

**Pentecost – 4-6-17**  
**Acts 2:1-11, Corinthians 12:3-7.12-13, John 20:19-23**

A few years ago I was fortunate to be able to visit Uluru – a landmark which so many in Australia and indeed the world recognises as an icon. On the many road signs in and around the Territory it said that it is – *the heart – the centre – the soul*. Certainly for the indigenous custodians of Uluru it is sacred where last week they gathered to discuss the future directions of their people.

From a faith perspective our celebration this weekend – **Pentecost** – is – *our heart – our centre – and soul* – of our faith – it's not just a story, but hopefully a reality. So how can we make sense out of this and recognise what it means for our faith? What does it look like for us as we tell our stories and live our lives?

Your children and those you love give us an insight to this. They help you recognise that Spirit in your lives and our scripture readings tell us what it can look like too. The disciples were hidden away in a room afraid of the world and without Jesus anymore – they didn't know what to do – but they became filled with the Holy Spirit in the form of *tongues of fire* that came upon them and then could speak amongst many. This Holy Spirit had made a home within them and in our Gospel Jesus said: *'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you...'* Witnesses to the gifts of the Holy Spirit where St Paul tells us are: *there are a variety of gifts, but always the same Spirit...working in different ways in different people.*

Sometimes we get stuck and blinded and cannot see what this faith and spirit looks like and can remain too long in the upper rooms of our lives like the disciples. We can be too afraid to reach out the hand of forgiveness, the hand of friendship, the hand of kindness and love to each other again. The gift of the Holy Spirit, our Advocate who walks with us is given again to each of us to overcome these fears and pains, and allows us to walk freely with each other, for you to walk with your children as they grow into God's love once more.

Over these past weeks we have been using the 'sprinkling rite' at the beginning of Mass as a reminder of our baptismal call of living out our faith. I have asked what this means for each of us, each of us with the same Spirit, but in different people? It is recognising these moments with you and your children, with us all in recognising it in our loved ones and those who are dear to us, in the little things and actions we do and show them in how we live.

This refocussing in our lives and reflecting on our baptismal call is a renewed focus on the face of Christ in our lives and the love which he has already given us. And as we renew our focus on the face of Christ in our lives, we ask who does Christ look like for me? They look like you the mums and dads who care for and love your children and families. They look like the teachers in all our schools – the grandparents and neighbours in our town – living our lives in the best way that we can and believing that the Spirit lives within each of us calling us forward together.

Too often do we focus on the hate and anger, the sadness and fear, the fights we have and arguments we are part of; the unkindnesses we remember and focus on, the

upsets and divisions. These fears and pains can be put aside and healed if we let the Holy Spirit walk with us as again as friend.

Our lives and the lives of others are not perfect but, if we don't try, then our faith is only words, not actions. Perhaps we can simply try and be kind to each other, try and be gentle to your kids and family, be patient with the world, be at peace and be joyful, try to love and trust again, to have self-control in our lives. These are all things we can do as we refocus on Christ. These are the things which we can do as we live out our faith.

We are challenged to make a difference in our own lives first and then to each other and so then with our world. This is how we encounter Christ. This is the Holy Spirit descending in tongues of fire burning within us and calling each of us in our different ways to live this call more deeply, more truthfully and more intimately with ourselves, our families and with each other.

Lord, send down your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. Amen.

Fr Matthew Moloney