



The Holy Spirit  
whom the Father will send in my name  
will instruct you in everything,  
and remind you of all  
that I told you.

Jn. 14:26

+ Rome, May 20, 2007

Dear Sisters,

We are in the Novena in preparation for Pentecost, the oldest novena that we know. "All devoted themselves with one accord to prayer," we read in the Acts of the Apostles (1, 14), "together with some women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers." Now, at the "eve," so to say, of the General Chapter, it is of special importance for us to be part of this ancient prayer of the early Church. But for what do we actually pray? What does the Holy Spirit mean for me personally? For our community? The Sequence of Pentecost is rich in references as to how the Spirit of God can act in the life of each person. Dear Sisters, in this prayer, that is more than 800 years old, we can find the promise that the Spirit is present in every situation of our life, not only in storm and fire, as on the first Pentecost, but more often in a hidden way. Just that fact often makes it difficult to discover his gentle, inward gifts – in ourselves and in others. The Holy Spirit acts inwardly – presuming that we let him enter into our heart and give him enough "space". However, then we may not be surprised when he does not let anything as it had been before. "Who believes in the power of this Spirit and pleads for his coming has to know that one calls for the Divine "disturbance." (German Missal)

The picture that I have placed on this letter is – as in my letter for Easter - from the Benedictine Sister Erentrud Trost. What is important in this representation of Pentecost is the community of disciples that is praying for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The center of this community is the Gospel (*Evangelium*), the Word of God. But they only recognized that this Word is the Person of Jesus Christ after they were filled with Spirit who came down upon them. Only then did they begin to understand the words Jesus had said to them before his departure: "The Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will instruct you in everything and remind you of all that I told you." (Jn. 14:26) Only then did they experience: Nothing remains the same as it had been before.

Dear Sisters, Pentecost is the Feast of God's unexpected possibilities. "The desolate time without the Spirit has an end, the paralyzing lack of awareness is over. Borders will be overcome, new horizons of life will open, people from all nations will find one another in an international and multicultural encounter, understanding one another in all languages. Women and men, young and old, free and unfree will get inspirations from the transforming power of the Spirit, rising above themselves into a new community, the Church." (Msgr. Bertram Meier) Pentecost has always to do with "exodus," with departure. "Bend the stubborn heart and will," we pray in the Sequence of Pentecost.

Dear Sisters, do we dare to pray sincerely for the coming of the Holy Spirit? I wish it for all of us. Then he will show us what is essential for us as women Religious today. May our passion for Christ impel us to be "weavers" of hope and life, as we read in the Declaration that was approved by the 850 Superior Generals at the end of the UISG Plenary on May 10, 2007. Hope and life – millions of people, also in our own neighborhood, are crying for that, often without a voice. Jesus came that we may have life, life in abundance. (Cf. Jn. 10:10) When we entrust ourselves to his Spirit he will impel us to be bearers of hope, giving "birth" to new life. "Wherever the Spirit breathes, there is fertility," Mother Pauline writes in her Retreat in 1843, and she concludes with the petition: "In you, O Spirit of Love, I place my trust."

I wish all of us a Spirit-filled Pentecost, not only on Pentecost!

In gratitude, your

*Sr. Adalberta*