

Today we find ourselves at the terminus of the Easter Season. Today is the Feast Day of Pentecost - the culmination of the "Feast of Weeks" - that is, 49 days after Passover ... for us, 50 days after Easter.

Customarily, for the Israelites, Pentecost commemorated Moses' receiving the Law on Mount Sinai ... seven weeks after Israel had departed Egypt.

For Christians, it represents the birth of the Church ... indeed, while our redemption was won at Calvary ... the disciples kept looking backward and were preoccupied with fear of persecution.

While the Law provided a structure for God's Chosen People to embrace ... the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is more than a written code.

Rather, the gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety, and reverence.

These gifts are not regulations that limit a Christian, but rather are the supernatural power given for complete transformation in Christ.

Transformation requires a radical honesty with ourselves - recognizing that while sin remains in us and in the world ... Jesus Christ has conquered sin. And so, our recognition of our sinfulness is not a cause for shame, but rather provides us a LASER focus of where we most need the saving power of Christ - Who has suffered and died, risen from the dead, and ascended ... now sits at the right hand of God the Father.

We no longer need to conform ourselves to an external Law, but instead need to open ourselves to the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

But we should not get too wrapped up in minutiae. Rather, we must allow the Spirit of God to completely transform our entire being - body, mind, and soul ... into the image of the risen Son of God ... Jesus Christ.

It is only through this supernatural help - the gifts of the Spirit ... the grace of God the Father ... redemption in Jesus Christ - can we truly begin to be transformed in Christ.

Today, on Pentecost, fourteen weeks since we began our Lenten journey ... seven weeks since we celebrated Easter ... may God send His Holy Spirit upon us with the seven-fold gifts ... so that our lives may show forth the saving power of Christ ... the transformation of the redeemed in the fruits of that same Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity.