



Let us Regain the Spirit of PENTECOST

It has been a bad news and sad news that an earth-quake has hit Nepal and some parts of North India on Saturday, 25th April, 2015, Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, becoming the epicentre of destruction. But people in the place, in spite of heavy losses of life and property, have not cowed down but has begun the rescue and relief work and reconstruction of their houses immediately in spite of cold and heavy rains. In recent times, at the advent of the BJP rule at the Centre, surprising attacks on Christian Churches have been on an increase, its epicentre, unexpectedly being Delhi itself, the capital of India. Four Churches and a school in Delhi have already been under attack. It has spread to other places like Haryana and U.P. What does it mean? Christians, Christian Churches and Christian missions are no more safe? What is our reaction? Do we take it as a challenge and reconstruct what is being attacked, as being done by the people of Nepal? Or are we trying to withdraw from our mission of Christian witness and sharing the Word of God, saying to ourselves – “now be quiet”, “keep quite”?

The tragic attack on Kandamal Christians based on a blatant lie, that “the Christians killed the Swamy”, did not subdue the Christians of the place, they still profess their faith, in spite of some of them lost their lives and others their homes and their properties. They have stuck to their faith at all odds. Their strength has not been their muscle-power or money-power but the power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. They followed the example of the first century Christians.

The Apostles and their followers stuck to their faith and spread it, even when they were



St. Stephen

persecuted. They did not keep quite but preached more boldly. Stephan, full the Holy Spirit, proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah of the Jewish expectation in a challenging way. And when the people heard him, some of them “were enraged and gnashed their teeth at Stephan. But Stephan, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus at God’s right hand. ‘Look’! he said, ‘I see the heaven opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God’. As they were stoning him, Stephan prayed, ‘Lord, receive my spirit’. And

then he knelt down and said in a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them’. When he had said this, he fell asleep.” (Acts. 7/54-60). Stephan’s martyrdom was not the end but the beginning of a severe persecution. “That day a severe persecution began against the Church in Jerusalem. All, except the Apostles, were scattered throughout the country regions of

Judea and Samaria. And those who were scattered went about preaching the Word.”(Acts. 8/1-8) Persecutions urged them to preach the Gospel and spread the faith more earnestly. Hence opposition and persecution should be seen as an opportunity to proclaim Christ and bring more people into the Church. Bold witnessing is the need of the hour - the spirit of Pentecost. St. Paul said, “We have been endowed not with the Spirit of timidity but of boldness”, to proclaim the Gospel “in season and out of season”. This is the true evangelical spirit. This has to be manifested by the Catholic Enquiry Centres, whose sole purpose of existence is to teach the Gospel and bear witness to Christ with boldness and conviction. Let no Catholic Enquiry Centre feel out of place due to opposition or persecution. On the contrary, let us make our existing CECs more active, begin more such Centres to make books and lessons available in all the languages of India, and let our doors be opened to seekers of Christian faith. That is the spirit of Pentecost which has spread Christian Faith across the world. Let us read the “Acts of the Apostles” during this time and follow its guidance in our missionary efforts – we are called to be the heralds of the Good News of God’s salvation through Jesus Christ. May God bless you all with boldness and faith in the Holy Spirit. Wish you a Happy Pentecost.

-Fr. Varghese N. SVD

(Secretary & Executive Secretary, ACECI)

Jesus, the Son God was filled with the Spirit of God

“Jesus then unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written:

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and sight to the blind. To free the oppressed and to announce the Lord’s year of mercy.’

Jesus then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. While the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he said to them:

‘Today these words of Scripture have come true even as you listen. (Luke: 4/18-21)