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Fr. Danny Murphy – Pentecost Sunday 2016

Pentecost! Thank GOD it's a nice day! There is nothing worse than a rainy Pentecost! You have probably made your Pentecost plans. And hopefully there won't be any traffic jams especially at the airport because everyone will want to be home for Pentecost! Hallmark loves Pentecost because by now all their Pentecost cards will have sold out. I hope you got your restaurant reservations for today's brunch or dinner, because the lines will be out the door! The telephone lines will be jammed later today with people calling relatives to wish them a "Happy Pentecost"! Maybe that is how it SHOULD be; because we as Catholics have three great feasts: Christmas, Easter AND Pentecost! Christmas and Easter are very festive, so what happened to Pentecost? Maybe the reason for less festivity is that we don't know much about the Holy Spirit. Here's a story: Back in 1974 the Bishop of Brooklyn was the president

at a Diocesan Celebration and I was invited to give the Homily. The Cathedral was packed – Standing Room Only. I began the homily with these words: " We know we are all made in the image and likeness of God, in the Book of Genesis, we read: 'God created us in his image, male and female he created them.' " Then I said these words, which made the whole church S H A K E... "Soo, if we are all made in the image and likeness of God, both men and women, then God must be both masculine AND feminine. The Father and the Son are both masculine, therefore, the Holy Spirit must be a woman!" At that point the Bishop started coughing and to THIS day, I have never been invited back! I may not know too much about the Holy Spirit, but I know this: the Holy Spirit came to the Apostles as tongues of FIRE and Jesus said, "I have come to bring fire..." The Holy Spirit IS that Fire! Soo, we should pray to the Holy Spirit to set us on FIRE! We should ask him to: Have us NOT settle; rather strive. Have us NOT survive; rather strive. Have us look at live NOT to be endured; rather to be enjoyed. We should ask the Holy Spirit to make us come fully alive. How can we become fully alive? I have two suggestions: FIRST: Let's not ask ourselves what does the Church need or what does the World need? Rather, let us ask ourselves what would make me come alive – and then go DO it! Because the Church and the World needs people who are fully alive and on fire. Here's an example: A friend of mine, in Brooklyn has a heart of gold and some people asked her to joint hem in protesting at a local abortion clinic. She felt she should honor their request even though she hated abortion, but disliked protesting. She dreaded going and then the Holy Spirit crashed into her and a light went on. She realized

that her passion was to help the poor especially the homeless. So now she spends her time and energy doing just that. So, what makes us fully alive? Find it and then DO it! The SECOND suggestion is to cultivate a grateful heart. Don't you know some people who are more fully alive than others? Most will say that "so and so" is SOO alive... Do they have a higher heartbeat or a faster pulse? Maybe not, but they have a grateful heart. St. Paul says that everything is a gift, therefore since this is so, give thanks to God for all things. If we do that, we will become fully alive. Anthony Demello tells the story about a couple who had their first baby. The husband rushes in to see his wife who is crying profusely. "Why are you crying?" he asked. Between sobs, the wife answered: "We had a BOY and you wanted a GIRL!!" "Don't worry," the husband answered, "that was my SECOND choice!" He had a grateful heart and was so fully alive! We may not know much about the Holy Spirit, but we CAN pray:

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your spirit and they shall be created, then we'll renew the face of the earth.