



Pentecost – A, B, C

May 23, 2021

John 20:19-23

Background on the Gospel:

Pentecost completes the 50 days of Christ's glorification. Christ's mission on earth was to manifest the Trinitarian communion of love and to allow us to have access to share in their eternal communion of giving and receiving. As He returns to the Father, at the same time He sends the Holy Spirit.

The first reading for today from Acts speaks of St. Luke's vision of the giving of the Spirit: on the 50th day after Christ's Death-Resurrection, on the feast of the giving of the Law. But for Christians, the Spirit comes to us to help us understand and fulfill the Law (commandments). The Spirit descends upon the assembled body of disciples at prayer: one common gift for all and a mission to preach to the ends of the earth.

St. John tells of the Lord giving the Spirit on Easter evening: a Spirit of healing, peace and forgiveness. These blessings are shared when we evangelize.

Whether in Luke or John, it is clear that the Spirit is a gift given to the whole Church for the work of evangelization. So this feast is often called the "birthday" of the whole Church. The Spirit dwells in each of us in a powerful and unique way but always for the good of the whole Church.

Thoughts for prayer and reflection:

- 1) *On Pentecost, due to the Acts 2 reading, we think of mighty wind and tongues of fire and much commotion yet John's Gospel describes the giving of the spirit very gently – a new creation – as the assembled disciples (deflated by sorrow and shame) are now revived as a group and become the Body of Christ. A quiet and gentle even intimate experience but a life-altering one, a commission to forgive sins and to recognize in that process we ourselves experience forgiveness for our own failure, fears and sins.*

Contemplate the Lord entering the Upper Room and breathing new air into our stale hearts and weary, tired lungs. Drink deeply of the Spirit He shares. Remember: this Spirit is supposed to flow through you – constantly – toward others. And others will "revive" you in the process too!

- 2) *This is a feast of communication: God "speaks" and breathes the Spirit upon us so that we can speak a new language of love beyond any boundaries. Pray for the grace to listen and then to speak words of love and compassion.*
- 3) *This feast celebrates the universality and diversity of the Church. Do you remember that whenever you pray, you pray in communion with the whole Body of Christ? Do you consciously include thoughts and intercessions for the Church throughout the world (especially in mission lands)? After all, we are brothers and sisters to them!*
- 4) *The Holy Spirit "completes" and "compliments" the earthly ministry of Christ. The Spirit "works" in/through us when invited. Pray for the gifts of the Holy Spirit for yourself and for all members of the Church.*