Sixth Sunday of Easter C 2022

Wouldn’t it be great if all difficult decisions could be announced in the manner reported in the First Reading. ‘It has been decided by the Holy Spirit that…’ who could argue with what followed if it had that introduction. The Church has had many rows and difficulties and will have until the end of time. The one described in the First Reading was the first major row - should all new Christians travel via the route of Judaism - that is by circumcision - or is this to be a new religion with new ways of doing things?

The reading we had is a cut down section of that part of the Acts of the Apostles. What is missing are the details of the long discussion and time of prayer that the Apostles went through before they came to their decision. They reflected on the Word of God and allowed it to direct them to the right path. In other words they had been open to the working of the Holy Spirit in order that they could make the right decision - one which proved vital for the success of the early Church. And so it was not an idle claim that the Holy Spirit had been part of their authority.

We are close to Pentecost now - to celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Church - the day the Church was born. A chance for us to reflect on how much WE allow him to be part of our lives. How often WE invite Him to be a guide for us. We can call to Him directly to help:- ‘Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful’. We can spend time in quiet reflection - perhaps using a piece of scripture, the Word of God, and without rushing allow Him to help us find the right way.

Jesus promises us in the gospel that He will send the Holy Spirit to us. And then He says ‘Peace I bequeath to you; my own peace I give you’. How often it is the case, when we have reached the right decision in a matter that has troubled us, that we have a sense of peace. It doesn’t mean that all difficulties are passed. But that sense of peace is the Holy Spirit’s guarantee that He is with us in the steps we then take.