



IMMACULATE HEART^{OF} MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

A LETTER FROM THE PASTOR MAY 31, 2020

Dear friends in the Risen Lord,

Pentecost is one of the solemnities experienced with renewed zeal by anyone who has made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Four months ago, our IHM pilgrims visited and prayed in the Upper Room in Jerusalem. Although the current structure dates from the 14th century, the site has been identified with the Jesus' Cenacle since the 4th century.

It is the room of the Last Supper, where Jesus washed his disciples' feet. It is the place where the disciples gathered in fear after Jesus' death and prayed, with Mary, for the coming of the Holy Spirit. It is where the Risen Lord breathed on them that same Spirit. And it is from that room that they went forth with boldness to share the Good News with all the world.

And yet, one need not physically go to the Cenacle in Jerusalem to be aware of its spiritual importance. What happened in that Upper Room almost two millennia ago, both before and after Christ's resurrection, continues to have significant and grace-filled personal effects on every baptized Christian. The events that took place there continue to rest at the heart of our faith today.

Moreover, inside each of us there is an "upper room," where we experience the living presence of God. Wherever we are, whenever we take the time to find and speak and listen to God, we can experience his life-giving, sacramental, and transformative presence. That awareness is especially important in these days when our own physical confinement has often been frustrating and burdensome.

As Pope Francis said, speaking from the Cenacle in 2014: "How much love and goodness has flowed from the Upper Room! How much charity has gone forth from here, like a river from its source, beginning as a stream and then expanding and becoming a great torrent. All the saints drew from this source; and hence the great river of the Church's holiness continues to flow: from the heart of Christ, from the Eucharist and from the Holy Spirit."

Happy Birthday, Church!