

Pentecost Sunday

Pentecost. Here we are! Last week if you were here at Mass, you heard me talk about the time between Ascension and Pentecost as a time for us, as disciples of Jesus, to do what Jesus told His very first disciples to do – go wait and pray to be baptized in the Holy Spirit! I said that being baptized in the Holy Spirit is not about receiving some type of new sacrament. Rather, since that word ‘baptize’ literally means “to plunge into”, what I’m talking about here is for us to allow ourselves to be more deeply immersed in Holy Spirit. It means that we give control of our lives to God; that we seek God’s will and not our own; and that we rely on the power of the Holy Spirit and not our own efforts!

Yes, we each received the Holy Spirit on the day of our baptism. And yes, we each had our own personal Pentecost the day we were confirmed. But, if we want iced-tea and all we do is just plop a spoonful of iced-tea mix into a glass of water without stirring it up, we’re just going to have a glass of water. Similarly, for many of us, although the Holy Spirit came to dwell within us in baptism and confirmation, He has yet to really be stirred up in our lives – He’s just a dormant guest! And so, what I will do in a little bit is to pray for you, that the Holy Spirit may be stirred up in your lives in a powerful, yet gentle, way. In particular, I will ask for a greater release of the Holy Spirit so that you can know God’s power in your life more fully.

At this point, you have to decide if you're willing to take the risk. Do you want a deeper relationship with God, and do you want to take your faith more seriously? Decide if you really want this – God cannot force anything on you, and neither can I. If you do desire this, then I'd like to invite you to close your eyes – but don't fall asleep! All you have to do is listen to the words of this guided meditation that I will lead you in, and respond to them in your heart. Just open yourself. The Holy Spirit already dwells within you.

Feel your breath coming in... and out... in... and out. Let your heart and mind be silent now, and remember that you are in the very presence of God, who loves you perfectly just as you are. Begin to pray silently to yourself, "*Come, Holy Spirit*" – just asking the Holy Spirit to come upon you, to move in your heart, your mind, and your body. "*Come, Holy Spirit*" – entrust yourself entirely to the will of God, trusting that He is moving right now in you and among us, His beloved children.

"Father, I now come before you fully repentant for all of my sins – each and every one – those I can remember and those I cannot – all of them – *PAUSE* ("*Come, Holy Spirit*"). I fully admit that what I have done was wrong and sinful in your sight. And so, Father, in Jesus' name, I now ask that you please forgive me and wash away all of my sins by the blood that your Son Jesus has personally shed for me on the cross ("*Come, Holy Spirit*"). I also ask by the power of the Holy Spirit that you give me the power not to do any of these specific sins ever again.

Father, there may be sins in my life, which are especially grievous, especially damaging and hurtful. And so, I now wish to fully renounce my involvement in these particular sins – *PAUSE* (“*Come, Holy Spirit*”) – And in Jesus’ precious name I command any evil spirits operative in my life to leave me right now and forever more – never, ever to come back to me again.” (“*Come, Holy Spirit*”).

Lord God, I believe that you love me perfectly. And by an act of my free will, Father, I turn my entire life over to you. I now place my body, my mind, my soul, my spirit, and my entire life into your hands. “Dear Father, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ, I ask you to stir up within me the fullness of your Holy Spirit. Help me to grow in my relationship with the third person of your Holy Trinity and to live in His power and use His gifts.

Lord Jesus, you promised, “the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father would send in your name, to teach us all things and to remind us of everything you have said to us”. Help me to remember that I don’t know everything, and that this is okay, because the Holy Spirit understands it all. Fill me with your Holy Spirit and His understanding of everything that is happening in my life.

O Holy Spirit, Jesus said that He would not leave us orphans, but would send you to us. How often I have wept or complained because it seemed like you, O God, were not with me in my sorrows and sufferings! Help me to recognize your presence in all situations. Help me to turn to you and find you, for you never leave me nor abandon me. You care even more about me and my problems than I do. You are working a plan for my benefit, to make good come from everything that happens to me. Help me to discover your presence in every moment of my life. (“*Come, Holy Spirit*”).

O Holy Spirit, you gave yourself to the Virgin Mary and she said “yes” to becoming the mother of the Messiah. Help me to say “yes!” to whatever it is you are calling me to do. Even though I have my own expectations about what I should and should not do, I now surrender to you my ideas, my limitations, my preferences, and my goals. Fill me, Holy Spirit, with all your supernatural gifts! Empower me to accept and grow in the spiritual life as much as those first disciples did. I want to go where you lead me.”

Come, Holy Spirit, come. Lord, as we come to the end of this prayer, I thank you for how good and loving you are to us. I thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit, who is with us this moment and each and every moment of our lives. And regardless of how we feel or don't feel right now, or whatever experience we may just have or have not had, I believe that your Holy Spirit is alive within me to help me live for you and to know and share your love.

Now, I invite you to spend some time in silence allowing the Lord to speak to your heart. Again, feel your breath coming in....and out... and in....and out... and when you are ready....open your eyes.

“Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth.” God bless you.