



14 May 2020

**Novena to the Holy Spirit at the dusk of our Diocesan *Year of Prayer***

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability (Acts 2:1-4).

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

A year ago at the Mass of Chrism, I announced that beginning on Pentecost Sunday, 9 June 2019, and lasting until the next Pentecost Sunday, 31 May 2020, we would observe a special *Year of Prayer* for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on our diocese as we seek to be “a mission-oriented Church that forms disciples of Jesus”.

On the day of Pentecost, the disciples were all together “in one place”. We cannot be together physically during the pandemic, but we can be united spiritually during these days which are meant to be an intense preparation for the Great Feast of Pentecost. I am asking that we mark these days, which will bring to a conclusion our *Year of Prayer*, by a novena to the Holy Spirit. **The novena will begin on Friday, 22 May, and continue until Saturday, 30 May, the Vigil of Pentecost.**

My hope is that all the faithful of our diocese, all our parishes and our families will unite in prayer each day of the novena, and that all of us will include in the different prayers we use, a daily recitation of the common prayer for the *Year of Prayer* ([attached](#)).

This prayer contains a vision for us as we strive in our Families of Parishes to be a missionary Church. In it, we pray that the Holy Spirit will fill our hearts with an ardent desire:

- To grow in a deep, personal relationship with Jesus, to be his missionary disciples;
- To know God’s word and to proclaim this Good News to others;
- To recognize Jesus present in the Eucharist and to be united closely with him in our lives;
- To love our neighbour, to seek reconciliation and with big hearts to serve those in need.

As we come to the end of this *Year of Prayer*, I would like to express my profound gratitude to you, the people of the diocese, for entering into this unique time of prayer. We have united ourselves with the Holy Spirit and are confident that our prayer will bear abundant fruit.

Together, we pray that Pentecost will be a new beginning for our diocese. On the first Pentecost after Jesus’ resurrection, the Holy Spirit completely changed the disciples. They were fearful, but filled with the Holy Spirit they went out and proclaimed the Gospel, even to the point of sacrificing their lives. Like these disciples, we do not know exactly what will be demanded of our Church. May we be filled with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. May we put our trust completely in his hands. Set on fire with his love, may we go out boldly to proclaim the Gospel to the world.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. R. Fabbro, C.S.B.  
Bishop of London