

Last week I preached about the *Titanic*. This week I again want to start my homily aboard one of those huge ocean liners crossing the Atlantic in the early 20th century. There is a story of an Irish family who scrimped and saved just enough money to buy tickets to America and a new life. They had almost no money left and so they brought as much food along as possible on-board, hoping to save money by not eating at the galley on-board ship. But it was hard. The kids got hungry as the parents doled out their rations very sparingly. Until one day the teenage son wandered off. He was gone so long that the parents got worried. The Father set off through the ship to find him. Eventually he did find the boy. At the galley! The hungry teenager was seated at a table with a plate of food before him, eating with great enjoyment. The Father was angry. How would he pay for all this? But when the teen saw his Father he quickly started explaining, “Dad, I we don’t have to pay extra! I found out – meals come free with the price of our tickets. We can eat here every meal!”

People have sometimes asked me, “What’s your methodology in evangelizing your parish?” My answer is basically, “I just try lots of things, using lots of styles, and see which ones the Holy Spirit wants to use.” For instance, we have a Eucharistic Adoration Chapel and have an annual Corpus Christi procession through the neighborhood, complete with baldachino, incense, while singing *Pange Lingua* -- which seems pretty traditional. But we also have a youth mass using drums and electric guitars, and praise and worship music. I’m looking for whatever God wants to use to reach us, the Christ Life program, and Alpha, mission speakers, conferences, I’ll do whatever it takes.

And so, speaking of the Holy Spirit, today I want to offer you another chance to go deeper in your relationship with God. On September 28-29, that’s a Friday night from 6:30 – 9:00 PM and all-day Saturday 9:30 – 9:00, Holy Family will host a Life in the Spirit Seminar. What’s that? I think most of us in our search for God are forgetting, or are ignorant of, how much we already have available to us that we’re

not taking advantage of, especially regarding the Holy Spirit. We know vaguely about the Holy Spirit, but, just as many of us know about Jesus without knowing Jesus, so we've heard about the Spirit, but we haven't experienced what He's can do, and so our lives are not filled with the Holy Spirit to the extent they could be. We're missing out needlessly.

Think about that Irish immigrant family. That family is like most of us in our relationship with the Holy Spirit. We don't know that the Holy Spirit comes along free with our Baptism and Confirmation. Do you feel that there must be more to your life in God than there is right now? If we read the Bible at all closely we'll see in the Acts of the Apostles and the Letters of St. Paul that in the Catholic Church of their age there was an extraordinary dimension to the Christian life. The power of the Holy Spirit was expected to work regularly through healing, deliverance from evil spirits, prophecy. This was normal. Why not now? Maybe it's because we don't have a faith that expects such fruit. We've forgotten that the Holy Spirit's power is present with us and available for the

asking. We are not tapping into the spiritual resources that are already there, lying dormant in us.

The Life in the Spirit Seminar is not adult education or theological up-date. It's meant to proclaim the Gospel so that those who hear it can make a more complete commitment to Christ, and then through prayer, call upon the Spirit to open each of us to experience a greater life lived in, and with, the Holy Spirit. This is called, by some, being "baptized in the Spirit." The gifts of the Holy Spirit, the charisms, are meant for everybody, not just priests and nuns, or a small minority. They are meant for you too.

What does the Life in the Spirit Seminar look like? Through Friday night and Saturday there will be seven sessions on topics such as God's Love, Salvation, New life in Christ, Sin in our Life and Examination of Conscience. The sessions include talks, witness speakers, table discussions, music and prayer. There will also be a chance to be prayed

over for an awakening of the Spirit in you. On Saturday lunch and dinner will be provided free of charge.

At every mass we at Holy Family pray our own parish prayer.

“Heavenly Father, please send your Holy Spirit upon our parish community to help each of us take our next step in following Jesus.”

Living out that prayer is what this Life in the Spirit Seminar is all about.

When we enter onto the journey to a new life in Jesus – think again of that Irish family seeking a new life in America – He wants us to enjoy all

He provides for the journey – the whole deal. The power of the Holy

Spirit is real, it is abundant, and it’s available to us. Jesus has already

sent the Spirit to us at the first Pentecost and in the sacraments. Now

we just have to accept Him more whole-heartedly. Try out the Life in

the Spirit Seminar. It’s for all of us, cradle Catholics, converts, reverts –

wherever you are in the spiritual journey. We can always receive more

of the Holy Spirit. God gives us as much as we ask hunger for. Please

sign up or get more information in the narthex after mass.