

# PENTECOST

Year B  
May 20, 2018

Acts 2:1-11  
Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34  
1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13  
John 20:19-23

## Assembly

*(An unlit candle, a Bible opened to this week's gospel and a bottle of Holy Water rest on a cloth-covered table in the meeting place.)*

## Beginning Prayer

*(The candle is lit. The leader holds the bottle of Holy Water as members form a circle around him, join hands and silently focus on the Holy Spirit's presence. The leader asks the Holy Spirit to bless those present. Following a short time of reflection, members alternate reading the following prayer aloud. After the prayer is read, members add personal intentions.)*

All: Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

I: Bless the LORD, O my soul!  
O LORD, my God, you are great indeed!  
How manifold are your works, O LORD!  
The earth is full of your creatures.

All: Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

II: If you take away their breath, they perish  
and return to their dust.  
When you send forth your spirit, they are created,  
and you renew the face of the earth.

All: Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

I: May the glory of the LORD endure forever;  
may the LORD be glad in his works!  
Pleasing to him be my theme;

I will be glad in the LORD.

All: Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34

## LISTEN TO THE LORD

*(The leader passes out copies of the scriptures. The scriptures are read aloud with a pause after each reading. After the gospel is read, the leader invites members to choose a few words from the gospel that touch them.)*

*The leader asks these two questions with a pause between them: “**What does this gospel say to you?**”, “**How does this gospel affect you in your life?**” The community silently reflects on these questions. The leader invites members to share their thoughts about the Insights and Reflection Questions for the week in a single group or within smaller groups.)*

## Insights

Jesus breathed the life of the Holy Spirit into the disciples who were paralyzed with fear. The power of the Holy Spirit overpowered man’s most primal response. When Jesus gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples he knew it was all they would need to accomplish the work he imparted to them. His frightened disciples, who cowered behind the locked doors of their abodes, would now fulfill God’s plan that had been set in motion by his birth. The disciples, transformed into confident warriors of peace, stepped away from their secure homes, into their villages and marched towards the unknown, to continue Jesus’ work of evangelizing. They continued to carry on Jesus’ work for the remainder of their lives after this day of transformation.

There are many mysteries surrounding Jesus’ birth, life, death and resurrection. The relationship between the Holy Spirit, God, Jesus and us, can be a difficult one to grasp. The concept of an omniscient God who loves and creates may be easier to understand because we can physically see the wonders of God’s creations in ourselves, the creatures of the Earth, the wonder of the Earth and in the universe our galaxy resides in. Jesus may seem more tangible to us because, like us, he was born human. We are familiar with the stories in the New Testament related to the miracle of Jesus’ birth, his works on Earth and his death. Through these testaments, we can *see* Jesus born under a bright star at night, we can *see* young Jesus

teach in the temple surrounded by elder scholars, we can *see* him change water into wine at a wedding he attended with his mother, we can *see* him meet and recruit his disciples along the Sea of Galilee shore, we can *see* him evangelize to the crowds gathered to hear him and we can *see* him fulfill the prophecy of his death at Golgotha and his resurrection at his burial tomb.

For some, the idea of the Holy Spirit may be more obscure. The Holy Spirit was delivered to the disciples by Jesus' breath. Like a vapor, it was not visible and was difficult to capture. The Holy Spirit is just that, a spirit. The Spirit of God and of Jesus as one. Our human spirits are connected to our being but are not part of our physical body and our spirit, or soul, leaves our bodies when we die. The Holy Spirit is the spirit manifestation of God and Jesus. When the Holy Spirit resides in us, God resides in us. All of God's children who have the Holy Spirit within them, have God within them. It does not matter where they live, what race they are, what their education level is, what their heritage is, or what their socioeconomic position is. God is in them. This is why Jesus says in Matthew 25:40 "Truly I say to you, inasmuch as you have done it to one of the least of these my brothers, you have done it to me." Therefore, we should accept and respect each other as extensions of God.

Just as the disciples overcame their fear of the outside world because of the Holy Spirit's power within them, we can embrace the power of the Holy Spirit within us and combat the stubborn human desires that draw us away from God. If the Holy Ghost is in us, then we are always a part of God, and we are never alone. The Holy Spirit is God's spirit, Jesus' spirit and the spirit of all those who believe in the light of God's love. If as people, as families, communities, states and nations we band together in the name of God then, with his love, we can conquer the path of evil in the world today. We can reject hatred, anger, prejudices and violence and stand together as one in the light and love of God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit.

### Reflection Questions

- ◆ What is your concept of the Holy Spirit? How do you explain the Holy Spirit to others?
- ◆ Do you ever feel the Holy Spirit within you? If so, do you feel it has changed you? How?
- ◆ Have you seen the Holy Spirit in others? When?
- ◆ When you pray do you pray to God the Father, Jesus or the Holy Spirit

separately, or all three, as one?

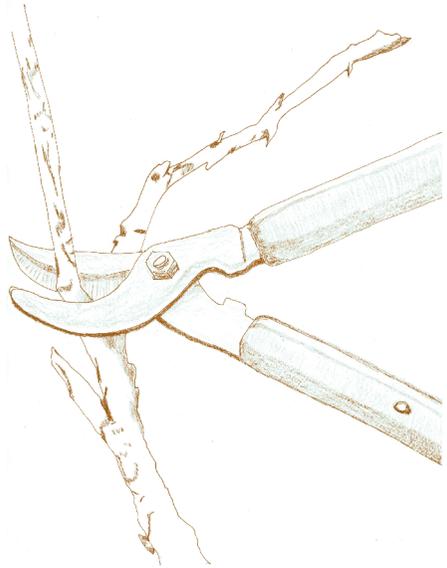
- ◆ Make the sign of the cross and say “In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” What does it mean to you?

### Suggestions for Action

- ◆ Ask your friends and family how they perceive the Holy Spirit. Share your thoughts and discuss.
- ◆ Light a candle at your church and offer prayers to the Holy Spirit. Ask God to breath the Holy Spirit into you to help change your heart.
- ◆ Sit in a quiet place in nature. Reflect on what it means to be a part of God’s Spirit. Ask God what he wants you to do for him and how you can use his Spirit for good.

### HEAR THE LORD

*(After about fifteen minutes of sharing, the leader poses these questions: “How has the sharing from this session affected you?”, “How will it change you this week?” The leader allows a moment for members to reflect before inviting them to share their thoughts. The leader reads a selection from the readings aloud. Following the reading, the leader poses these questions to the members: “What is Jesus saying to you?”, “What is your response?” The community pauses to reflect on these questions. A brief instrumental selection may be played during this time. After a time of reflection, the leader invites members to share what they hear Christ saying to them.)*



### Closing Prayer

*(The leader plays the song “Breath On Us” found at [www.insightsbooks.com](http://www.insightsbooks.com). Click on the Music link and select the appropriate week. After the song is complete, several members pray as follows.)*

## Spirit of Holiness

- I: I breathe in your spirit  
on winds of faith.  
A breath of clean air  
on a warm summer day.
- II: Breathe deeply his spirit,  
Inhale his goodness,  
Exhale all deceit.
- III: Blessedness flows into my heart  
Propelling it to every part of me  
A healing mystery change's  
parts of me that need repair
- IV: My new self is born  
Full of God's Light and Love  
Wondrous happiness to share  
With those with heavy hearts.



*(The leader blesses each member with the Holy Water. Members exchange a sign of peace. The candle is extinguished.)*

