

PENTECOST SUNDAY



Send Us Your Spirit

O God,
throughout the ages you are mighty,
and when your Spirit came upon
the apostles,
they ceased to be afraid.
Out they went, into the world, filled
with your love.
Send us your Spirit,
renew the earth,

make all fear cease.
The world hungers for wisdom
and knowledge,
for understanding,
for fear of the Lord, for counsel,
for piety, for fortitude.
Send these gifts in abundance,
that we might do your work in the world.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

May 23, 2021

The Mighty Acts of God



Today's readings: Acts 2:1–11; Psalm 104:1, 24, 29–30, 31, 34; 1 Corinthians 12:3b–7, 12–13 or Galatians 5:16–25; Sequence: Veni, Sancte Spiritus; John 20:19–23 or John 15:26–27; 16:12–15. Imagine yourself gathered in the locked upper room with your friends, all who share your fear. And then in an instant, a driving wind comes through the room and tongues of fire descend on each one of you. Suddenly, you are no longer afraid. Leaving the room, you speak of the mighty acts of God, and all who hear you understand the language you speak.

Today's reading from Acts depicts the change that comes over the apostles when the Holy Spirit entered their lives. They now have what they need to preach the Gospel to all nations, as Jesus had commanded them.

Each one of us received the gifts of the Spirit in our baptism and later, in their fullness, when confirmed. Throughout our lives, we are able to ask the Spirit to strengthen these gifts in us, so that we might have what we need to do the work God has called us to in the world. Take some time to consider how you see people use the gifts of the Spirit: fortitude, knowledge, counsel, understanding, wisdom, piety, and fear of the Lord. The lives of the saints may be looked to for an embodiment of these gifts, but saints also dwell around you.

For Pentecost, pray to the Holy Spirit for a strengthening of your gifts. Celebrate, too, this solemnity of the Church. The event in the upper room affected the whole world for all time.



THIS WEEK AND BEYOND

Monday, May 24

Experience Pentecost

Read Acts 2:1–11 aloud, either to yourself or with your family. What do you notice in the Scripture? Which words or phrases stand out for you? What emotions would the disciples feel? Meditate by writing about or drawing the events of Pentecost. If you have children, act out the reading as a family activity. Consider using special effects, such as fans for the “driving wind.”

Tuesday, May 25

Piety and Fear of the Lord

Reflect on the Spirit’s gifts of piety and fear of the Lord. Piety involves respect for what is holy, but also delight. What would it mean to delight in God? Fear of the Lord is harder to grasp. This gift allows us to regard God with reverence because of his place in our lives. Practice these gifts by seeking to spend the day in a spirit of humility.

Wednesday, May 26

Wisdom, Knowledge, and Understanding

The gifts of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding may seem to be similar gifts, but they are not identical. Wisdom helps us to see rightly with our hearts. Wisdom also helps us to see ourselves and others accurately, recognizing our limitations and our dependence on God. Knowledge is knowledge of God. Understanding is about perspective. Choose a saint to read about and consider how that person used these gifts. Read Matthew 22:37–39. Do you think this passage tells us what it might mean to have these gifts?

Thursday, May 27

Counsel and Fortitude

Counsel helps us to judge things rightly and to discern, while fortitude helps us to do what is right even when it is difficult. We can all think of times when we have needed these gifts. Sometimes it can be so hard to know what the right thing is. Practice becoming quiet and sitting in a posture of listening. As you consider a problem or decision, invite God into it. Then envision all the possibilities. Where do you feel the most peace and consolation? This is counsel. As for fortitude, even St. Paul had trouble following through with what he knew to be right sometimes, doing instead, he tells us, “what I hate.” Virtue is a habit of acting rightly. Research the virtues and see which ones you might practice to help you build strength in your spiritual life so that you might be more capable of accepting the gift of fortitude.

Friday, May 28

Come, Holy Spirit!

Copy the prayer, “Come, Holy Spirit and fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.” Hang the prayer in your home throughout Ordinary Time, and allow it to remind you of the Spirit’s presence in your life and the nudgings from God in your heart.

Saturday, May 29

Celebrating Ordinary Time

Ready yourself and your home for Ordinary Time by changing your prayer area to green. Throughout this season, we are able to contemplate the mysteries we have celebrated as we are invited into deeper engagement with the entire life of Jesus. Ordinary Time is so named because we count the weeks, using ordinal numbers (first, second, third). In the secular world, we are entering summer, when many people’s lives settle into a calmer routine. During this season, take time to be present in the moment, whether in prayer, with your family, or during the course of your day.

