



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Next weekend is the Feast of Pentecost. This is a feast of the Holy Spirit, as we remember how He descended upon the Disciples in tongues of fire. In the first reading today, we hear about how the Disciples gathered in the Upper Room. Jesus had told them to go into Jerusalem and pray, to await the coming of the Holy Spirit with “power from on high” (Luke 24:49, see Luke 24:46-47, Acts 1:6-9).

This is the time we’re in, what we celebrate today – the in-between time, the time of waiting. We just celebrated the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven (on Thursday), and now we wait in Novena (nine days of prayer) for the coming of the Holy Spirit. We, too, wait and pray for a greater outpouring of His Holy Spirit, so that we may be better witnesses to the world of His love.

It is important to notice that Mary, the mother of Jesus, is specifically named as being with the Disciples in the Upper Room (Acts 1:14). Mary’s presence there helped for the Disciples to receive the Holy Spirit. Remember that Mary is the spouse of the Holy Spirit. At the Annunciation, the Angel tells Mary that “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you” (Luke 1:35). Mary was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit in a very special way. The tradition of the Church recognizes this as her betrothal, as it were, to the Holy Spirit. Being without sin from the first moment of her conception in the womb of her mother St. Anne, living her life in complete obedience to God, and having been “wed” to the Holy Spirit, places her in a unique position to assist the Disciples to receive this outpouring of the Holy Spirit. I’m sure this time was a very tender time for her to share with the Disciples intimate stories of Jesus’ life before they had met Him, and of “mothering” them. Mary helped the Disciples in this time to be open to the Holy Spirit.

She can help us, as well. Mary and the Holy Spirit never got a divorce! She is the Mother of Christ – both the head (Jesus) and the members (the Church – us). She mothers us and helps us to be open to the Holy Spirit moving in our lives. She helps us to say, “May it be done to me” (Luke 1:38); she trains our souls to “magnify the Lord” (Luke 1:46) as hers did; she points to Jesus and says to us, “Do whatever he tells you” (John 2:5); she is present with us through our crosses, and directs us to gaze upon Jesus as she did at the foot of the Cross.

In this month of May, this month of Mary, as we prepare for a greater outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, let us ask Mary to mother us, to help us to be as open as she was to the movement of the Holy Spirit, so that we may be witnesses of God’s love to all the world.