

St Paul stands today in the middle of Athens.

The great city of philosophers.

The city of learning, debate, ideas, temples, statues.

A city overflowing with intelligence—

and yet spiritually lost.

And Scripture says something striking:

“His spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols.”

Provoked.

Not irritated merely.

Grieved.

Because Paul sees something tragic:

Human beings made for the living God
bowing before things they themselves have made.

And perhaps that is why this reading speaks so powerfully to our own age.

Because modern people often think idolatry disappeared.

It did not.

The idols simply changed shape.

Now the idols are comfort.

Success.

Pleasure.

Self.

Politics.

Technology.

Image.

And like Athens, the modern world is full of intelligence—

yet often profoundly empty spiritually.

Paul walks through Athens and notices an altar: **“To an unknown god.”**

And he begins there.

“You worship what you do not know.”

That is the tragedy of the human heart without revelation.

Humanity reaches upward.

Searches.

Hungers.

But cannot save itself.

Reason can search for God—but only God can reveal Himself fully.

And that is exactly what happens in Jesus Christ.

Paul proclaims the truth the world could never discover by itself:

God has entered history.

God became man.

God will judge the world in justice.

And proof has been given—because Christ has risen from the dead.

And suddenly the atmosphere changes.

Some mock him.

Others walk away.

A few believe.

That remains the pattern of the Gospel in every age.

And then the Gospel explains why.

Jesus says:

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth.”

Truth is not invented.

It is revealed.

The Holy Spirit does not create a new Gospel.

He leads the Church deeper into the truth already revealed in Christ.

And this matters profoundly now.

Because we live in an age drowning in information yet starving for truth.

Everybody speaks.

Few listen.

Everybody has opinions.

Few seek wisdom.

And into that confusion the Church still proclaims:

Truth exists.

Truth has a face.

And His name is Jesus Christ.

And today, on the memorial of Our Lady of Fatima, this becomes even more striking.

Because what did Our Lady come to do at Fatima?

Not entertain curiosity.

Not create fear.

She came calling the world back to reality.

Back to prayer.

Back to repentance.

Back to God.

She spoke about sin because sin is real.

She spoke about hell because souls are eternal.

She called for conversion because eternity matters.

And the world mocked Fatima too.

Just as Athens mocked Paul.

Because the world always resists what interrupts its illusions.

But Our Lady came as a mother.

Warning because she loves.

Calling because souls are in danger.

And this is where the readings come together.

Athens was full of idols.

The modern world is too.

And the deepest danger of idolatry is not statues.

It is building life around something less than God.

Something temporary.

Something unable to save.

Paul sees a city full of brilliance and yet spiritually blind.

Our Lady at Fatima sees a world moving toward catastrophe because it has forgotten God.

And Christ promises the answer:

The Spirit of truth.

Because without truth, humanity loses itself.

And perhaps the gravest line in the Gospel is this: **“He will glorify me.”**

The Holy Spirit always glorifies Christ.

Never the self.

Never the spirit of the age.

Christ.

That is how we know whether something truly comes from God.

Does it lead toward Christ crucified and risen?

Toward repentance?

Toward holiness?

Toward the sacraments?

Toward truth?

Or does it lead inward toward self-obsession and confusion?

And so today the Church speaks with both urgency and hope.

Urgency—because idols still enslave souls.

Hope—because grace still breaks through.

Even in Athens.

Even in the modern world.

Even in hardened hearts.

Paul walked into a pagan city carrying the Gospel.

Our Lady appeared to poor children carrying a rosary.

And both proclaimed the same truth:

Turn back to God while there is still time.

Because human hearts remain restless until they rest in Him.

And no idol, however modern, can ever take His place.