
"Let the holiness of God shine forth" (cf. Mt 5, 16)

item 504

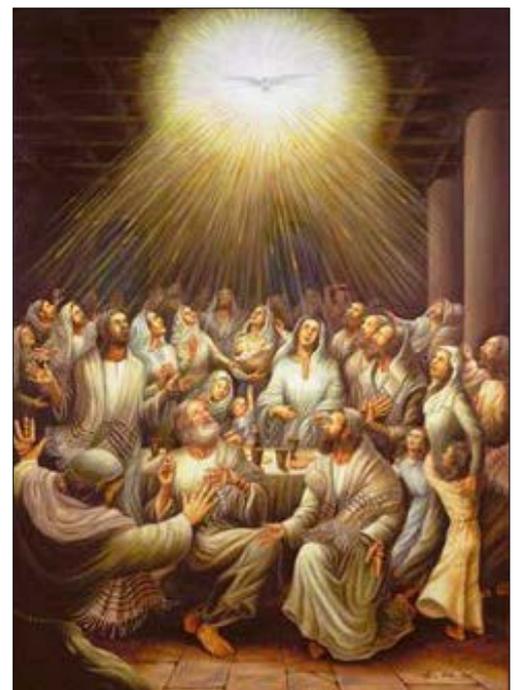
our mission spirituality: 'in the spirit of Cenacle' [II]

What does the upper room tell us about the spirituality of *Pallottine* mission?

The upper room provides the sacred and shared space for his disciples to gather around Jesus and eat with him. It was a place of assembly for his disciples in his name. The upper room keeps the disciples united so that they may not disperse away from Jerusalem before they receive strength and power from the Spirit of Jesus. The upper room stands for that communion of the disciples gathered in the name of Jesus. By their presence and nearness to Jesus and to each other in this room they assure one another; their loneliness, fears are calmed by the presence of Jesus and the fellow disciples. In his own moment of loneliness, doubt and fear Jesus would turn the Garden of Gethsemane into a sort of upper room where he prayed that heart-rending prayer while his disciples slept: "Father if it is your will let this cup pass from me; but let your will and not mine be done." In that sacred space Jesus would receive mental stability, emotional strength, purposefulness of life and peace of heart to face his mission of bearing witness to the Father. It is in this room the disciples of Jesus would for ever find what Jesus found in the Garden of Gethsemane for their own respective missions.

The upper room is not only an historical space but also a spiritual and mystical place where the community founded by Jesus would forever devote itself to prayer and await the fulfilment of the promises of the Father. It is the sanctuary where the Spirit of truth would again and again be given to the disciples of Jesus, the spirit who would lead them to all truth.

Contact with God is the beginning of all mission. It is also the reason of the continuance of the mission. That is why in the Old Testament and the New there is no hereditary prophets and apostles. The son of a king could be a king; the son of a priest could be a priest; but the son of a prophet could never be a prophet nor could a son of an apostle be an apostle. Prophets and Apostles were handpicked by God because they were people immediately in contact with the Word of God. When they lost touch with the Word of God, they not only ceased to be prophets but became false prophets.

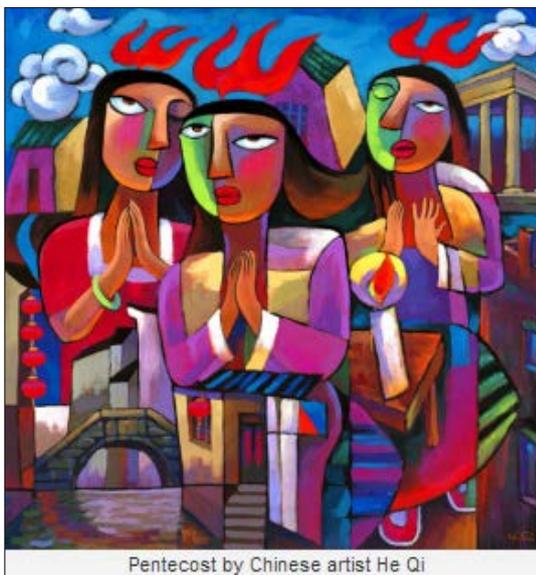


...The upper room also becomes the locale wherein the wind of God blows on the life of the disciples of Christ giving them life and strength. It is also in the upper room that Elijah, the great prophet and Peter and Paul the great apostles, would perform life giving acts on behalf of God. God's mission is life-giving. God's mission is not about religion and doctrines. It is about bringing people to the fullness of life. Increase of life is the final criterion whereby we should evaluate all mission enterprises.

Furthermore the upper room tells us something essential about God's mission. The prophet and the missionary are not people who hear the word of God and superficially channel it to people. The prophet and the missionary are people who have been profoundly affected and transformed by the mission entrusted to them. As the rain that comes from heaven does not return to God without watering the earth and making it yield so also the commission to the prophet and the missionary do not return to God without accomplishing first in the missionary himself and then in the people what it was meant to do.

The prophet and the missionary were not merely informed by God about their mission but they were transformed, shaken up and shaped by the mission they received. Perhaps this is the meaning of the prophetic prefix "The word of Yahweh came to me." It was only when the word of God achieved its mission in them, as surely as the rain and snow falling on the earth and making it yield, that they felt strong enough and ready for their own mission, namely, the transmission of that same word to others....

In Pallotti's thought this insight is perhaps best put across in a passage about Mary:



Pentecost by Chinese artist He Qi

"The Society was founded under the special protection of the Queen of Apostles. [...], although Mary was neither a Priest nor an Apostle, she applied herself with such perfection and fullness that she merited a glory above the most holy Apostles. Therefore the Church gave her not only a simple honorary title but it is for reason of the fullness of merits that she greets her with the distinguished title of Queen of Apostles".

Mary's apostleship is not one of external accomplishments but one of internal transformation. Who indeed heard the word more profoundly than she did! Who indeed kept the word more faithfully than she did! It is for this she was crowned the Queen of apostles.

We could quote innumerable texts from our founder which would illustrate that there cannot be an authentic mission to others without a mission first to oneself. I cite just one text as a sample:

"If man is a living image of Charity in Essence in every possible way then he should freely, in thinking, speaking and acting, always look to the fullest development of himself – an image of God's Love... But just as we ought to love our neighbour as we love ourselves, and as we seek our own salvation, so we must seek the eternal salvation of our neighbour".

To base our Pallottine mission on the Cenacle is to recognize the profound truth that God's mission is not entrusted to individuals as their private tasks to be carried out separately, but is a commission given to the entire community of Jesus.

The wind of God blows on everyone in the cenacle equally, bringing new life into them, like in the vision of Ezekiel. And each one in that upper room had a share of the tongues of fire. The promise of the Father was fulfilled on all of them together.

There is a democratization of the mission, ruling out any kind of unnecessary elitism or monopolization of the mission. Pallotti himself would see his entire foundation as “an auxiliary body of the Church”. Participation, collaboration, teamwork, sharing and communion are the underlying elements in this model of mission. The specifically Pallottine promises undertaken by the members of the SAC, viz., perseverance, sharing of resources and the spirit of service, which are essentially relational, do also simply corroborate this aspect of the mission.

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you commented...

on #271 It was with sadness and joy that I read of the death and life Ms Shanti Joseph in last week’s E Bulletin. The overview of Shanti’s life provided a wonderful example of how, living the charism of Saint Vincent, she reached out and responded to the needs of those around her. A life well lived, yes Vincent would rejoice. Condolences to all of the Khristsevikas Community members.

Also congratulations for the E Bulletin on publishing 500 stories, focusing on how we live our charism on a daily basis.

CS 22.05.17

Congratulations on the milestone which has so wonderfully ‘opened our eyes’ to the worldwide Pallottine family.

MG 31.05.17

The 500th article of our E-Bulletin is to be seen as a real achievement. Usually any such venture is initiated and soon forgotten for lack of materials. In many meetings participants make a suggestion to start a new publication or open a website but few materialise or endure. More than five years ago a proposal was made during one of the Asia Oceania Intercontinental Meetings to start an E-Bulletin for the Society in Asia Oceania. The proposal soon found two passionate promoters – Ray and myself. But nothing would have happened without generous contributions from the entire Pallottine Family during these years and hence our gratitude to you. Today this Bulletin has become one of the most widely read in the Pallottine world and does a wonderful work of sharing information and connecting Pallottines from all the continents and from all walks of life. There is nothing scientific or academic about it, just simple sharing. May God be glorified.

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