

Cover060919

THE QUESTION OF THE WEEK

“Suddenly there came from the sky a sound as of a strong driving wind. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire which parted and then came to rest on each one of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages.”

Acts 2: 2-3

Have you ever been to a large venue music concert, a live performance on Broadway, a World Series game, a Super Bowl, a championship game for the Stanley Cup or the NBA Finals? Have you even been part of a large gathering of hundreds of thousands of people such as a papal Mass or World Youth Day? Have you ever been so moved by an experience or so surprised by an event that you were struck speechless—initially—but then could not wait to tell people what had happened to you and what you had witnessed or experienced?

Things such as these happen to us as human beings. They don't happen all the time or on a regular basis but they do happen. Great family celebrations also qualify—weddings, baptisms, First Communion, even Funerals can provide us with memorable or even once in a lifetime experiences. We use words like “life-changing” or “Never before experienced.”

Well, such was that Pentecost event for those apostles and disciples and the Blessed Virgin in that Upper Room. It was the same Upper Room in which Jesus had eaten the Last Supper. It was the same Upper Room where he bid them “Do this in memory of me.” And here is the thing I want you all to think about. Were all those people actually gathered in that Upper Room doing precisely what Jesus had asked them to do—celebrate Eucharist—when the Holy Spirit was poured forth upon them, descended upon them, alighted upon them as tongues of fire, transformed them, filled them with a loving presence and changed their lives forever?

The Holy Spirit is the subtle person of the Blessed Trinity, the most shy member, the most humble. The Holy Spirit is powerful and can make his presence known and felt but most of all prefers to work behind the scenes and in anonymity and obscurity gently massaging our own human spirit and comingling with it to help us realize the person God wants us to be. The Holy Spirit is very content if you or I get credit for what is largely his work. It is his way. He lets us increase while he does decrease. Did you know that? The question of the week.