

Pentecost – Prayer for Families 23rd May 2021

“The gift of the Holy Spirit has been bestowed upon the Church and upon each one of us, so that we may live lives of genuine faith and active charity, that we may sow the seeds of reconciliation and peace.” Pope Francis 25 May 2015

Acknowledgment of Land, Seas and Waterways

As we seek to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit this Pentecost, it is a reminder of the



connection with spirit felt amongst the First Nations Peoples. We acknowledge the First Nations Peoples of these lands, seas and waterways, their elders, past, present, and emerging, and our commitment to connecting with the spirit in our journey towards reconciliation.

Fire. Photography. Britannica ImageQuest, Encyclopædia Britannica, 25 May 2016.

quest.eb.com/search/149_2045644/1/149_2045644/cite. Accessed 17 May 2021.

Context of Pentecost

Pentecost is a time where the Church celebrates Christ filling the church with the power of his Spirit. We are reminded as followers of Christ we are called to bring peace, joy and mercy to all.

Pentecost Sunday occurs on a Jewish feast day and the name of that feast includes the Greek word for 50. The Feast of the Tabernacles celebrated the end of the harvest and was a time to thank God for Plenty (adapted from Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ).

Scripture

A reading from the Book of Acts

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 travellers 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

Reflection

Images for the Holy Spirit are often diverse. In the reading we hear the imagery depicted as tongues of fire, a very strong symbol, whereas the dove and gentle breezes are also used. The Holy Spirit communicates to a variety of people, in a variety of ways and as such offers a variety of gifts to us all. The Holy Spirit unites us through these gifts if we choose to accept and develop the gifts. Wisdom, Understanding Knowledge, Good Judgment, Courage, Reverence and Awe are all on offer for us and our children. Perhaps then our question should be around, firstly; do we believe we personally have these gifts, and secondly, how do I exercise these gifts in my daily life. A gift is useless unless someone uses it. What good is a new bike if it is never used, a gift voucher not redeemed, a gaming console if you do not game? Richard Rohr challenges us to think of the gift of church and the Holy Spirit in the same manner. He provokes our thinking by stating "our personal relationship with Jesus seems to be based on a very small notion of Christ. We've modelled church after a service station where members attend weekly services to "fill up" on their faith." My reflection on this statement is that Church has so much more to offer us in forming a relationship with our God

when we see people as Church and not a building, and when we see each interaction with each other as a time to nurture the gifts given to us and others.

These gifts are often most visible in the smallest of moments, hard to define, yet impossible to forget. It is during these very small moments that we can sometimes feel the true presence of God, one kind word, a smile, a simple sharing of a plate of cookies or a giggle with a friend, a friendly ear, a comforting hug, noticing the beauty in all around us. One thing most have learnt is that life is short and uncertain. By embracing the gifts of the Holy Spirit and encouraging ourselves and our children to use these gifts, we can ensure our moments that we encounter each other are full of life and love.

A Prayer for Pentecost

Dear God, Please grant me;

Wisdom, so that I will live my life in harmony with your divine will;

Understanding, so that I will be a person of compassion;

Knowledge, so that I will be open to truth and godness;

Good Judgment so that I will make choices that reflect your will;

Courage, so that I will be able to stand up for what is right and just;

Reverence, so that I will enter into your divine mystery;

Awe, so that I will see the beauty in all of creation.

Amen.

Call to Action

Think of a person you would like to communicate with in a more positive way. Whose story do you need to hear in order to better understand and connect with this person.

- ✚ Take time today or in the upcoming week to learn more about that person - and listen to them without interruption to see if there is a way you can connect to their story.
- ✚ Create a spiritual family tree;
 - Think of family members in your family tree and which gifts of the Holy Spirit they have passed on to and your family members.
- ✚ Talk to your children about the gifts you see in them and challenge them to use these gifts in their local community.



Holy Spirit. Photograph. *Britannica ImageQuest*, Encyclopædia Britannica, 25 May 2016. [quest.eb.com/search/300_1168857/1/300_1168857/cite](https://www.britannica.com/search/300_1168857/1/300_1168857/cite). Accessed 17 May 2021.