

Dear Friends,
Do we understand the language of God? How can we know what is he saying if we do not speak his language? Have you ever lived among the people who speak a different language and hold different values than we



do? I had that kind of experience a few times in my life, in Papua New Guinea, Zimbabwe and in the USA. Let me share one of them. In 1987, I landed on New Guinea Island. I was excited about my mission work, but very soon realized that I was a stranger among strange people in a strange land.

The people there had a very different culture and language. The beginning was tough and confusing. The tribesmen would have conversations that I could hear but not understand. There were some rituals regarding weddings and funerals, and I had no clue what they meant. After a few months, something clicked in my brain, and I started to understand them and have simple conversations. Their way of life was not so strange to me anymore. After a year of living with the tribes, I was changed, and in some sense, I became like them. I spoke their language and, to some extent, I was immersed into their culture. I was not a stranger any more. Even some of my values changed, and I became a stranger to my own people when I got back from Papua New Guinea. As I reflect upon it, I can see that my understanding of their language and culture came after spending countless days living in the villages with the natives.

Pentecost is about a gift of understanding. So often we misunderstand God. And perhaps it is because we do not learn his language. We do not spend enough time with him so the way God does things seems to be strange to us. We hear the voice of God and we see the signs of his presence, but we do not understand what he is saying to us. We need to learn his language and

culture – how do we do that? *There are three indispensable things that we have to do it in order to understand God!*

- ***Pray each day, especially before the Blessed Sacrament***
- ***Read the Holy Scripture,***
- ***Participate in the Mass and in the life of the Church.***

These are a must - they are not options - in order to understand God's language and his "culture".

There was no option for me in Papua New Guinea or Zimbabwe. I needed to learn the language of the people, their culture and their way of life in order to be able to live with them. Without learning the language and culture of God, we do not know how to act as followers of Christ. How do I know that I understand God and follow his culture? Once we speak the language of God and lead our lives according to his culture, we will become strangers to our own people. That's what happened to me. When I got back from mission, my family and friends who knew noticed I was not the same and asked what happened to me. This is what happened to the early Christians.

They were different than the rest of the people. ***"Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect."***(Rom 12:2) Early Christians were different; they followed the culture of God not the culture of the world. May we strive to do the same.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love and renew the face of the earth.

-Fr. Krzysztof