

Lectio Divina of the Pentecost Sunday -2021



Opening Prayer: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten our minds to perceive the mysteries of the universe in relation to eternity. Spirit of right judgment and courage, guide us and make us firm in our baptismal decision to follow Jesus' way of love. Spirit of knowledge and reverence, help us to see the lasting value of justice and mercy in our everyday dealings with one another. May we respect life as we work to solve problems of family and nation, economy and ecology. Spirit of God, spark our faith, hope and love into new action each day. Fill our lives with wonder and awe in your presence which penetrates all creation. Amen.

I Reading: A reading from the book of the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God."

The Word of the Lord/ Thanks be to God

Commentary: The first reading describes in detail the miraculous transformation that took place during the first Pentecost, thus fulfilling Jesus' promise to his apostles that they would receive "Power from on high." There was first "*a noise like a strong driving wind.*" Then there were "*tongues as of fire*" resting on the disciples, and each of them was filled with the Holy Spirit. The first, formerly timid and frightened, burst out of doors and began to proclaim the Good News of Jesus after they received the Holy Spirit. The Jews came from 16 regions and they spoke different languages but they were surprised to hear the apostles and other believers speaking in languages other than their own, the languages of other nationalities. Everyone there, regardless of their many different native languages, was able to understand the Apostles' proclamation of the Good News of the salvation of mankind, "*in his own tongue.*" The miracle of tongues on Pentecost thus reverses the confusion of tongues wrought by God at the Tower of Babel, as described in Genesis 11. God works all kinds of miracles to spread the gospel, using many languages as he calls all kinds of people to become his followers. There is no racial, linguistic, ethnic and color differences in God's kingdom.

Responsorial Psalm: 104 *Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.*

Bless the LORD, O my soul! O LORD, my God, you are great indeed!
How manifold are your works, O LORD! the earth is full of your creatures.

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD be glad in his works!
Pleasing to him be my theme; I will be glad in the LORD.

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

If you take away their breath, they perish and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

II Reading: A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 12:3-7,12-13

Brothers and sisters: No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

The Word of the Lord / Thanks be to God

Commentary: St. Paul explains how the sharing of the various spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit enriches the Church. The variety of gifts, given to the Church, comes from the same Spirit Who activates all of them in Christians for the common good. They are described as the *gifts, fruits* and *charisms* of the Spirit. They take different forms like prophecy, teaching,

administration, acts of charity, healing, and speaking in tongues. They are granted to and reside in different persons like apostles, prophets, teachers, healer, and so on. Paul lists the fruits of the Spirit in his Letter to the Galatians: "***What the Spirit brings is ... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control***" (5:22-23a). He insists that these spiritual gifts are to be used in the present time for the benefit of others, for the common good, and for the building up of the Body of Christ.

Sequence (Veni, Sancte Spiritus)

Come, Holy Spirit, come! And from your celestial home Shed a ray of light divine! Come, Father of the poor! Come, source of all our store! Come, within our bosoms shine. You, of comforters the best; You, the soul's most welcome guest; Sweet refreshment here below; In our labor, rest most sweet; Grateful coolness in the heat; Solace in the midst of woe. O most blessed Light divine, Shine within these hearts of yours, And our inmost being fill! Where you are not, we have naught, Nothing good in deed or thought, Nothing free from taint of ill. Heal our wounds, our strength renew; On our dryness pour your dew; Wash the stains of guilt away: Bend the stubborn heart and will; Melt the frozen, warm the chill; Guide the steps that go astray. On the faithful, who adore And confess you, evermore. In your sevenfold gift descend; Give them virtue's sure reward; Give them your salvation, Lord; Give them joys that never end. Amen.

Gospel Reading: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John 20:19-23

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ/ Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

Meditation: Pentecost was one of the major feasts of the Jews along with the Feast of the Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles. During these three great Jewish festivals, every male Jew living within twenty miles of Jerusalem was legally bound to go to Jerusalem to participate in the feast. The English word ***Pentecost*** comes from the Greek word "***pentecostes***" which means "fiftieth." The feast received this name because it was celebrated on the fiftieth day after the Feast of the Passover. In Hebrew, Pentecost is called as Shebuot or "The Feast of Weeks". It was originally a day of thanksgiving for the harvest. For us Christians, the feast of Pentecost is the end and the goal of the Easter season. It is a memorial day of the Holy Spirit descending on the apostles and the Virgin Mary in the form of fiery tongues. The feast also commemorates the official inauguration of the Christian Church by the apostolic preaching of St. Peter, which resulted in the conversion of 3000 Jews to the Christian faith. Pentecost is, thus, the official birthday of the

Church, established nearly 2000 years ago. The focal point of today's readings is that the gift of the Holy Spirit is something to be shared with others.

Today's Gospel relates how the Risen Jesus gave his apostles a foretaste of Pentecost on the evening of Easter Sunday by appearing to them and sending them to carry on the mission given him by his Heavenly Father. He then empowered them to do so by breathing upon them and saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit." On the day of Pentecost, Jesus fulfilled his promise to send the Advocate or Paraclete.

The Holy Spirit and Jesus: He was born of the Holy Spirit, Anointed by the Holy Spirit , Overcame the temptations and cast out the evil spirits by the power of the Holy Spirit. He was always accompanied by the Holy Spirit whom he promised as a Counselor and Advocate to the apostles in their mission.

The Holy Spirit and the Disciples: On the day of Pentecost, The Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles and the Blessed Virgin Mary in fiery tongues. The frightened apostles were transformed into fiery preachers and evangelizers.

The Holy Spirit and We: We are the Living Temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16). As a sanctifying God, He makes us holy through the Sacraments. He makes us children of God and heirs of heaven through Baptism. He makes us temples of God through Confirmation. He enables us to be reconciled to God by pardoning our sins through Reconciliation. He gives us spiritual nourishment through the Holy Eucharist by converting bread and wine into Jesus' Body and Blood. As a teaching and guiding God, He clarifies the teachings of Christ and speaks to us through the bible. As a giver of gifts, He gives us His gifts, fruits and charisms. He takes control of our life when we allow ourselves to His promptings

The hall marks of the Spirit filled Christians: The Spirit filled Apostles and the early Christians led a very witnessing life. The early Christians were united in their mind and heart. They devoted themselves to prayer and shared their blessings with each other and joyfully listened to the teachings of the Apostles. As Spirit-filled people, let us pray for one another and the church in general. Paul encourages us, "Pray on every occasion as the Spirit leads. For this reason keep alert and never give up; pray for all God's people" (Eph 6:18). As the Spirit united people of different nations, languages and cultures as one people, let us strengthen our unity by joyfully celebrating the differences and their significances in our one holy, catholic and apostolic church. As Spirit filled people, let us allow the Spirit to change our lives through daily reading of the Bible and the frequenting of the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist. Let us, as Spirit-filled people, speak words that heal, restore, make people happy and build people up instead of tearing them down. Let us pass on the love of God to the people living around us by their acts of kindness, mercy and charity like the early Christian community. This is the witnessing life which the Holy Spirit expects from each one of us. Without breath, there is no life. Without the Spirit, the Church is a field of dry, dead bones.

The Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen once said about the Church, *"Even though we are God's chosen people, we often behave more like God's frozen people--frozen in our prayer life, frozen in the way we relate with one another, frozen in the way we celebrate our Faith."* **Ignatius of Laodicea** wrote *"Without the Holy Spirit, God is distant, Christ is merely an historical figure, the Gospel is a dead letter, the Church is just an organization, authority is domination, mission is propaganda, liturgy is only nostalgia, and the work of Christians is slave labor. But with the Holy Spirit, Christ is risen and present, the Gospel is a living force, the Church is a communion in the life of the Trinity, authority is a service that sets people free, mission is Pentecost, the liturgy is memory and anticipation, and the labor of Christians is divinized."* Today is a great day to ask the Holy Spirit to rekindle in us the spirit of new life and enthusiasm, the fire of God's love. Let us conclude our reflections with the prayer of the **Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman**. *"Come Holy Spirit, Make our ears to hear. Make our eyes to see. Make our mouths to speak. Make our hearts to seek. Make our hands to reach out. And touch the world with your love"* Amen."

Concluding Prayer: Oh Holy Spirit, You are the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. You are the Spirit of truth, love and holiness, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and equal to Them in all things. We adore You and love You with all our heart. Teach us to know and to seek God, by whom and for whom we were created. Fill our heart with a holy fear and a great love for Him. Give us compunction and patience, and do not let us fall into sin. Increase faith, hope and charity in us and bring forth in us all the virtues proper to our state of life. Help us to grow in the four cardinal virtues (Practical wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance) Your seven gifts and Your twelve fruits. Make us faithful followers of Jesus, and obedient children of the Church and helpers to our neighbor. Give us the grace to keep the commandments and to receive the sacraments worthily. Raise us to holiness in the state of life to which You have called us, and lead us through a happy death to everlasting life. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord.