



Relationship with GOD

More than Just SUNDAY

Go to the Upper Room

Do you have an Upper Room in your life? A sacred place where this often dim and muddled world of ours can be lit up by the grace of God?

The average Christian recognizes the expression “Upper Room” easily from the Bible, though he or she may not recall all the holy things that took place there.

We celebrated one of those holy events just last Sunday – Pentecost, of which we are reminded in today’s Gospel. It was in the Upper Room that the Apostles received that outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the “Spirit of Truth,” that Jesus had promised. On that day, the apostles were “clothed with power from on high,” manifested in a mighty rush of wind and tongues of fire. Their shaking knees were strengthened; they were changed from fearful men to courageous witnesses for Jesus Christ.

It was also in the Upper Room, the night before his death on the cross, that Jesus had washed the apostles’ feet and celebrated the Last Supper, instituting the gift of his Body and

Blood in the Eucharist and establishing them as his first priests.

Moreover, it was in the Upper Room that Jesus appeared to the apostles soon after his Resurrection, telling them not to be afraid – that he was not a ghost – and breathing on them already the first breath of the Holy Spirit and the power to forgive sins in his name.

With quiet, humble hearts, you and I are invited often to visit the Upper Room. There we gather also with Mary, the Mother of God and our Mother. It is no surprise that she was praying with the apostles in the days leading up to Pentecost. They needed her, a tender pillar of strength, to hold them up and keep them steadfast in the midst of confusion. So do we.

What must it have been like for the disciples in those days? Sometimes they recognized the risen Jesus and sometimes – even standing next to him like Mary Magdalene or the two men on the road to Emmaus – they didn’t. And then, just as quickly as their eyes were opened and they saw him eat fish or bless bread, he was gone again. Yet by now they knew and believed. The last uncertainty vanished when doubting Thomas fell to his knees, sorry and

ashamed, and said, “My Lord and My God.”

What powerful memories the apostles must have carried of that Upper Room! As for us, even if we never make it to the Holy Land, to the place known and celebrated as the “Cenacle,” the Upper Room is open to us.

Maybe it is a parish adoration chapel, a prayer nook or bedroom in our home, or just a quiet chamber in our heart. Sometimes we may run there like the apostles, seeking refuge from our fears or troubles. Other times we may go rejoicing and grateful. What matters is that in the Upper Room we are never alone. We are joined there by Mary, who intercedes for us, and by the other holy disciples, the Communion of Saints. At the center of course is Jesus, who continues to pour out to us the gift of his Spirit and to lead us to the Father.

All of this is invisible to our earthly eyes, of course, but not to the eyes of faith. It is more real than the ground beneath our feet. Believe it, and go there often.

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