

CELEBRATION OF THE WORD

Pentecost

This is a celebration of the Word to aid your worship this Sunday alone or with your household. If possible, place a simple cross or crucifix prominently in the room and light one or more candles. You can also place an image of the Virgin Mary there. If there is more than one person present, choose someone to lead the prayer and one or two people to do the readings.

Whoever leads the prayer can say:

By the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Christ's Paschal Mystery was brought to its completion. The Holy Spirit prepares us with his grace in order to draw us to Christ. He manifests the Risen Lord to us, opening our minds. He makes present the mystery of Christ. And he reconciles us, bringing us into communion with God. Saint Thomas Aquinas says that the Holy Spirit interiorly perfects our spirit, communicating to it a new dynamism so that it refrains from evil for love. With the Holy Spirit within us, "it is quite natural for people who had been absorbed by the things of this world to become entirely otherworldly in outlook, and for cowards to become people of great courage" (Saint Cyril of Alexandria).

SIGN OF THE CROSS

After a moment of silence, let everyone begin by making the Sign of the Cross:

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

HYMN

Choose an appropriate hymn.

We place ourselves before the Lord, beginning with an act of contrition, such as:

O my God,
I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee,
and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments,
but most of all because they offend Thee, my God,
who art all good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more
and to avoid the near occasion of sin.
Amen.

The following are the readings of Pentecost.

**A reading from
the Acts of the Apostles**

2:1-11

WHEN PENTECOST DAY came round, they had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his

own language. They were amazed and astonished. “Surely”, they said, “all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome—Jews and proselytes alike—Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.”

The word of the Lord.

℟️ Thanks be to God.

————•PSALM 103•————

℟️ (cf. 30) Send forth your Spirit, O Lord,
and renew the face of the earth.

Or: Alleluia!

Bless the Lord, my soul!

Lord God, how great you are,
How many are your works, O Lord!

The earth is full of your riches. ℟️

You take back your spirit, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.

You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth. ℟️

May the glory of the Lord last for ever!

May the Lord rejoice in his works!
May my thoughts be pleasing to him.

I find my joy in the Lord. ℟️

**A reading from the first Letter
of Saint Paul to the Corinthians**

12:3b-7, 12-13

NO ONE CAN say, “Jesus is Lord” unless he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them. The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose. Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

The word of the Lord.

℟️ Thanks be to God.

————•SEQUENCE•————

Veni, Sancte Spiritus

Holy Spirit, Lord of light,

From the clear celestial height
Thy pure beaming radiance give.

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Come, thou Father of the poor,
Come with treasures which endure;
Come, thou light of all that live!
Thou, of all consolers best,
Thou, the soul's delightful guest,
Dost refreshing peace bestow;
Thou in toil art comfort sweet;
Pleasant coolness in the heat;
Solace in the midst of woe.
Light immortal, light divine,
Visit thou these hearts of thine,
And our inmost being fill:
If thou take thy grace away,
Nothing pure in man will stay;
All his good is turned to ill.
Heal our wounds, our strength renew;
On our dryness pour thy 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.
Thou, on us who evermore
Thee confess and thee adore,
With thy sevenfold gifts descend:
Give us comfort when we die;
Give us life with them on high;
Give us joys that never end.
Amen. Alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia! Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. **Alleluia!**

**A reading from
the holy Gospel according to John**

20:19-23

IN THE EVENING of the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, "Peace be with you", and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you." After saying this he breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Allow for a few minutes of silent reflection. The following passage could be read:

Invocation of the Holy Spirit

Come, Spirit,
Holy Spirit,
Into every crevice of my heart.
Leave no narrowest defile
For pride to walk.
For hard-lipped judgements to stalk,
Leave no smallest part.
Come, Wisdom,
Holy wise One,
Visit the warped reason of my mind!
Flame in my confusion
With white light.
Waft the sweet diffusion
There of certained might.
Come, Love,
Heart of all love,
Into the embraces of my soul.
To my thousand-armed desires
Come in all fulfilment.
Speak with tongue of fire
In my soul's stillness.
Finger of God,
Flaming finger,
Cauterise my folly.
Be in all the cunning maze
Bright and burning sign.
Trace with fire on dubious ways,
Love's design.

MOTHER MARY FRANCIS, P.C.C.

Mother Mary Francis († 2006) was abbess of the Poor Clare Monastery of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Roswell, New Mexico. This excerpt is from Where Caius Is and Other Poems. © 1955, The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, NY.

INTERCESSIONS

In a group, the leader can begin with these words:

The Holy Spirit manifests Christ to us, recalls his words, and opens our minds to the Paschal Mystery. Rejoicing in the Spirit we pray:

That the Holy Spirit, who makes present the mystery of Christ, will reconcile all people and bring them into communion with the Church. Lord, in your mercy,

R Hear our prayer.

That the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, will show his richness to all those in need. Lord, in your mercy, *R*

For those who have grown lukewarm in their faith: that the Holy Spirit will drive out the torpor of coldness and rekindle the desire for heaven. Lord, in your mercy, *R*

That all the relationships in our own lives be made holy through the gift of the Holy Spirit, the bond of love in the Blessed Trinity. Lord, in your mercy, *R*

For the marginalised, the doubt-ridden, and those on the verge of despair: that the peace of the Spirit will bring them to new life. Lord, in your mercy, *R*

For the grace this week to be free of fear, and to live with the strength bestowed on us by the Holy Spirit. Lord, in your mercy, *R*

Personal intentions

Our Father....

In a group, the leader could offer some words of consolation at this moment, such as:

Lord Jesus, we offer ourselves to you, with all our worries and concerns. Make us the living stones of the Church in this difficult time, and when we are free once more to gather in our churches, may we be strengthened in faith, hope, and charity.

An Act of Spiritual Communion:

My Jesus,

I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar.

I love you above all things

and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,

come spiritually into my soul

so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and for ever.

Amen.

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and lead us to everlasting life. And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.

To conclude the celebration, you can sing or recite the following or another suitable hymn. Turn and face an image of Mary, if you have one.

*Regina caeli, laetare, alleluia,
quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia,
resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia;
ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.*

Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia!
for he whom you were worthy to bear, alleluia!
has Risen as he said, alleluia!
Pray for us to God, alleluia!



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Whitsunday

Pentecost is also known as Whitsun or Whitsunday, and the week following it as Whitsuntide. There are many ancient local and national customs connected to this time of festivity, from cheese-rolling contests to pageants, but here are a few ideas you could use at home this week:

WEARING WHITE

The name Whitsunday, a contraction of “White Sunday”, may be a reference to the white garments worn by catechumens. Also, though the liturgical colour for the day is usually red, white was also used liturgically in England until the Protestant Reformation, so wearing white could be a fun and traditional way to mark the festival.

A WHITSUN WALK

Many folk customs around this holyday take advantage of the late spring weather. A walk, perhaps in the countryside gathering white, red, and green foliage to decorate your home, would be a simple and beautiful way to mark the day. Columbine is particularly associated with the Holy Spirit (the petals are dove-shaped, hence “columba” which is Latin for dove).

A CLOSING BANQUET

You could celebrate the birthday of the Church with a special meal. In medieval times, ale or beer drinking parties were common parish fundraising events at this time of year, but in these days of social distancing you could decorate the house and table, sing or listen to the Sequence *Veni, Sancte Spiritus* from Mass, and maybe consider some almsgiving.

GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Pentecost marks the end of the Easter season, when we remember the gifts that the Holy Spirit pours out on us, and celebrate the fruits of that new life sown in us: *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness, and self-control* (Galatians 5:22-23). Families might find ways to creatively catechise the younger members through treasure hunts, amateur dramatics, or art projects exploring the Gifts and Fruits. Here are the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit outlined by Saint Thomas Aquinas:

Wisdom is both the knowledge of and judgement about “divine things” and the ability to judge and direct human affairs according to divine truth.

Understanding is penetrating insight into the very heart of things, especially those higher truths that are necessary for our eternal salvation—in effect, the ability to “see” God.

Counsel allows a man to be directed by God in matters necessary for his salvation.

Fortitude denotes a firmness of mind in doing good and in avoiding evil, particularly when it is difficult or dangerous to do so, and the confidence to overcome all obstacles, even deadly ones, by virtue of the assurance of everlasting life.

Knowledge is the ability to judge correctly about matters of faith and right action, so as to never wander from the straight path of justice.

Piety is, principally, revering God with filial affection, paying worship and duty to God, paying due duty to all men on account of their relationship to God, and honouring the saints and not contradicting Scripture.

Fear of God is, in this context, “filial” or chaste fear whereby we revere God and avoid separating ourselves from him—as opposed to “servile” fear, whereby we fear punishment.