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

item 425

Pentecost in UAC Rome - 2016

The church, like a mother and teacher, accompanies us through the various periods of the liturgy in living the special seasons that help us celebrate the mystery of salvation with a greater understanding. One of the most important is the paschal season because it recalls the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus and it culminates with the feast of Pentecost which brings to mind the descent of the Holy Spirit.

The icon of the Cenacle was always dear to our Founder: in the Cenacle, together with the disciples, we find Mary, the Mother of Jesus. She who fully lived the richness of the mystery of Christ in silence, in listening and in her perfect acceptance of the will of God, continues to be present in the infant Church, sustaining and encouraging the apostles in their mission of evangelization.

For us, members of the *Congregation of the Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate* – Pallottines – and of the *Missionary Sisters of the Catholic Apostolate*, this feast has a special significance because both Congregations celebrate this day as the anniversary of their Foundation.



In the Pentecost of 1838 Vincent Pallotti wanted to enter, together with the orphan girls, the orphanage he had planned for them – the *Pia Casa di Carità* on Via Sant'Agata dei Goti, 8 Rome. But because it was a Sunday and to enable as many persons as possible to participate, he decided to postpone it to the next day, Monday 04 Jun. For this reason, in the General Chapter of 2007, the decision was taken to always celebrate the feast of Foundation on the day of Pentecost, as the Founder desired.



The two Congregations had their origin in St Vincent. Because of geographic distance and historic events they developed autonomously, but as soon as it was possible they recognized one another as sisters and have grown in a spirit of communion and true fraternity. There have been the many occasions when they have interacted, but above all they have commemorated together the historic and unifying events as joint members of the Union. By mutual agreement they decided and have celebrated for several years now, a solemn liturgy on the feast of Pentecost, recognized as the beginning point of the Congregations as Vincent desired. Their General Councils have committed to create, as a strong symbol of unity, this joint celebration either in Rome in the church of SS Salvatore in Onda or elsewhere where it is possible.

This year the preparation was preceded by a novena to the Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles and by a novena to the Holy Spirit. Through these prayers we aimed to dispose ourselves to live the feast more intensely, to purify our minds and hearts to welcome with an open spirit the gifts of the Holy Spirit and to allow each one to grow in an apostolic and missionary spirit. Symbols and signs used in the liturgy were carefully chosen and helped to make the celebration one of participation and a profound lived experience, as were the songs that were selected and the talks so well connected to the liturgical celebration.

St Vincent Pallotti always considered himself unworthy to receive God's many graces and so he would often say: *I am nothing and sin*. But his being '*nothing and sin*' only drove him to totally entrust himself to God who is Love and Infinite Mercy. We too try to make these attitudes live within our hearts so that our apostolic action may always be more efficacious and we may bring God to others and not only our poverty.

With great joy on the feast of Pentecost this year, May 15, we once again lifted up a hymn of gratitude and praise to the Lord for the life that He continues to give to our Congregations. The Cenacle is the place where we gather the gifts to spread forth to others because without the Spirit of God we can do nothing.

At the celebration there were many members of the local Union of Catholic Apostolate. During Mass we together renewed our Consecration, invoking with Mary Queen of Apostles the gifts of the Holy Spirit, to be able to courageously offer to the world and to the Church the charism of our beloved Founder.

Fr Jacob Nampudacam sac, Rector General of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate, presided at the eucharistic celebration. In his homily he shared his reflections on the theme of the specific responsibility we have, as communities founded by St Vincent, to promote, accompany and spread the Union of Catholic Apostolate with the same spirit with which he himself began his work. Fr Jacob affirmed still further that in celebrating the birth of the Congregations of the Pallottine Sisters, we remember our common responsibility for the life and development of the entire Union.



As we look back now we recall how close many were with us in prayer, and we extend an invitation to continue to remain united in the Cenacle, so that we may live our charism faithfully and be an "evangelical and missionary trumpet" within the church enlivening and inviting all to proclaim the love and mercy of God to all creatures.

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called to be seeds of hope

“This evening we are invited to celebrate together as the Pallottine Family!

The church defines the eucharist as a *memorial*. This evening each of us has accepted an invitation to celebrate together and ‘make memory’. i.e. ‘remember’ – remember the pristine spirit that animated St Vincent in founding the female congregations.



In his heart we were born on January 9, 1835 – the ‘day of inspiration’ – but we were created in the world on the solemnity of Pentecost in 1838. On that occasion he was filled with immense joy because, during the novena, he had received written approval from the legitimate representatives of the church as confirmation of God's will for his institution.

Our holy founder was very demanding: he chose among his cooperators, those who were willing and able to live "the fullness and the Spirit of Jesus Christ and nothing else he asked except that of the spirit of sacrifice and readiness to accept God's will fully, considering as a fundamental rule the life and the teachings of Jesus Christ".

We were born on the day of Pentecost! The Spirit of God has been poured out on each of us to continue to realize the salvific mission of Jesus Apostle. We have been entrusted to the protection of the Queen of the Apostles, "always hoping for ... the treasures of graces of the holy Institutions as God wills."

We celebrate the eucharist, to say ‘thank you’ to the Lord for our past ... for our founder, for the apostolic charism, for each Sister who has given us the lifeblood of the same charism ...

We give ‘thanks’ to the Lord for the present history that we are writing together and let us ask the Holy Spirit for the grace to be open to his inspirations and to be available to the new evangelisation that the world today needs ...

Like St Vincent, we give ‘thanks’ to God, in advance, for the future that will make us a gift, to continue to embody a more effective apostolic zeal and to live our apostolic missionary charism, and wherever we are called to live, to find roads always new and be for everyone ‘Seeds of Hope.’”



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