

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.

ACTS 2:3-4

PENTECOST SUNDAY

MAY 23, 2021

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Feast of Faith

Liturgy: Work of the Spirit

The Spirit of God who hovered over the waters at the dawn of creation—the Holy Spirit who descended upon the disciples at Pentecost in ever-changing forms in the sound of a mighty wind or tongues of flame—hovers also over our celebration of the liturgy, giving it life, making it real. It is the Spirit of God who draws us, gathering us together, Sunday after Sunday. It is the Spirit of God who called loudly to the inspired writers of the scriptures and who continues to whisper to us, revealing ever-new facets of God's word, granting insight just when we need it. It is by the Spirit's power that, when Christ's words are uttered by the priest, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. And it is surely the Spirit who inspires us—that is, breathes in us—when, sent forth from the assembly, we seek ways to serve our brothers and sisters, to allow the gospel to come to life in the world. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of your love.

—Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Readings for the Week

Monday:	Gn 3:9-15, 20 or Acts 1:12-14; Ps 87:1-3, 5-7; Jn 19:25-34
Tuesday:	Sir 35:1-12; Ps 50:5-8, 14, 23; Mk 10:28-31
Wednesday:	Sir 36:1, 4-5a, 10-17; Ps 79:8, 9, 11, 13; Mk 10:32-45
Thursday:	Sir 42:15-25; Ps 33:2-9; Mk 10:46-52
Friday:	Sir 44:1, 9-13; Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b; Mk 11:11-26
Saturday:	Sir 51:12cd-20; Ps 19:8-11; Mk 11:27-33
Sunday:	Dt 4:32-34, 39-40; Ps 33:4-6, 9, 18-20, 22; Rom 8:14-17; Mt 28:16-20

A Prayer To The Spirit

Holy Spirit,
who sent Christ Jesus
to carry the Good news to the poor,
we pray to you:
Help us to continue your work
by serving the poor, our brothers and sisters.
—From Come, Lord Jesus by Lucien Deiss, CSSP, copyright © 1976, 1981, Lucien Deiss. Published by World Library Publications. p.181

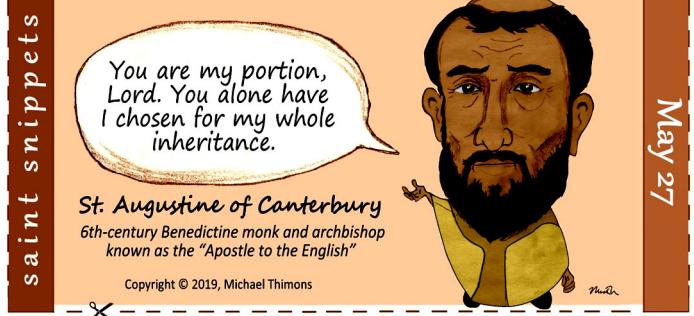
Lord, Send Out Your Spirit

In today's responsorial psalm the Church sings out: "Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth." All three readings describe how God has answered that prayer already.

In the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles and in the Gospel passage from John, we read of astonishing events that called cowering disciples to step out of hiding and proclaim news that would condemn them and change the world forever! In the second reading Paul's words reach out into the future to us: "we were all given to drink of one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

It is our task to truly pray today's psalm response. Let us together beg the Holy Spirit to renew the earth by renewing the Church, sending many more men and women to serve in its various ministries.

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Saints and Special Observances

Sunday:	Pentecost Sunday
Monday:	The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church; Eighth Week in Ordinary Time
Tuesday:	St. Bede the Venerable; St. Gregory VII; St. Mary Magdalene de'Pazzi
Wednesday:	St. Philip Neri
Thursday:	St. Augustine of Canterbury
Saturday:	St. Paul VI; Blessed Virgin Mary

Today's Readings

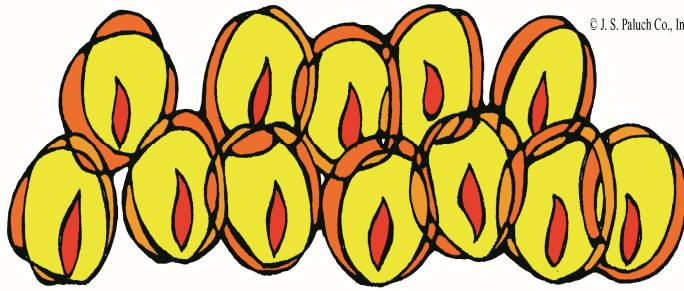
First Reading — They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in different tongues (Acts 2:1-11).

Psalm — Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth (Psalm 104).

Second Reading — There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13) or Galatians 5:16-25.

Gospel — As the Father has sent me, so I send you: Receive the Holy Spirit (John 20:19-23) or John 15:26-27; 16:12-15.

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Pentecost Sunday

May 23, 2021

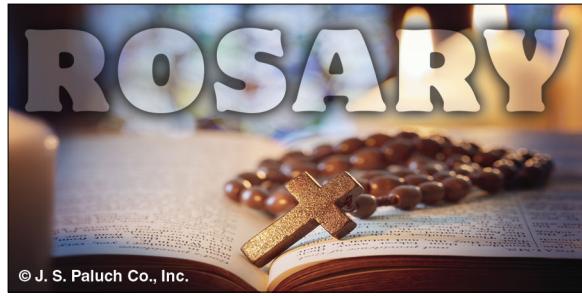
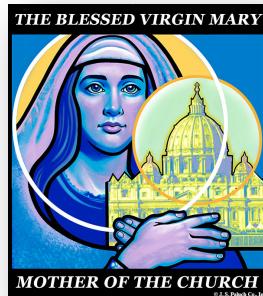
There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit.

—1 Corinthians 12:4

Treasures From Our Tradition

The roots of today's "birthday of the Church" are in an ancient Jewish festival of springtime harvest, seven weeks after Passover. Now, seven weeks after Easter, our great fifty days of rejoicing come to an end. In the countries where the Church first came to life, this is a time of harvest, and the first fruits appear: apricots and lemons, cherries and strawberries. Even in our gardens, herbs are abundant and asparagus, that close relation of the Easter lily, comes fresh to our tables. The earth is laden with so much new life, and that has always been a sign to Christians of Easter's glory. Pentecost means "fifty" and our fifty days of Easter joy are complete. This Sunday is a day to savor the glory of Easter once more: picnics and cookouts, walks by the water, time in the garden—are all ways of extending the feast. Notice the paschal candle today, still burning during Mass. Our Easter celebration now complete, the candle will soon be moved to a place near the baptismal font, and be lighted at baptisms and funerals as a silent witness to Christ's abiding presence.

—James Field, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.



Caution: Spirit at Work

If Pentecost celebrates the gifts of the Spirit, it can tempt us to separate the Spirit from the Father and Jesus. Sometimes we think of the Father as the God of the Old Testament, Jesus as center of New Testament, and the Spirit as God of the present age, almost as if the Father and Jesus were enjoying their retirement. Actually, all three persons share one God-life. Instead of three gods debating the fate of the universe, we have one God who is over all and in all.

The Spirit has been active in all ages. The prophets were empowered by the Spirit to proclaim God's word to Israel. Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit led Jesus into the desert at the beginning of his ministry. (Search the word "spirit" in the four gospels and it appears 75 times.) Jesus was filled with the Spirit as he preached and worked miracles. Then at Pentecost the disciples were filled with the Spirit. So what about Pentecost? It is really about using our gifts and sharing the good news. The Spirit gives us the power, courage, and energy to do this. The Spirit's gifts are meant to be shared. The prophets could not help proclaim God's message. Jesus shared all he knew with his disciples. The disciples went out to the world to spread the news of Jesus' death and resurrection. So we, too, are given gifts to be shared.

The greatest gift we have been given is the news of our salvation. This feast reminds us to share that with others. We may do that by example, as when we worship together, forgive others, give to the poor or help someone in need. We can also share that news by teaching our children about God and his love for them, teaching them to pray, or sharing our faith with other adults. As we come to realize how much God has done for us and how close he is to us, we will want to share that with others. Obviously, we can't make everyone believe in Jesus. But how sad would it be if someone we know was looking for the truth and we neglected to offer it?

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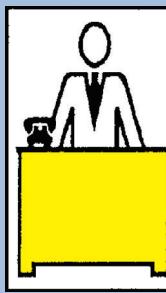
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