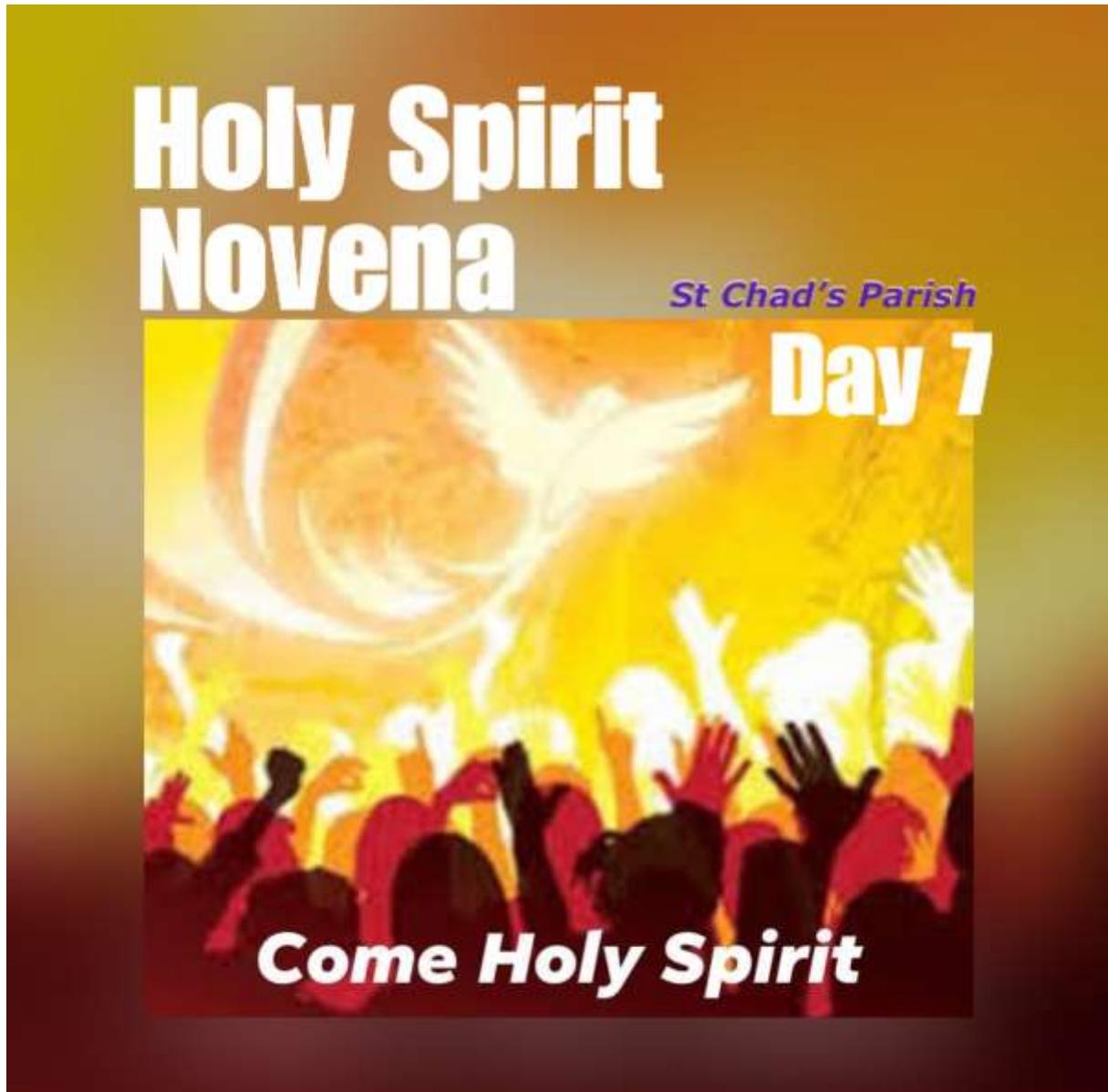


Novena to the Holy Spirit
Day VII - Thursday
May 28th 2020



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.

Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

(Rom 8:26-27)

Some twenty years before Paul wrote these words to the Christians in Rome his world had been turned on its head. Back then, he was self-assured and confident in his faith. He knew all about God, what was pleasing to him and what was not. He was as certain as anyone could be that Jesus was not the Messiah and that the movement that was gathering strength in his name had to be stopped. Jesus could not be the messiah because quite simply he was crucified; he died a criminal's death, beyond the reach of God. Then it happened! Paul encountered the crucified and risen Christ and so began a total transformation of how he understood himself, the world and his God. He had to unlearn all his certainties, allow the Spirit of God to create him anew. This Spirit, which was the Spirit of the risen Christ was at work in him now and for twenty years had been teaching him to call out to God "Abba Father" just as Jesus had done. So, when Paul writes to the Romans that the Spirit helps us in our weakness he knows what he talking about. He has learned what it means to be brought to your knees, he knows what it means to be lost, uncertain and confused. He knows what it is like to come to prayer and have nothing to say. He has learned to allow the Spirit of God to pray in him with sighs too deep for words. He has come to know that when we pray we must allow God to be God. We have to trust that the Spirit abides in us and that our prayer is not about conforming to methods or models but about resting in his presence.

And because you are children,

God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

(Galatians 4:6)

Let us pray:

Gracious God,

when our hearts are broken

or our minds are distracted,

when we are anxious and troubled

or when our faith is weak,

give us confidence that we can still

turn to you even though we have no words,

because you encounter us

just as we are through the presence of your Spirit who prays in us a wordless prayer of longing and love.

AMEN.