

A Take-away Coffee with Alessio



The Pentecost Novena

A Novena is nine days of prayer. These days of prayer can take place within or outside the Mass and can be done privately or publicly. They can also be prayed for nine consecutive days or on 1 day each week for nine weeks. For example, at our Cathedral here in Perth, every Wednesday evening there is the Novena to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal and in the nine days leading up to the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (December 8) there is the Novena with Benediction each day from November 29. There are novenas to Jesus and Mary under various titles as well many of the saints. We usually pray a Novena for a particular cause or intention. Whilst we can pray a Novena to Jesus, Mary or a Saint in the lead up to a particular feast day, we can also pray that Novena at any time throughout the year as well. It is important to note that the Saints pray for us, and that we are praying to God, through Mary and the Saints. They intercede for us on our behalf. So, Novenas like all forms of prayer are heard and responded to by the Lord in various ways. We don't always get what we ask for. Let **Your will** be done Lord, not mine.

Anyhow, back to the Pentecost Novena. How did it come about? After Jesus ascended into Heaven, He commanded His disciples to come together in the Upper Room to devote themselves to constant prayer (Acts 1:14).

Those eleven men were an interesting lot. Jesus certainly made them come out of their shell, but just when He thought they got the message – it seemed like He was back to square one with them. For those eleven to become brave and courageous took their whole lifetime. So, whilst they were locked in the Upper Room, Mary was there too, and they prayed for the coming of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus had promised He would send. They received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Sunday. This Sunday, the Ascension of the Lord, we will hear about that episode.

The Novena begins this Friday and will end next Saturday (30 May) – the Vigil of Pentecost. The Ascension used to be celebrated on the Thursday after the Sixth Sunday

of Easter, but some years ago the Bishops in this country and some others decide to move the Solemnity to a Sunday. Nonetheless, we can begin praying the Novena this Friday for our intentions, and for wisdom and guidance in all our important life decisions. We have so much and so many people to pray for at the moment, so let's make the most of this Novena.

Come Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful
and kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit,
did instruct the hearts of the faithful,
grant that by the same Holy Spirit
we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations,
Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

As for a coffee and cake – today is the first day that cafes and restaurants are allowed to trade (with a maximum of twenty patrons). Hopefully, they will find that business starts to pick up and remains orderly and safe. A chocolate brownie with cream and a flat-white from *Gelare* is a good way to go.

The column will come out on Friday next week (29 May). Till then enjoy your takeaway coffee and cake or if you are lucky enough to get into a café, enjoy the dine-in service and hospitality.

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