

“The Spirit Is A-Movin’!” by Fr. Don Loskot, SDS of the Jordan Ministry Team

Back in my college days, we often sang a song written by Fr. Carey Landry and Carol Jean Kinghorn at our Sunday Masses. The first line of the song went, “The Spirit is a-movin’, all over, all over this land!” As I complete my first year of ministry with the Jordan Ministry Team, and as I contemplate the great celebration of Pentecost this month, I’m reminded of that song.

Even though I still have only begun to meet the people of the Diocese of Tucson and have only visited a small number of parishes and schools since I arrived in August, I am convinced that the Holy Spirit is very much alive here in Southern Arizona.

I’ve learned a very valuable lesson this year: we of the Jordan Ministry Team have a great privilege. Our ministry allows us to encounter the many gifts of the Holy Spirit in the people to whom and with whom we serve. To quote the Preface of Christian Unity in the *Sacramentary*, “How wonderful are the works of the Spirit revealed in so many gifts!” That sentence echoes in my mind every time I meet more of the members of the Church of Tucson.

I’ve seen how the Holy Spirit is working in the inmates for whom we provided a two-day retreat in Florence. I presided at the first Mass that they had been able to attend for over three years. I witnessed their hunger for the Bread of Life. I heard them share about their faith with each other.

I’ve seen the Spirit empowering catechists and Catholic school teachers to grow in their understanding of our Faith so that they can better express its richness to their students.

I've interacted with students preparing for their Confirmation as they ask important questions about full and mature membership in the Catholic Church. I've seen them wrestle with the pressures and influences of our culture and what kind of stance they're willing to take in the face of so many negative factors.

I've journeyed with men and women preparing for certification as Lay Ecclesial Ministers and men in formation for future ordination as Permanent Deacons for the diocese. I've seen their passion for the Lord and their great desire to minister to the needs of God's people in this diocese.

I've been fortunate to have encountered college-age mission volunteers, women's spirituality groups, Theology on Tap, parish missions, retreats, as well as the regular sacramental ministry of parish ministry. In every case, our God is constantly manifesting a wonderful unity in a great diversity of gifts. The Church is alive and well!

As we celebrate the "Birthday of the Church" on Pentecost this month, let's look around at the wonderful ways the Holy Spirit has gifted us – individually and as a Church. The best way to celebrate these gifts is to accept them and share them for the benefit of all God's people. We are a very gifted people – gifted and sent forth. Let's continue to live in the Spirit!