people to be together, united in their diversity, harmonizing everyone’s different gifts, Pope Francis said. The spirit “makes us church” as a concrete reality, teaches the Church how to be “an open house without walls of division,” to walk and go forth to evangelize and face the problems of today.

The evil spirit, on the other hand, “drives us to concentrate on our own problems and interests, on our need to appear relevant, on our strenuous defense of the nation or group to which we belong,” he said.

The pope asked people to let the Holy Spirit liberate them from an “obsession with emergencies” and a desire to “program” or “modernize” everything as a solution.

Later, before leading the recitation of the *Regina Coeli* prayer, the pope said that, for some, the Gospel may seem “to be outdated, unable to speak to our current moment, with its demands and its problems,” especially in an age of “the

internet and globalization.”

But thanks to the Holy Spirit, “who connects the teaching of Jesus with every time and every person,” the pope said, “the words of Christ come alive today” for each individual.

Sometimes when people experience “a setback, a struggle, a crisis,” they forget Jesus’ love and fall into doubt and fear, Pope Francis told people in St. Peter’s Square.

“The remedy is to invoke the Holy Spirit” often, but especially before difficult decisions, he said.

The pope suggested that at such crucial moments people pray for the Holy Spirit to come and “remind me of Jesus, enlighten my heart,” and then to open the Gospel and read a small passage slowly “and the Spirit will make it speak to our lives.”