

Third Sunday of Easter ~ 4/22

"The high priest questioned the apostles, saying, 'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you are determined to bring this man's blood on us.'" (Acts 5:27-28)

A hound dog is a funny creature. The dominant sense in this dog is his or her ability to smell. For example, if a Beagle picks up the scent of a rabbit it will take off after the bunny with its nose to the ground. At that point it is almost impossible to stop the dog from chasing over the fields in an effort to catch up with the rabbit. The dog is totally taken over by the sense of smell and is oblivious to anything else around him.

People who are filled with the Spirit are rather like the hound dog. We may be a little offended by the comparison but in fact Spirit-filled people are folks who have felt or heard or in some way experienced the Spirit. Once they pick up that inner sense of God's fire they will not be distracted from their course. They become oblivious to anything but the will of the Spirit.

Like the owner who tries in vain to stop the dog from chasing the rabbit, the high priest tried to stop the Apostles from proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. The Apostles simply ignored him because they were totally consumed by will of the Spirit.

The human being seems to be more dependent on the sense of sight or hearing than on the ability to smell. Nevertheless when we do smell smoke we are instantly aware that there must be a fire in the vicinity. The Apostles were 'smokin' and the high priest could tell that these men were not going to be controlled by any mere order from him. He appeared indignant because the finger of condemnation for the crucifixion of Jesus seemed to point in his direction. He was fearful that the people will begin to realize that real fire of the Spirit will be found in these Apostles.

If we are people of God we will sense the presence of the Spirit and we will respond. If our hearts seem to be smoldering then the wind of the Spirit will fan them into flames. If we are not people of God we too will sense the Spirit but we will be fearful of this Fire of Love. We will try to extinguish it. The Fire of God will continue to burn and we are called to draw near or perish.

Questions for Reflection

- 1. When was the last time I sensed the Spirit moving?*
- 2. Are there times that I am not one with the Spirit and seek to avoid the Holy Fire?*

Prayer: Spirit of God enflame my heart. Make me Your light to the world. Never let me fear the Fire of Your love.