

## WHY THE SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD?

There is a book by Juan Louis Segundo entitled *Our Idea of God*, and in it there is a quote that I will paraphrase. It is Jesus speaking to his apostles when He tells them it is better for them that He goes to the Father. “If I stay I can only calm one storm at a time, feed one group at a time, or heal one person at a time. But if I go (and my Father and I breathe our own Holy Spirit into the world and into each of you) then I can (through you) build better boats to ride out storms, feed many more people through better cultivation of soil and distribution of crops, and through people learning better medical skills cure many more people. So it is better for you that I go that more of the work that I have come to accomplish, (and now give unto you) can be done in my name.”

A few days back I stopped in at the Verizon store to buy a couple of recharging cords for my Smartphone. The ones I had no longer worked to recharge my phone. Expensive. Necessary. I have become very dependent on the recharging of my Smartphone. I am guessing that you are like me in that the recharging of our phones and Tablets has become part of our daily routine. Even carrying extra power supplies at times and extra cords on the move. We do this because we realize that our phones work on the power of a battery. There is stored electrical energy in the battery. When the battery gets depleted the phone stops working—no matter the person you are speaking with or the data you are downloading.

If I do not replenish my battery, then my phone will come to a point where it stops working. It is a daily occurrence. Have you thought about the recharging as part of God’s answer to your daily praying of the Lord’s Prayer? Give us this day our daily bread (that which sustains and nourishes, Lord) which is what our connection with people does. We know that some uses of our phone drain more energy than others. FaceTime or WhatsApp or watching any kind of streaming video. You know. Even my recording and uploading of Mass each day puts a significant drain on my phone’s battery. Some of our interactions with people, family or colleagues drain more of our personal energy.

Why should it be otherwise? In life itself we eat and consume various amounts and kinds of calories which our body turns into fuel which we draw upon to do our thinking, moving, working. By the end of the day we have drained our energy by means of the various tasks we engaged in especially the mental ones and the emotional ones. These activities drain our energy sources and they too need to be replenished—by food, and by sleep or rest, or recreation. Energy. The condition for the possibility of life in this world. Replenishing used up energy is also the condition for the possibility for ongoing life for continued living in the world.

So now let me return to the quote from Juan Louis Segundo. Jesus says it is better for us that He goes to the Father because then they will breathe their Spirit into us. Into

each one of us. We experience this sacramentally. And it is very real. It is a real gift of energy. Spiritual energy. The kind of energy that we need to live with, live for and love others. As a matter of fact, we cannot live this way without the very Spirit of Jesus. His Spirit is an empowering Spirit. His Spirit provides the spiritual energy we need to live his way in the world. To do the things he did and to do more and better things even.

My friends, I go into this because we are about to emerge from our three month long cocoons in two weeks. During this time, I know that many of you have altered your prayer routine. I know that many are praying together more as a family. Many are spending more time in prayer each day and even participating virtually in Eucharist each day without being able to receive Holy Communion. This increased prayer is your recharging of your spiritual life—both personally and as a family. I felt it myself when on Friday I gathered with the priests in our prayer group for a prayer meeting. We masked and stayed six feet from each other because we are all now in the at risk group.

But our presence replenished our spiritual energy as we prayed together and shared what was taking place in our lives these past two months. That has been happening to many of you too. But there will be a danger now. When we return to the physical practice of the faith and our work routine stabilizes and our family routine resumes we will be tempted to stop praying. Or tempted to stop praying as much or as we have come to be praying. We have to be on guard against this. We have to expect the temptation and choose to continue praying more and better than we did before.

The Lord has been recharging your spiritual energy. Prayer is the recharging. Stop praying and you will find that your spiritual energy will begin to wane. It is really pretty simple. You and I cannot stop praying. We have to encourage each other and pray with each other. Jesus told his apostles about why he had come into the world. It was so that they—and we—might have eternal life. And Jesus goes on to say: “Eternal life is this; to know the One True God and to know the One He sent, Jesus Christ.”

My friends, you do know Him. And so do I. But we cannot stop, we cannot backslide, we cannot give up on plugging in to the daily spiritual energy source we know we need. Please continue to pray each day. You will be given precisely the energy you need for your state in life.

May the Lord bless us today and give us his peace.