

PENTECOST

Year B
May 23, 2021

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 for each member of the group, a Bible opened to this week's gospel and a peace sign rest on a cloth-covered table in the meeting place.)

Beginning Prayer

(Each member of the group selects a candle to represent the Holy Spirit within them. The candles are lit. Members form a circle and silently focus on God's presence. Following a short time of reflection, members alternate reading the following prayer aloud. After the prayer is read, members may add personal intentions.)

- I: Spirit sent
To renew the Earth
All God's creatures
Heavenly worth
- II: Returned to dust
When they perish
Breathe of spirit
God will cherish
- III: Because of his works
The Lord endures
Send out your spirit
To the earth bring cures



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

LISTEN TO THE LORD

(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 spoke these words to his disciples after his resurrection, “Peace be with you,” while his disciples huddled in their locked room cowering in fear. If there was ever a time the disciples needed peace, it would have been at that point. Jesus then bestowed upon them the greatest gift of all, eternal peace, via the Holy Spirit. Without having the Holy Spirit in their hearts, peace would have been difficult to attain.

Being in a peaceful state, especially during turbulent times, is not an easy achievement but when we have the Holy Spirit within us, it becomes possible. Jesus gave us the gift of the Holy Spirit to sanctify us and to help us understand God’s presence in our lives. The Holy Spirit’s presence within us helps us to let go of worries that paralyze us and allows us to stay focused on being Christians, doing God’s work and improving ourselves. Within the gift of the Holy Spirit are the seven gifts, which are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. We received these gifts at Baptism and they were sealed at our confirmation. When we nurture these gifts we have no need to feel doubt, insecurity, anger, jealousy, greed, etc. We can let go of these negative aspects of ourselves and can allow the Holy Spirit to bring God’s peace to our hearts. Letting God’s love and peace into our hearts helps us to be closer to God, helps increase our understanding of God and opens up our communication with him.

If we nurture the Holy Spirit’s presence within us and cultivate the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, we will not need to control every aspect of our lives. God will lead us and we will follow peacefully where he leads us. Trusting the Holy Spirit, God’s Spirit, to teach us the lessons we need to grow, is the basis for our Christian life. When we completely trust God and leave all of

our anxiety behind us we will have a peaceful life.

When we give up control in our lives and leave our destiny in God's hands we will receive the peace Jesus wished for us. In Jesus' name, may peace be with you.

Reflection Questions

- ◆ How has the Holy Spirit's presence within you kept your heart at peace?
- ◆ How has the Holy Spirit within you helped you bring peace to others when they needed it?
- ◆ Is there a time in your life that the Holy Spirit's presence helped you manage a stressful time? If so, when?
- ◆ How do you nurture the Holy Spirit's seven gifts?

Suggestions for Action

- ◆ Plan a retreat to a peaceful destination that focuses on slowing down and examining what is truly important in your Christian life.
- ◆ Practice a peaceful meditation that focuses on a different biblical passage each morning this week.
- ◆ Share any items that you have in excess with those who have less than you.

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 “Holy Spirit” found at www.insightsbooks.com. Click on the Music link and select the appropriate week. After the song is complete, members alternate reading the following prayer.)

May God Be With You

- I: May the Holy Spirit
 Bring peace to your soul
 My God’s healing love
 Keep your heart whole
- II: May God be within you
 And the Holy Spirit too
 May your soul be content
 May peace be with you
- III: May God’s gifts be upon you
 May your worries cease
 May God’s light protect you
 May God grant you peace

(Members exchange a sign of peace. The candles are extinguished.)

