**Pentecost Sunday May 19, 2013 Year C**

I asked you to close your eyes and imaging an image of the Holy Spirit that might come to mind.

Maybe the water of the baptismal font when we were first given the Holy Spirit.

Maybe the fire of the tongues that descended upon those gathered in the room on that first Pentecost.

Or the noisy sound of wind that shook the building.

Maybe the breath of God as He breathed life into the first human as the Book of Genesis tells us.

Or the dove that appeared at Jesus’ baptism.

Well today, I have another image of the Spirit that is not as poetic as those images but might also work.

Raise the champagne bottle for all to see.

This is a bottle of champagne, all corked up.

Now imagine if I popped this cork. Champagne would be spewing all over the people sitting in the first few pews.

Just like the events of the first Pentecost the Holy Spirit seems to be exploding and spewing out all over the place.

Champagne is a drink of celebration, with hugs, kisses, pats on the back, lots of noise, singing and broad ear-to-ear smiles.

Sometimes with tears of joy and relief in celebrating accomplishments that seemed impossible.

It’s part of the locker room celebration after winning the World Series. Everyone gets a bath---the players still sweaty from the competition;

coaches and managers; club owners in expensive suits.

Reporters, with the ink on their notepads smearing and their camera lens streaked with the champagne spray.

**You can’t get the champagne back into the bottle even if you wanted. It’s out and permeating the atmosphere. Sounds like the Holy Spirit to me.**

We drink champagne at weddings. And Pentecost, with the coming of the Holy Spirits celebrates the special permanent union between God and the church.

Champagne is used to toast the successful end of a project; Jesus, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension has saved the world. And the Holy Spirit continues that saving power today.

Champagne toasts are also for beginnings, a marriage or business partnerships, new born babies and store-openings.

Pentecost champagne, the bubbly Spirit, is for the beginning of a new life for believers.

The new work ahead will require the working and breath of the Spirit and disciples.

At the first Pentecost the Spirit is bubbly and intoxicating so much so that on lookers actually thought they were drunk.

Like champagne the Spirit is barrier-breaking and wants to “bring ‘em all in!” Let’s have a party and let’s not leave anyone out!

If they don’t understand the language, the Spirit seems to be saying, then I’ll get through in their own language so that they’ll all feel welcome!”

Some of us just need to know this champagne-aspect of the Holy Spirit---that things can change to a celebration. A powerful God is with us.

What we can’t do on our own needn’t discourage us.

Because the Spirit is in the mix and that Spirit wants the best for us.

Addictions can be broken,

barriers removed,

new beginnings are possible,

defeat isn’t the end;

a drooping spirit can be roused;

risks can be taken and prayer can be refreshing again.

Sometimes we just need to know that God’s life is full, rich, joyful. And yes inebriating at times.

It’s a life that is creative and filled with all kinds of potential for us.

The champagne of the Spirit is out of the bottle, and nothing, no one can put it back in. And the drink is there for all of us.

But the Spirit doesn’t’ always work with such pyrotechnics. In fact, if my experience is any clue, we don’t often, if ever, get such displays.

Some never see such signs that clearly indicate the creative force of God at work.

As day-by-day Catholics, we try to live a good life (not a perfect one).

Work hard raising the kids; struggle to make a marriage work. Don’t cheat on our taxes or lie to get out of a predicament;

Volunteer to feed the hungry and clothe the naked; let go of a grudge; help a new co-worker get adjusted; are friendly to strangers at church.

That’s most of us here today, giving thanks for our ordinary gifts and graces and begging for a little help in a current small or big crisis.

However, even without the visual signs, the Spirit is here and now, urging us to work at community building, peace and justice, love and reconciliation.

Helping us overcome destructive addictions, opening our eyes to God, so present in the world around us, in the people who affect our lives, And in the little miracles that happen every day if only we look for them.

With all the troubles in our world these days, we can be tempted, like those first disciples, to go to church on Sunday, seal the doors and be together commiserating for a while to ease the tension.

But this Spirit is the Spirit of the risen Christ, for whom closed doors are not an impassable barrier; nor are they part of a fortress to keep us in.

So let’s pop the cork of our minds and hearts and let the Holy Spirit explode outside the doors of this Church and go forth spewing the Good News of the Risen Lord singing Alleluia, Alleuia.