

It has always been a little difficult for me to preach on Pentecost Sunday.

To preach on the power of the Holy Spirit is no easy task.

And so today, rather than try to tell you about the Holy Spirit,  
I came across an article that shows the Holy Spirit in action.

This article was written by Rick Reilly sometime around 2008.

Reilly was at the time a writer for Sports Illustrated magazine

And I clipped out the article because I'm an Indpls. Colts fan  
and you'll see the connection

The article's title is "Coaching the Grief-stricken"  
and I've condensed it for this homily.

Reilly writes:

*"Maybe you could use a happy story after what happened  
at Virginia Tech, and maybe I've got one.  
I have this friend, an Iowa truck driver named Mark Lemke.  
Last July he wrote to SI, nominating his 19-year-old son, Cory,  
for "Faces In The Crowd".  
Said the kid set all kinds of golf records  
and he'd been meaning to write for a long time.  
Said he was just finally doing it now  
because Cory had just died in a motorcycle wreck.*

*Well, I wrote a column (Aug. 21, 2006) about how I got Mark  
on his cell phone as he was driving his tractor trailer on an Ohio highway  
and how he wept while talking about losing his best pal.  
And then we made up a Faces In The Crowd box for Cory  
and stuck it at the bottom of the column.*

*Anyway, a couple of months go by, and then Mark gets this call:  
"Mr. Lemke?" the voice says. "It's Tony Dungy."*

*Now, Lemke, 51, is just an ex-jock with a simple life  
that a motorcycle drove a hole through.  
The most he hopes for is maybe a frosty root beer  
and a Vikings game to take his mind off Cory for a few hours.  
So, naturally, he figures the call is a joke.  
"No, it is Tony Dungy," the voice says.*

*"I'm just calling to offer my condolences to you  
and see if there's anything I can do to help you."  
Now, you've got to understand, this was in October.  
The Colts were into the teeth of their schedule,  
the most critical season in Dungy's life, not to mention Peyton Manning's,  
not to mention the millions of Colts fans'.*

*But Dungy has his own sorrow to swallow.  
His 18-year-old son, James,  
hanged himself three days before Christmas in 2005.  
And Lemke knows this.  
So maybe Dungy, who's the same age as Lemke,  
is a guy who can relate.  
So they talk, and the coach tells Lemke to keep in touch.*

*"The hardest thing for me is, I sit in my truck all day,  
and all I do is think about him," Lemke tells him one day. "You're lucky.  
You've got so many people around you to get you through the days."  
"Yeah," Dungy says, "but that doesn't get you through the nights."*

*And pretty soon they've got this bond going.  
Dungy has a wife, five kids, the monster job,  
numerous charities he works with and a thousand things to do,  
yet he takes the time to answer every Lemke e-mail,  
gives him his cell number and returns every call.  
They go deep sometimes. Lemke gets hot at God for taking Cory.  
Dungy tells him that's normal, but he adds that if they keep their faith,  
"we'll see them again."*

*Then it's the playoffs, and Dungy is apologizing  
for not replying to Lemke right away.  
"Sorry about not getting back to you," he emails Lemke one day.  
"Sometimes I can go for a few days without getting on my computer,  
especially if our defense is not playing well."  
I ask you, who is that nice?*

*Next thing you know, the Colts are in the Super Bowl  
and Dungy is inviting a man, a Vikings fan, no less, to be his guest there.  
So Lemke finds a load that needs hauling to Florida,  
and a load that has to come back, and he drives his 18-wheel rig to Miami.*

*The day before the game he meets Dungy in person at the team hotel.  
They hug. They visit. They pray.  
The next day Lemke takes his seat in Dolphin Stadium  
and watched his new buddy win it all.*

*And this is only one stranger whom Dungy has befriended.  
There's the former high school coach in Wisconsin  
whose son committed suicide.  
There's the young kid in Indianapolis  
who lost his mother and brother in a car wreck.  
Heart broken people from all over are suddenly getting a hand up  
from a man who himself should be a puddle  
but is instead a river of strength.*

*Yet Dungy refuses to talk to the media about these good deeds,  
which only makes them better.  
"I'm awfully grateful to him," Lemke says.  
"He helped me keep my faith.  
He taught me that he and I-we're not alone."*

*After two weeks of hearing how low man can sink,  
isn't it nice to know how high he can rise?*

*Tony Dungy stands as a reminder to every parent  
who's grieving right now that there is a way through the pain.  
And that way is through each other."*

That article captures the Holy Spirit active in the life of one man---  
A man that most of us have heard of, but few of us have met.

But the Holy Spirit is active too in people right around us,  
People right here at St. John Paul II...

It's active in people like Don Ferry and the people of the SVDP Society,  
Linda Pratt and the Christian Service Commission,  
Jeri Vest Wade and the people in our parish and others  
that staff the Speed-Sellersburg Food Pantry  
All of whom, led by God's Spirit,  
work daily on behalf of the poor right here in Sellersburg.

It's active in people like the St. Gianna Pro Life group that work  
on behalf of the unborn and others who can't speak for themselves.  
It's active in our teachers in our school and our catechists in our faith  
formation programs, in our Children's Liturgy of the Word,  
our VBS leaders who use their gifts to mold our young Church.

I see God's Spirit in the countless volunteers who spend hour after hour  
cutting our grass, cleaning our Churches, stuffing our bulletins,  
renovating our buildings and the list goes on and on and on.

Today we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost.

And yes, I could tell you all about the Holy Spirit...

Or you can simply look around this Church...

And see the Holy Spirit for yourself.