

# Sunday Reflection

- ◆ **First Reading:** *Acts 2:1-11*
- ◆ **Second Reading:** *1 Cor 12:3-7,12-13*
- ◆ **Gospel:** *John 20:19-23*

“.....SUDDENLY THEY HEARD WHAT SOUNDED LIKE A POWERFUL WIND FROM HEAVEN, THE NOISE OF WHICH FILLED THE ENTIRE HOUSE IN WHICH THEY WERE SITTING..... THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT...” On that particular occasion the presence of the Spirit was pulsating, awesome, indescribable....

How would you describe a commonly used word “presence”?, yes, we all know what it means, but how is it defined?, when you think of it, “presence” is a very powerful word, because it can describe many instances, joys and sorrows, fear also. Right now the presence of this Covid-19 is very obvious everywhere, but where is it?, “gosh!, it’s out there all over the place”!!!, “but” says you “ I can’t actually see it!!, it seems to be a menacing presence”

From March 2016 to June 2018 my dear ‘ol mother lived in a care home called “T.L.C.”, in Santry, not far from Dublin airport ; her room was number 203, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, the area is Northwood, a peaceful housing estate. The Northwood road links the old airport road to Santry road. At that time this one mile radius of territory meant everything to me, why? because my elderly mother was part of it, she resided within that space, I felt her presence, she was close by ; even after a visit to the T.L.C., I could still feel her presence down at the local Omniplex shopping centre, she was still close by ; but that all changed on 24<sup>th</sup> June ’18 when she peacefully passed away. The undertaker came to do his job and in less than 24 hours room number 203 had a new occupant. With my mother deceased, a loving family PRESENCE had disappeared, as we would usually say “I had no more business in that area of Santry”, now instead of PRESENCE, I was experiencing ABSENCE.

In this context the sting of absence, even of just that one beloved person, was taking in an entire area. Again it's not easy to define PRESENCE, it's worth exploring or how about that 1959 epic version of BEN HUR?, though this wonderful film deals with the story of prince Judah Ben Hur, the presence of the Christ Messiah permeates the film ;

What is it that permeates the life of the Church? Or outside of church life what is it that influences the lives of so many people who lead lives of righteousness, decency and generosity?, what is it that gives spiritual life to the Mass and the other sacraments?, it's the presence of the Holy Spirit. Is it possible to be influenced by that same Spirit and not be aware of it? of course it is! so how does the Spirit work? Jesus spoke about the workings of the Spirit, in st.John's Gospel, chapter 3, he says to Nicodemus **THE WIND BLOWS WHEREVER IT PLEASES, YOU HEAR IT'S SOUND, BUT YOU CANNOT TELL FROM WHERE IT COMES NOR WHERE IT IS GOING. THIS IS HOW IT IS WITH ALL WHO ARE BORN OF THE SPIRIT....** Again how does the Spirit work?, in millions of ways, and more millions!! The Holy Spirit is the Enforcer of life, and Jesus came to give life in abundance ; He also said

**IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT GIVES LIFE, THE FLESH HAS NOTHING TO OFFER. THE WORDS I HAVE SPOKEN TO YOU ARE SPIRIT AND THEY ARE LIFE..**

But there is something the Spirit needs from us in order to make our little corner of the world a better place, and that is a listening ear!!, to pray properly without distractions is to listen to the Holy Spirit. Therefore prayer is of the essence, pray well and grasp as best you can that wonderful mysterious presence of the Spirit or have you ever tried to pray even when you don't "feel" like praying?, try it!!, try anything to allow the Spirit IN, and there will be life. In chapter 17 of Acts, st.Paul presents his description of the Spirit, he says to the people of Athens

**YET IN FACT HE(the Spirit) IS NOT FAR FROM ANY OF US, SINCE IT IS IN HIM THAT WE LIVE, AND MOVE, AND EXIST, AS INDEED SOME OF YOUR OWN WRITERS HAVE SAID we are his children...."**

Though our churches still remain closed during this Pandemic, but the Holy Spirit will never remain “closed”, the Spirit intercedes for us along with all the saints and angels, we are not alone, stay tuned to the Spirit, present everywhere, even at work in the midst of the lockdown ; don’t expect miracles nor magic from the Spirit, more so, allow the Spirit to lead, strengthen and guide you peacefully thru’ your journey of life with all those detours, joys, sorrows and uncertainties attached ;

And the responsorial is **SEND FORTH YOUR SPIRIT, O LORD, AND RENEW THE FACE OF THE EARTH....**

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