

6 Easter Friday 2020
JN 16:20-23

This morning's gospel yet again finds us at the Last Supper table with Our Blessed Lord in the Upper Room. He's four chapters into His teaching on His last night on earth.

- ✓ The weeping and mourning,
- ✓ grieving for a time,
- ✓ you will be sad for a time

all refer to the time between the Ascension of Our Blessed Lord, after He had left them, and Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit had come to guide them to all truth.

For nine days, from Ascension Thursday, to Pentecost Sunday, the Apostles, along with the Blessed Mother, prayed the very first novena. For nine days, they prayed in the Upper Room for something to happen. They knew the Holy Spirit was coming because, during the Last Supper, Jesus drilled the Apostles over and over again about the coming of the Holy Spirit. We went over the five times Our Blessed Lord spoke of the Holy Spirit at the Last Supper on Monday.

The Apostles knew the Holy Spirit was coming but they did not know the when, the where, the how, or, the what of

the Holy Spirit's descent. The unknown is always a source of tension. I explained this in my homily on Monday

Kind of like social distancing, and isolating, and quarantining for those who were exposed or diagnosed. The difference between the Apostles for those 10 days, and us today, is they were not graced with the Holy Spirit but we are.

But the Apostles did not remain

- ✓ weeping and mourning,
- ✓ grieving for a time,
- ✓ and sad for a time

What force so transformed Peter who cursed and swore like a common fisherman, in the light of the fire that he knew not the Man - into one who could startle the hearts and thrill the souls of the learned with the message of Jesus whom God raised from the dead?

What force so transformed Saul, the greatest enemy of the Church into St. Paul, her greatest champion?

What force so transformed that crude, homeless smelling group of Galilean fishermen into fearless martyrs who preached the Gospel to the ends of the earth?

There is only one force in the world which explains how:

- ✓ habitual doubters like Thomas
- ✓ greedy tax collectors like Matthew
- ✓ dull men like Philip
- ✓ impetuous characters like Peter
- ✓ gentle dreamers like John
- ✓ and the rest sea faring men reeling under the shock of a crucifixion

could be transformed into men of fire, ready to suffer, dare, and if need be, die – and that force they proclaimed everywhere. It was nothing short of the descent of the Holy Spirit, which you have I were privileged to receive sacramentally, not once in Baptism, but again in Confirmation. Nothing short of the Holy Spirit. So realizing that gift, that sevenfold gift of:

- ✓ wisdom
- ✓ knowledge
- ✓ understanding
- ✓ fortitude
- ✓ counsel
- ✓ piety
- ✓ and fear of the Lord,

let not yourselves cower in this time of crisis, but rather stand tall. Stand firm with Our Blessed Lord through the power of the Holy Spirit.