3. The Blessings of the Pentecost

Ours is the Pentecost age. For over a long time, I used to think that the feast of Pentecost is something that takes place on one Sunday and after that life continues as before until the following year. Thank God that now I understand that Pentecost, which is for us the experience of personal manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the world through the community of disciples, is a continuous event. The Spirit is sent to remain with us forever. His presence and action is never a thing of the past. He is the best gift of God to the world, to the Church and to every individual disciple.

Thanks to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost we are able to encounter God, to experience Him, to participate in the life of the Most Holy Trinity and to cooperate in their work of salvation without having to go the Holy Land. Hence, we can understand the words of Jesus to his disciples that it is better for them that he goes so that Advocate will be sent to us (Cf. John 16, 7). If Jesus remained physically

with his followers (if there was no Ascension), it would mean that for us to encounter him we would travel to Israel.

In fact, the hidden mystery which sometimes escapes our attention is that through the Holy Spirit, every place can now become a Holy Land and every moment of our life could be the fullness of time. This was what Jesus was trying to let the woman of Samaria understand during his discussion with her at Jacob's well. The time will come, he said, when true worshippers will no longer go to Jerusalem or to the mountains of Samaria in order to encounter God. They will worship the Father in Spirit and truth (John 4, 21-22). He inaugurated this time through his life, ministry, suffering, death, resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father. However, it is on the day of Pentecost that the effect of Jesus' accomplishment was made available to the world. Thus, we belong to the generation of true worshippers.
Many Christians are rapidly moving away from the erstwhile attitude of the “forgetfulness of the Holy Spirit” to the tradition of being Spirit-filled. Nobody should be left behind in this Spirit movement because that alone takes us to the Father and Son. Chinua Achebe in his book, Chike and the River, tells the story of a man called Peter Nwana who lived in the River Niger but washed his hands with spittle. This would be the best description of any Christian who has not yet realized what the Father has done for us on the day of Pentecost. How can we live miserable lives when the Holy Spirit has been poured out on us?

_Culled from Pentecost Reflection 2006 by Fr Boniface Ukwu C.S.Sp._

4. **On Being Possessed by the Holy Spirit**

One of the most practical ways of enjoying the full benefits of Pentecost in our lives is by making a conscious decision to become possessed by the Holy Spirit.

Today there is so much talk and even fear about spirit-possession and deliverance is becoming a household word and fast growing ministry. People are afraid of being initiated into one kind of devilish society or another. Parents are apprehensive about having baby-sitters because before they know it their children are invested with strange powers. Others are slow at accepting drinks, fruits or food from even close friends because they are afraid of being initiated into satanic cults. How long would we live in situations like this? Is there no way out of this predicament?

Certainly! There is a way out: if you do not want to be possessed by the bad spirit then submit yourself completely and immediately to be possessed by the Spirit of the living God. One