

Nine Days Novena to the Holy Spirit.

**Novena of Reflection and Prayer in Preparation for the Feast of Pentecost
(31st May) 2020**

Prepared by Spiritan Mission Ireland



Introduction

These reflections on biblical texts that speak of the many and varied ways that the Spirit of God is at work among us are an invitation to prayerful preparation for the Feast of Pentecost during this time of global pandemic.

Follow grace and never go ahead of it. It is not necessary that you see how you are advancing – that is for the Spirit to do. He is your guide, not you. In prayer follow that which attracts you...
(Francis Libermann)

Day I – Friday, May 22nd

Where the Spirit is, there is creation and new life.

Where the Spirit is, there is the living Christ.

The Spirit is the breath of God's creative love,

so that whoever lives in the Spirit

lives in the ever newness of God.

(Sr. Ilia Delio OSF)

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

The earth was a formless void and the breath (spirit) of God swept over the waters.

Then God said, "Let there be light and there was light."

(Gen 1:1-2)

Our upbringing furnishes us with mental models that inform our outlook and help us to negotiate life's difficulties and questions. These models or maps are a way of organising the things we know into useful information that we can call upon when needed. This is also true of our religious upbringing. So, it may be that as we approach Pentecost we think of the Spirit as something given on some wonderful once-off occasion, 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus, a gift that that gave rise to the community of faith called Church.

We may also associate it with our confirmation and the seven gifts of the Spirit that were poured out on a given day.

However, as such a perspective is quite limiting, especially when we consider that in the Scriptures the movement of the Spirit of God is not restricted to a particular feast day or time. In the Bible the Spirit or breath of God (ruah) is an expression of the activity of the utterly mysterious Other, the Creator who causes everything to be and who sustains all that exists. That this is so is subtly expressed in the beautiful opening words of Genesis.

According to some experts in Hebrew, the language of the Old Testament, it would be perfectly acceptable to read those words as: "When God began to create the heavens and the earth..." In other words what is put before us is not a one-off moment that occurred "in the beginning" but rather a process, a process that is a breathing (inspiration) of the breath of God. What that means is then expressed symbolically in the first outcome of the creative activity of God who breathes "Let there be Light!"

The mystic who wrote Genesis 1 intuited that when we contemplate creation and ourselves in it, we are somehow drawn to the mystery of God, the source of Light and all that is good. Perhaps this is what the writer of Psalm 36 has also grasped when he, considering the gift around him gave voice to this prayer:

How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
They feast on the abundance of your house
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
For with you is the fountain of life; In your light we see light.
(Ps 36:7-9).

(Pause for reflection)

Let us pray:
Creator God,
Fill us with your creative Spirit
that we may learn to contemplate
with wonder and gratitude
the world in which we live and on which we depend.
Let it speak to us of you and the movement of your Spirit
through which you renew the face of the earth
everyday.
AMEN.