

**Novena to the Holy Spirit  
Day III - Sunday  
May 24<sup>th</sup> 2020**

**Reflection and Prayer**

**Prepared by the Spiritan Mission Ireland**

**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.**

**A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. (Ezek. 36:26)**

**The world's first heart transplant, performed by Dr. Christian Barnard in 1967, caused a sensation at the time as people marvelled at the advancement in medical science that allowed for such an operation. Dr Barnard and his team had learned how to remove a deeply defective heart and replace it with a healthy one.**

**The prophet Ezekiel, writing some two and half thousand years earlier, had something very different, but no less remarkable, in mind when he shared his understanding of what God wanted to do for his people. Ezekiel had been a priest in the Jerusalem Temple. He lived through the war and siege that led to its destruction and was numbered among those taken into exile by the victorious Babylonian army. He knew what it was to live with a broken heart, what it was to feel lost, without roots, and even abandoned. Yet still, while mired in circumstances he would never have chosen for himself, he came to a new understanding of God at work in his life.**

**In the midst of the mayhem, he perceived that God wanted to heal his people and would do this by fixing what was wrong with them. He would give them a new heart. In the Bible the heart is the seat of understanding. Their grasp of God had become skewed and was distorted, and they had failed to hear and respond to his invitation to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly in his way. Now, however, their faithful God would have them come to know him again, he would breathe new life into them. This life would come from his Spirit and it would give them new heart. So once again we find that in the Scripture the Spirit's role is to create, to recreate, to make new.**

**Through the mission of Jesus, we have come to learn that God will always meet us where we are and that is where he begins the work of forming us anew. At times, this may feel like heart surgery without anaesthetic, but we also know through Jesus that the divine healer can be trusted.**

**I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and have done this, says the LORD. (Ezekiel 37:14)**

**(Pause for reflection)**

**Let us pray:**

**Healing God reach out to us now and make us well.**

**Heal our hearts and the hearts we have hurt by our faithlessness and neglect. Through the gift of your Spirit awaken us to the new life you offer,**

**rooted in your compassion, justice and love, so that we may become instruments of your healing goodness.**

**We make this prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**AMEN.**