Many Christians are rapidly moving away from the erstwhile attitude of the “forgetfulness of the Holy Spirit” to the tradition of being Spirit-filled. Nobody should be left behind in this Spirit movement because that alone takes us to the Father and Son. Chinua Achebe in his book, Chike and the River, tells the story of a man called Peter Nwana who lived in the River Niger but washed his hands with spittle. This would be the best description of any Christian who has not yet realized what the Father has done for us on the day of Pentecost. How can we live miserable lives when the Holy Spirit has been poured out on us?

_Culled from Pentecost Reflection 2006 by Fr Boniface Ukwu C.S.Sp._

4. _On Being Possessed by the Holy Spirit_

One of the most practical ways of enjoying the full benefits of Pentecost in our lives is by making a conscious decision to become possessed by the Holy Spirit.

Today there is so much talk and even fear about spirit-possession and deliverance is becoming a household word and fast growing ministry. People are afraid of being initiated into one kind of devilish society or another. Parents are apprehensive about having baby-sitters because before they know it their children are invested with strange powers. Others are slow at accepting drinks, fruits or food from even close friends because they are afraid of being initiated into satanic cults. How long would we live in situations like this? Is there no way out of this predicament?

Certainly! There is a way out: if you do not want to be possessed by the bad spirit then submit yourself completely and immediately to be possessed by the Spirit of the living God. One
of the oldest hymns to the Holy Spirit goes like this: Come Holy Spirit Creator come from thy bright heavenly throne, come take possession of our souls and make them all thy own. In other words, Christians believe that the Holy Spirit possesses people. Nothing then stops us from acting according to the faith which this hymn expresses so well.

In economics, it is said that bad money drives out good money and that is a fact. People tend to be slow at parting with the clean/new money that they have so they spend the dirty money. At last it is bad/dirty money that one finds in circulation. We would be repeating a similar pattern if we allow possession by powers of darkness to become the prevalent thing in our world. As things stand now, whenever somebody talks of possession we easily think of the bad spirit. The easiest way to popularize possession by the Holy Spirit is to become first and foremost possessed yourself. Nobody who is possessed by the Holy Spirit can be possessed by the evil spirit at the same time.

Think of it. When you drive a car to a parking place you look for a free space. It is impossible to get into a slot that is already occupied by another vehicle.

The problem is that some so-called Christians are not Holy Spirit-possessed and by that fact are empty. Being thus empty they become easy preys to the bad spirits who go around looking for someone to devour (I Peter 5, 8). Nature abhors a vacuum; we must be possessed by somebody or something.

It is, therefore, important that one decides who or what should possess one. Essentially we are different from other creatures because we are capable of making conscious choices. However, when we fail to use our freedom to choose we find that somehow a choice is made for us by a person or force from outside us. Let us, therefore, decide now to be possessed by the Holy Spirit and be proud to confess that we are possessed. Once this is done we can say good bye to the fact and fears of bad spirits entering
our lives to take control of them. The advantages are more.

A Church of people possessed by the Holy Spirit will remarkably be vibrant. It will be a real sacrament of Christ in the world as well as effective instrument of salvation for all peoples. For it is only by being clothed by power from above that Christians could become witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of earth (cf. Luke 24, 49; Acts 1,8). In such a Church, wealth will be measured not merely by physical assets but by the riches of the Holy Spirit, namely, her manifestations in the lives of individuals, parishes and communities.

A vibrant parish will not be determined by the amount of money it realizes during bazaars or launchings. And priests will not as well be appreciated or rejected on the basis of their productivity in physical projects. Poverty and riches will be a spirit affair. Consolation, help and strength to cope with life will come as part of the dividends of being possessed by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit that comes to possess us is the Comforter, the Helper par excellence and the power of God. He comes to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. Together, therefore, let us raise our voices in prayer to the Father through his Son Jesus, saying: Come Holy Spirit and fill our lives and enkindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth Lord your Spirit and we shall be recreated and you will renew the face of the earth. Amen.

_Culled from Pentecost Reflection 2006 By Rev Fr Bona Ikenna Ugwu C.S.Sp._