LIVING FAITH
PENTECOST SUNDAY

ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S

THE WORD OF GOD TODAY
Acts 2:1-11

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.

REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

How do you, in your own language, speak about God's deeds of power?

Everybody speaks more than one language. We speak a linguistic mother tongue, and many speak one or more other languages or dialects. Actions are probably the language that we all speak, and is often underrated! Most people know us and get the measure of us by watching our actions.

What language does God speak? It is probably not English, French, Latin or Greek. The language that God speaks is mercy. Mercy is the language in which you and I must become fluent. When others see us speak God's native tongue, mercy, what do they see? They see us, the daughters and sons of God, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, burying the dead, sheltering the traveler, comforting the sick, and ransoming the captive.

Today, the Holy Spirit is poured out into you and into our community, strengthening us and sending us to speak God's language of mercy to a world which desperately needs to hear it. Again, today as in the early Church, we speak about God's deeds of power through our actions.

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Pentecost - Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Wisdom - discern what is true and right

Understanding - to understand how the teachings of Jesus apply to the different situations of our lives.

Knowledge -to know what God has revealed to us

Courage -to rise above pressures and challenges

Right Judgment -to make decisions that are good and right

Reverence -to develop our relationship with God

Wonder and Awe -to sense God's presence

A Family activity for this week: Take some time to reflect on the gifts of the Spirit working in our lives and families. Can we identify specific examples in our lives when we can see how each gift is at work. Can we name and have conversation how these gifts have helped family members?

Make some time to share with one another the qualities and gifts that you each see in one another that speak to you of God's Spirit. Celebrate this! Take some time to reflect on and realize the Spirit that is with you.

YOU ASKED... MARRIAGE

I've heard that Marriage is the only Sacrament not normally conferred by a priest or bishop. Is that true? Who confers the Sacrament, then?

You heard correctly! The Sacrament of Matrimony (Marriage) is conferred by the couple on one another when they give their consent. The priest witnesses this, representing the Church, and gives the Church's blessing on the couple and their union.

Why does the church teach that marriage is a sacrament?

The sacraments make Christ present in our midst. Like the other sacraments, marriage is not just for the good of individuals, or the couple, but for the community as a whole. The Catholic Church teaches that marriage between two baptized persons is a sacrament. The Old Testament prophets saw the marriage of a man and woman as a symbol of the covenant relationship between God and his people. The permanent and exclusive union between husband and wife mirrors the mutual commitment between God and his people. The Letter to the Ephesians says that this union is a symbol of the relationship between Christ and the Church.

Do you always have to celebrate Mass with a wedding?

No. While many choose to celebrate their wedding within the context of a Mass, it is perfectly permissible to celebrate a wedding at a Liturgy of the Word, held in a Roman Catholic Church, with a priest of designated minister of the Church receiving the vows. Couples should discuss the options with their parish priest before any decisions are made.

Can you get married anywhere outside a Roman Catholic Church?

With permission, the wedding of a Roman Catholic to a person of another Christian faith may be celebrated in another church. Couples should discuss the options with their parish priest before any decisions are made.

Can you get married by a Catholic priest outside of a church?

No. All Roman Catholic marriages must be celebrated in a church or chapel.

Thank you to Fr. Paul Lundrigan for his contribution and consultation.

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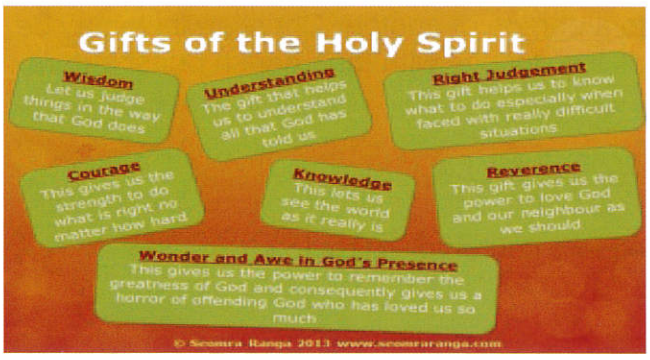
A TRADITIONAL PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.

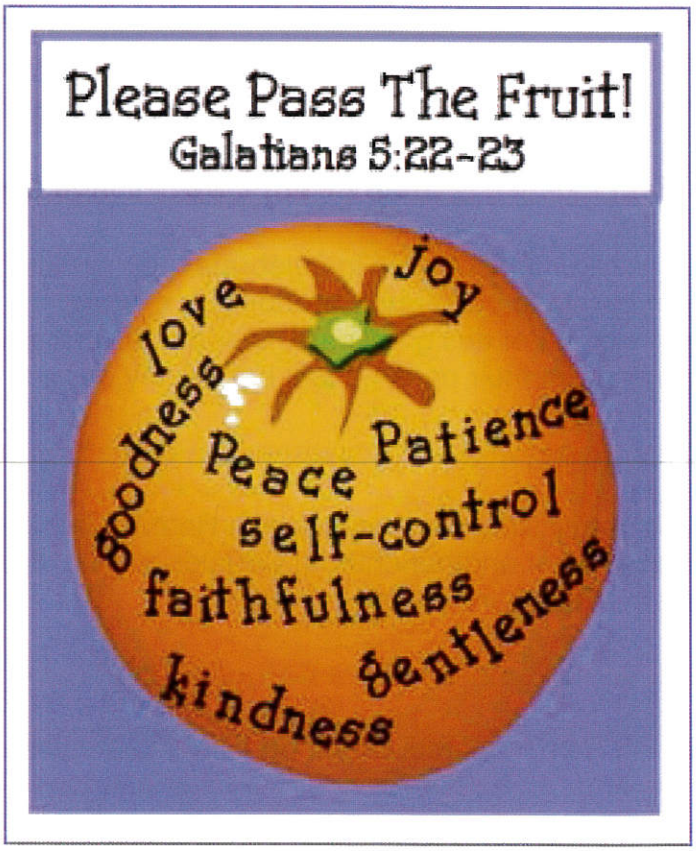
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations,
Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.



A PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AS WE CELEBRATE PENTECOST "THE BIRTHDAY OF THE CHURCH"

Spirit of wisdom and understanding, enlighten our minds to perceive the mysteries of the universe in relation to eternity.
Spirit of right judgment and courage, guide us and make us firm in our baptismal decision to follow Jesus' way of love.
Spirit of knowledge and reverence, help us to see the lasting value of justice and mercy in our everyday dealings with one another. May we respect life as we work to solve problems of family and nation, economy and ecology.
Spirit of God, spark our faith, hope and love into new action each day.
Fill our lives with wonder and awe in your presence which penetrates all creation. Amen.



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