

Pentecost: Rediscover Your Gift

Pentecost — meaning fiftieth in Greek, was originally a Jewish feast counting the days from Passover to the Feast of Weeks, from the Exodus out of Egypt to the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai. Symbolically, it also celebrated the end of the barley harvest, plus the beginning of the wheat harvest in a Mediterranean climate. Whatever the layers of meaning, the first disciples maintained this chronology to designate the fulfillment of the Paschal Mystery in the descent of the Holy Spirit, the creation of the Church, the harvest of Easter so to speak.

Specifically, Pentecost is the birthday of the Church. It marks the day the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles while they were filled with fear and hiding behind locked doors following Jesus' resurrection. After receiving the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit, the apostles immediately went out and preached Jesus' message to everyone—even those who spoke other languages.

The Holy Spirit - through his gifts of wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord – so inspired the apostles and set their hearts on fire such that nothing stood in the way of their preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ. They were empowered for one reason, which was to bring the Good News to every soul.

Because the apostles never wavered in their mission, St. Paul tells us in Galatians 5:22-23 that the work of the Holy Spirit through the apostles bore fruits of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

The feast of Pentecost reminds us that we are each called to bear good fruit. It invites each person to rediscover the gift(s) bestowed upon us by the Holy Spirit and use it to inspire others. What gifts has the Holy Spirit given you? How do you use them?

May the Holy Spirit set our hearts on fire for the love of God and neighbor.

— **Fr. Anthony Ahamefula**
Parish Priest

Prayer To the Holy Spirit by Saint Pope John Paul II

*Holy Spirit and Seat of Wisdom
help us in the great endeavor that we are
carrying out
to meet on a more and more mature way
our brothers and sisters in the faith.
Through all the means of knowledge, of mutual
respect, of love,
may we be able to rediscover gradually the
divine plan.
Teach us constantly the ways that lead
to unity.*

*Help us all to proclaim Christ and reveal the
power of God
and the wisdom of God hidden in His Cross.
How greatly I desire to entrust to You
all the difficult problems of the societies,
systems, and states—
problems that cannot be solved with hatred, war,
and self-destruction,
but only by peace, justice, and respect for the
rights of people and nations.
Amen.*