

Come Holy Spirit Fill the Hearts of the Faithful...!

Today is the Solemnity of Pentecost, fifty days after Easter. We recall the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles and remind ourselves of the gifts of the Spirit we receive in our baptism and confirmation. Jesus had promised his Apostles that he would send them the Holy Spirit to be with them always. He would be their helper and comforter. On this day, the Blessed Trinity is fully revealed, completing the three stages of the salvation history. The stage of God the Father, the Creator, the stage of God the Son, the Redeemer, and the stage of God the Holy Spirit. The Sanctifier and the Vivifier, the age of the Church.

Pentecost means 50th day. In the Jewish calendar, Pentecost is usually celebrated annually on the 50th day after Passover. There were three great Jewish Festivals to which every male Jew living within 20 miles of Jerusalem was legally bound to come, the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacle. Thus, in the first reading, we read about many people of different languages who have gathered, and they all witnessed the coming of the Holy Spirit. The event of the Pentecost is the fulfillment of the promises Jesus made to his disciples before his ascension.

On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down visibly on the Apostles in tongues of fire and they received the power to confess that Jesus is Lord as St. Paul remarked in the 2nd reading “No one can say Jesus is Lord unless he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit.” The Apostles confessed the faith and became great witnesses to the gospel they professed, even shed their blood for the gospel's sake. The gifts of the Spirit transformed them from selfish and timid men into giants of courage, faith, and love. The mission that the disciples started on the Pentecost continued to date. So, Pentecost marked the beginnings of the Church and its mission to all peoples, tongues, and nations.

On this day, we pray that the Holy Spirit, which we have already received, will always be alive and active so that it will fill our hearts and rekindle in us the fire of love. We remember that the center of all that Jesus taught his disciples was love. He spoke about it and showed it by laying down his life. The gift of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles revived the same Spirit of love that they had at their initial stay with Jesus before the passion that scattered them and left them helpless and hopeless. The Spirit inspired them to speak the language of love, which everybody heard. If the gifts of the Spirit are to bear fruits in our lives, we must cleanse or purge away our selfishness and other tendencies that quench this fire of love in us. The gifts of the Spirit are God's gifts to us; the fruits we bear from these gifts are our gifts to him. St Paul gives 12 fruits of the Spirit- charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity (Galatians 5: 22-23). We pray that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of love, will strengthen us to use the gifts God has given us to speak the language of love always. Amen.

“Come Holy Spirit fill the hearts of the faithful and rekindle in them the fire of love. Send forth your Spirit and we shall be created, and you will renew the face of the earth.”