

James Bond. There have been 6 actors playing James Bond: Sean Connery, George Lazenby, Roger Moore, Timothy Dalton, Pierce Brosnan, and Daniel Craig. 6 James Bonds. But to my mind there is only one great Q. Q is the Quartermaster, the one who provides James Bond with all of his fabulous equipment. And for me, the great James Bond movie Q will always be Desmond Llewelyn.

After his death, they tried to replace him. John Cleese tried it. I love John Cleese. I'm a big Monty Python fan. But I never found John satisfactory as Q.

Then the character was absent for a couple of movies. In the most recent 2 movies, they've brought in a very young Q played by Ben Whishaw. He's done a decent job, but it's not the same.

The replacements both pale in comparison to the late great Desmond Llewelyn. Even Pierce Brosnan said about him, "There can be forever many Bonds, but only one Q."

For 36 years, from the 2nd movie to the 19th, Desmond Llewelyn was Q. During those 36 years, he only appeared on screen for a total of about 30 minutes. But his appearances were always essential.

I remember seeing an interview with Desmond Llewelyn once. He was talking about how he originally struggled with trying to figure out how to play the part. He initially thought that Q would be in awe of super-spy 007.

But then he realized that Q was the individual who allowed James Bond to do what he did. Q didn't have to kowtow to James Bond. Just the opposite. Bond depended upon Q. And so Llewelyn found the key to his character. He said that the words that best got him into his character were when Q would say, often in an exasperated voice, "Now, pay attention, 007."

And James Bond would always be wise to heed those words. Pay attention. Because the equipment Q provided James Bond was always essential to the plot of the movie. Without Q, James Bond would have been killed a long time ago. It was Q's equipment that allowed James Bond to accomplish his mission.

And that certainly applies to us spiritually. For a Christian, our spiritual equipment comes from God, the Holy Spirit. And the gifts of the Spirit are essential if we are to carry out our mission.

We heard again this morning St. Luke's account of Pentecost in the 2nd chapter of Acts. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit equipped the early church in miraculous ways. There were several miracles at Pentecost. There were two minor miracles. And there was one major miracle. And since the minor miracles are flashier than the major miracle, we often confuse the minor for major and the major for minor.

The first minor miracle is a rather strange sound and light show. Our reading this morning begins with all of the disciples gathered together. All of a sudden, there's an enormous sound. It's rather mysterious. It's not wind. But it sounds like wind. There are also mysterious

lights. They're not fire. But they're like fire. That's a pretty nifty miracle. But that isn't the major miracle of Pentecost.

Then we're told that the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples. And they began to speak in other languages. Literally, we're told they're speaking in other tongues. These are not mysterious languages. This is not, "speaking in tongues" as St. Paul talks about elsewhere. This is a gift of being able to speak in different earthly languages. And we get the tongue twisting laundry list: Parthians, Medes, Elamites... and on and on it goes. All of them, all of these different people were able to hear the disciples speaking in their native languages. This is also a very nifty miracle. But it's still not the major miracle of Pentecost.

Now don't get me wrong. These other two miracles are great. The disciples are given a powerful experience of the Holy Spirit while they're in the house. That's great. Then they're given a really valuable tool for communicating with people from other nations. That's great too. The Holy Spirit is with them. The Holy Spirit has given them gifts for ministry. But the big miracle is what happens next.

Peter raises his voice and addresses the crowd. And the other 11 disciples are standing with him. That's the major miracle of Pentecost. Not as flashy. But much more important. The minor miracles are miracles of gifts being given. Peter standing up with the apostles and preaching is a miracle of gifts being used.

Don't forget who these guys were. 7 weeks earlier, what were Peter and the others doing? All of them turned tail and scattered when Jesus was arrested. But now they're sticking together as a group. 7 weeks earlier they were hiding out in a room with locked doors because they were afraid of being arrested. Now they're boldly standing out in public.

And Peter. Don't forget about Peter. 7 weeks earlier he denied even knowing Jesus. Peter wouldn't even admit that he knew Jesus to a little servant girl in the middle of the night. But now, in broad daylight, in front of a large crowd, he's preaching all about Jesus. He's standing up publicly and delivering the first Christian Sermon. That's an enormous turnaround. That's an amazing miracle.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter and the other 11 disciples begin to use the gifts they were given by the Holy Spirit. And they use those gifts so that they can begin to live into Jesus' last words: "You are my witnesses." By using these gifts, the Disciples become Apostles. Disciples follow a teacher. Apostles go forth, carrying a message. The Holy Spirit has empowered them to take the Good News of Jesus Christ out into the city of Jerusalem, and then out into the world. And they do just that.

We also have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit. Every Christian is given at least one spiritual gift. The question is, what do we do with them?

We might be tempted to keep them private. But that's not the pattern in the 2nd chapter of Acts. The Spirit is poured upon the apostles in a house. But they spill into the streets. They carry the message out to the entire city, and later to the entire country, and later, to the

entire world. They don't keep these gifts private. They use them publicly. After all, spiritual gifts are meant to be used.

We might be tempted to say, "Thank you very much," but then not do anything with our spiritual gifts. But that's not the pattern of the 2nd chapter of Acts. Gifts are meant to be used. Equipping is done with the intent of the *equippee* using the *equipment* given by the *equipper*. If it's not used, it doesn't do any good.

Imagine how boring a James Bond movie would be without any gadgets from Q. Or, imagine, that James Bond is given equipment that he never uses later in the movie. Pretty dull. The excitement is in seeing these gifts used for the purposes for which they were designed and given.

In the same way, the Holy Spirit equips us with gifts. But they're gifts with a purpose. We are called to use them for ministry. In Acts, chapter 2, the Holy Spirit equipped the Disciples with gifts for ministry. But the book doesn't stop there. And the other 26 chapters of Acts tells us how as Apostles carried out that mission, how they carried the Good News to all the Roman empire.

In fact, the title of the book is a good reminder to us about the Holy Spirit. The book is called, "The Acts of the Apostles." It's not called, "The Wonderful Theologically Correct Faith of the Apostles." It's not called "The Warm Fuzzy Internal Spiritual Feelings of the Apostles." It's not called "The Book of the Gifts Given that Never Get Used." It's called ACTS. The Holy Spirit empowers. The Apostles act.

The Holy Spirit gives his people a variety of spiritual gifts. Some to proclaim the word. Some to teach. Some to serve with their voices. Some to serve with their hands. Some to sweat with their muscles. Some to love with their hearts.

A variety of gifts. And these are gifts meant to be used.

Each one of us has been given at least one spiritual gift by the Holy Spirit. And the same Spirit calls us to use these gifts to do his work in the world.

Come Holy Spirit. Fill our hearts. Empower us with your gifts. And give us boldness, that we may share those gifts with all those meet. Come Holy Spirit, come.