

Thomas Edison is most remembered for his invention of the electric light. In talking about this, he is quoted as saying:

“I speak without exaggeration when I say that I have constructed 3,000 different theories in connection with the electric light, each one of them reasonable and apparently likely to be true. Yet only in two cases did my experiments prove the truth of my theory.”

Doing a little math, this means that for all the theories he had for electrical lighting, 99.93% of them were wrong. But Edison was not someone to be let down. He persevered through all of those failures and is remembered for his brilliant inventions.

Another quote of Edison's is that “genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration.”

In fact, Edison was such a genius that he invented 1,093 things — or at least, he holds the patents for 1,093 new things ... among which are light bulbs, phonographs, telegraphs, typewriters, transformers, train signals, telephones, generators ... and even the electric meter.

Inspiration is a word often used in religion, and comes from the Latin meaning “to breathe into.”

This evokes the imagery of Genesis, when God formed the first man from clay, and breathed life into him.

And inspiration is the immediate influence of God over our minds and actions.

The difficulty here is that we tend to ignore that 1%, and instead do a lot of things through 100% perspiration - in effect, doing it all on our own power ... and cutting God out completely.

In today's reading from the Acts of the Apostles, we hear about the Council of Jerusalem in the first half of the first century. Their decision not to impose the whole of the Mosaic Law on the Gentile Christians begins with: "It is the decision of the Holy Spirit and of us ..."

That is, a healthy balance of God's influence and the experience of the Apostles.

And in the reading from Revelation, we hear a description of the 'New Jerusalem' coming down from heaven. It is made completely out of precious jewels and oozing with beauty.

Which brings up the other extreme — namely that of doing nothing, and hoping that whatever we need is going to plop down from heaven and we won't have to do anything but sit and wait.

Today, as we approach this altar to receive the sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us pray to be open to the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit in our daily lives.

Whether that is 1%, 2%, 5%, 10% ... whatever it takes ... let us be prepared to receive the grace of God in a new and powerful way ... to be motivated by His love and power in our lives ... so that we may assume our place in the new creation as children of God the Father, redeemed in Jesus Christ, and filled with the dynamism of the Holy Spirit.