The Miracle of Pentecost, ceiling fresco, Herzogenburg Abbey Church, Daniel Gran
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A Reflection on Pentecost
by Fr. James Doran, OMV

A few years ago, my nephew sent me an email to ask a question: a theological question, a question on Mariology. What could the Holy Spirit do for Our Lady if she was already perfect? I was reminded of that question as I prepared today’s Mass.

What happened to the Mother of Jesus after He ascended into Heaven? Acts of the Apostles tells us that the Apostles returned to Jerusalem and devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some women and Mary the mother of Jesus and His relatives.

Mary prayed with these men who Her Son had chosen to spread His Word. She prayed that they would receive the Holy Spirit because they were not yet ready to face the world. He did not leave them as orphans.

She knew all about the Holy Spirit since He had already descended upon her at the Annunciation, He overshadowed her and brought about the Incarnation — the conception of Jesus. Since she had already experienced the gift of the Holy Spirit, she could appreciate Him more than anyone. It was the Spirit that made her a mother and Mother of the Savior. Unlike the others who were waiting in fearful expectation, she helped them get ready to receive the Paraclete. It was appropriate that she receive a renewed gift of the Spirit. The first time, she became Mother of Christ. This time she received the gift of spiritual motherhood. The disciples needed her intercession and love.

Mary is the image and model of the Church. Pope St. John Paul wrote that she waited for “Pentecost and implored a multiplicity of gifts for everyone, in accordance with each one’s personality and mission...Just as in the Incarnation the Spirit had formed the physical body of Christ in her virginal womb, in the upper room the same Spirit came down to give life to the Mystical Body” of Christ.

Pentecost is the fruit of the Blessed Virgin’s constant prayer. For this reason, Christians have had recourse to her throughout the ages.

Our Lady passed on to the disciples her memories of the Incarnation, the infancy and the hidden life of Jesus as a precious treasure. She helped to make Him known as nobody else knew Him.

Pope St. John Paul explains; “We have no information about Mary’s activity in the early Church, but we may suppose that after Pentecost her life would have continued to be hidden and discreet, watchful and effective. Since she was enlightened and guided by the Spirit, she exercised a deep influence on the community of the Lord’s disciples.”

So, what did I tell my nephew? Mary was a perfect Mother to her Son Jesus, but she again needed the Spirit’s help to become Our Blessed Mother, the Mother of the Church. He did not leave us as orphans.
The Oblates of the Virgin Mary is an international religious community of priests and brothers serving in Italy, France, Austria, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Nigeria, the United States and the Philippines. The Oblates are involved in retreat and parish missions, spiritual direction, parish work, the mass media, clergy formation, and the foreign missions.

The US Province of the Oblates of the Virgin Mary is dedicated to St. Ignatius of Loyola, and includes communities in Massachusetts, Illinois, Colorado, California and the Philippines.

The OMV US Province House is at St. Clement’s in Boston.

The OMV motto, “Mariam Cogita, Mariam Invoca” “Think of Mary, Call on Mary” is taken from a homily by St. Bernard.