**1st Wednesday Reflection & Prayer Hour**

**June 20**

*MMI keeps the first Wednesday of the month as a day for corporate prayer. Please use these notes to pray for an hour at some time during the day. Do please share with us any scriptures pictures or insights that you receive as you spend time reflecting and praying.*

**Reflection: The Pentecost Challenge**

***“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”***

*Acts 1:8*

We are now in the season of Pentecost. The Western Church has just celebrated it while the Eastern Church is about to do so. We have most probably already heard many sermons, talks and watched video messages on the Holy Spirit.

Various Christian denominations and traditions place a different emphasis on the ministry and work of the Holy Spirit. Still, let us review together the above verse and answer some important questions:

“**But you”-** who are the “you” in the passage?

They were “the apostles whom He had chosen” (Acts 1:2b), His committed followers, His disciples! Would it be a valid statement to say that there are many people today who claim faith in Jesus Christ but would not identify themselves to be “disciples, committed followers of Jesus”? In his book “Not a fan”, author Kyle Idleman asks a profound question: “Are you a fan of Jesus or a follower of Jesus?...Fans want to be close enough to Jesus to get all the benefits (the Holy Spirit?) but not so close that it requires sacrifice. Fans may be fine with repeating a prayer, attending church on the weekend, and sticking a Jesus fish on their bumpers. But is that really the extent of the relationship Jesus wants?”

So, Acts 1:8 is a promise. What is this promise?

“**You will receive power”** (the Greek – dynamis) – the manifested power of God, the work of God in real life.

Yes, we have seen already that this is a conditional promise – applies only to those who have seen the resurrected Christ, who have experienced the fellowship of Christ in their lives (Acts 1:6 – “gathered around Him”). Apostle Paul goes even further to identify the Holy Spirit with being a true child of God (Rom 8:14).

So, what is the true purpose of this promise, of this “power of the Holy Spirit”

In order to respond, let us apply the old Byzantine apophatic approach – to explain what it is for, let us respond what it is not for:

It is not to impress the others with the gifts of the Spirit – unfortunately many Christians take advantage of their Spirit-given gifts to demonstrate spiritual superiority and over-blown spirituality

It is not to perform miracles for the sake of the miracles, signs and wonders.

It is not to elevate this or that minister or preacher above the others. It is not to glorify men, but God!

**“to be my witnesses”** – this is the true purpose of the Holy Spirit: to enable and empower the disciples of Christ to be witnesses for Christ!

So, the true criterium, the Pentecost challenge of whether we live and operate in the power of the Holy Spirit are not the gifts, nor the miracles (although both are God-given and encouraged) but our witness for Christ!

What has been happening these days in the USA – with the violence that has broken out after the tragic murder of a believing black man (yes, he was a Christian) – provides a real challenge for the Christian witness of believers of all races, especially those in police and military uniform. May be not as radical nor drastic, but likewise, do we not have our daily “Pentecost challenge” to our Christian witness too?

As we prepare for our **MMI International Day of Prayer,** let us humbly answer for ourselves the following questions:

* How is my daily life in the Spirit?
* Am I seeing God’s “dynamis” power manifested in my life and ministry?
* How is my witness for Christ?
* How is our MMI/MCF collective witness for Christ?
* How can I/we see more of the power of the Holy Spirit in our my/our witness for Christ?

*Rev Grozdan Stoevski RTL Europe Jun 20*

**Prayers:**

**Give thanks for:**

The gift of the Holy Spirit.

The life and ministry of Billie Jean  Reifsnyder:

We have received the sad news that ACCTS Latin America staff member Billie Jean went to be with the Lord in the early hours of Saturday morning. Pray for husband Bob (also ACCTS staff member for Latin America) and their family to know peace and comfort in the Lord.

The life and ministry of Brig Spiro Kalemi

We are sad to report the death, earlier this month, of the founder of MCF Albania, Brigadier General Spiro Kalemi.Please pray for the Kalemi family – Emanuela Kalemi Haien, his daughter and an ACCTS staff member; his daughter Elda; and his three grandchildren.

**Pray in June for:**

**Sat 6 June: MMI International Prayer Day via Zoom 10.00am-12.30 (UK time).** . An exciting opportunity to pray for our regions with the RTLs, VPs, MCF members, and significant in-country partners in military ministry. 10.00-12.30 and 14.30-15.30. Contact prayer@mmi.org.uk to register and receive the zoom link, detailed information and prayer fuel.

Pray for the organization, administration and good internet connections as well as for people to join in with our intercessory prayer. *Further details at end*.

**28 June** ‘**EMCM Light’** – online teaching and fellowship for those who would have attended the European Military Christian Meeting in May. Pray for the preparation and participation.

**SAR 2020**. It is possible that the Summer Adventure Retreat (SAR) 2020 will be able to take place as a physical event at the end of August.  Pray for wisdom and guidance in the planning for this potential event, which has to start now.

**MCF leaders,** key contacts and Chaplains, pray for them as they serve the military and police community, to be effective witnesses for Christ, for provision and protection of themselves and their families.

**AMCF VP East Africa** has asked for prayer for the consequences of the floods in Uganda, which have taken more lives than covid 19; such floods are usually followed by famine. Pray for Uganda and surrounding East Africa countries which are dealing with this additional crisis.

**MMI Finances**: Understandably, and like most charities, our irregular giving is significantly down. Please pray for continuing financial resource to minister as the Lord leads.

**Please come and join us on 6th June for the MMI International Prayer Day**

 an exciting time of reaching out to the Lord for His guidance, direction and powerful intervention in the lives of the military in the nations we serve.

We will send out regional briefing notes and prayer points in advance

to those planning to attend.

Please let us know at  prayer@mmi.org.uk if you plan to join us