

While I was in the Holy Land, a couple of years ago, one of the places we visited was the Upper Room. The room is about the size of the Sanctuary here at St. Brigid. We heard about the upper room in today's Gospel and a couple weeks ago at Pentecost, and of course during Holy Week. The Upper Room, also known as the Cenacle, is located in the southern part of the old city of Jerusalem on Mount Zion. It is perhaps best known as the traditional site of the Last Supper, according to tradition, this is where the apostles stayed when they were in Jerusalem. It was in this room where Jesus washed his disciples feet, which symbolizes the ministry of loving service. It is the place where the disciples hid in fear after the death of Jesus and prayed with Mary. It is the same room where Jesus appeared both before and after His death. It was here that the risen Lord showed his disciples His wounds for them to see and touch, and the room where Thomas's faith blossomed. It was in this room that we heard two weeks ago at Pentecost that Jesus called down the Holy Spirit upon his disciples and they were filled with the Spirit and went out and spread the good news to the whole world. For all these reasons, the Upper Room is a much sought-after destination for Christians who travel to the Holy Land.

Perhaps it is because the Apostles spent so much time with Christ in this holy place that we can see very clearly the various personalities who are gathered here especially at the last supper. It was in this room that Jesus foretold of Judas's betrayal, He predicted Peter's denial and exposed Thomas's doubt and then belief. The humanity of each Apostle is greatly shown in the Upper Room, it might even give us a look into our own hearts and faith, as well as showing us just how much love Jesus has for all of His followers. It was also in this room from which, filled with the Holy Spirit, the Apostles would leave and change the world, your world and mine.

While the Upper Room is a real place, it is also much more than a simple room or a historical location in Jerusalem. It is here where the Apostles gathered away from the world to be with Jesus, here they listened to every word as He revealed to them the mysteries that they would one day pass on to thousands of others. It was here, above all, that they were given the Spirit, the power, the courage to do what they were called to do.

We do not need to go physically to the Upper Room to be aware of its spiritual importance. What happened in that Upper Room in Jerusalem almost two thousand years ago,

both before and after Christ's resurrection, continues to have a significant and grace filled personal effect on each and every Baptized Christian. This is so much more than just a room to us as Catholic Christians. It is a place where, at the Last Supper, Jesus instituted the Eucharist, His body and blood, as our life giving Sacrament. Wherever we are, whenever we take the time to find, to speak and better still to listen to God, we can experience His life giving presence. In a way inside each one of us there is an Upper Room, where we experience the living presence of God.