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We give thanks to God by joining in the words of the offering prayer Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. All things come from you, and of your own do we give you. Heavenly Father thank you we gather to celebrate the feast of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Disciples. We pray: That the church may be blessed and guided with the gift of the Holy Spirit and to preach the Gospel to all people; We pray for our ministers and all who preach and teach the way of salvation. May each of us respond to the gift that the spirit bestows to enable us to serve the Lord each day. Lord in your mercy Hear our Prayer That the Holy Spirit may speak in all tongues to a world troubled by divisions, conflicts and misunderstandings; We pray for peace in the world, that the Holy Spirit may unite and reconcile the peoples and nations to bring an end to war, hatred and discrimination. Break down the barriers that hold people apart so that God's wonderful works will be known. Lord make us more aware of our responsibilities to our environment, our climate and our resources that we may ensure that the beauty of the earth continues for future generations. Lord in your mercy Hear our Prayer We pray for all whose lives are limited by poverty, suffering, sickness or violence and who may not know the fullness of life that God wishes for them; May the Holy Spirit come to them to be their comforter and their companion. We remember those who have died and share with their families and friends in their time of loss. Jesus Christ is the light of the world, a light which no darkness can quench, we remember before God those who have died and we light a candle to symbolise the light of Christ; which eternally shines and brings hope. You turn our darkness into light in your Light shall we see light Lord in your mercy Hear our Prayer Lastly we pray for ourselves and we give thanks for our health, for each new day that dawns and the opportunities they bring May we have the courage to speak the words of faith, comfort and hope and may we give thanks for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and pray for guidance in our daily lives; Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. Lord in your mercy Hear our Prayer Alternative Today we celebrate the feast of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Disciples. We pray: 1. That the church may be blessed and guided with the gift of the Holy Spirit and to preach the Gospel to all people; Bless your ministers and all who preach the way of salvation. 2. That the Holy Spirit may speak in all tongues to a world troubled by divisions, conflicts and misunderstandings; Break down the barriers that hold people apart so that God's wonderful works will be known. 3. For all whose lives are limited by poverty, suffering, sickness or violence and who may not know the fullness of life that God wishes for them; May the Holy Spirit come to them to be their comforter and companion. 4. For ourselves that we may have the courage to speak the words of faith, comfort and hope; May we give thanks for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and pray that they will guide our daily lives. We join together in the prayer that Jesus taught us to our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen Pentecost Sunday, 23rd May, 2021 Prepared by Rev. Diane Smith Call to Worship John 20:19-24 Hymn - O Breath of Life - Singing the Faith (STF) 391 (Elizabeth Ann Head - Bessie Porter Head) O Breath of life, come sweeping through us, revive your Church with life and power: O breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us, And fit your Church to meet this hour. O wind of God, come, bend us, break us, till humbly we confess our need; then in your tenderness remake us, revive, restore; for this we plead. O breath, of love, come breathe within us, renewing thought and will and heart; come, love of Christ, arise to win us, revive your Church in every part. Prayer of Adoration We praise you God of all time and places. We thank you and praise you for the gift of your Holy Spirit. Your Spirit embodied in Christ our Lord. Your Spirit offered freely to the open heart. You Spirit given since the dawn of time. Your Spirit given at Pentecost to unite, inspire transform and heal. Your Spirit given at the birth of the world, the birth of Jesus and the birth of the Church. Your spirit given to all work and witness in accordance with your will. For the Gift of the Holy Spirit, we praise your Holy name. Amen. A Prayer of Confession Forgive us good Lord for the times we do not hear the prompting of the Spirit. Forgive us good Lord for the times we do not act upon your guidance. Forgive us good Lord for the times we struggle in our own strength and fail to love you and our neighbours as we should. Amen. Bible Readings Genesis 1:1-5 and Acts 2:1-21 Sermon/Reflection We live in a world of instant and mass communication. From Zoom meetings to text messaging and email, through to the more traditional letter writing and daily newspapers. We have the means and the technological advancements to know what is happening on the other side of the world, as it happens. It is a fact however, that many barriers and walls still exist physically and psychologically across the globe. With all our technological advancements we do not always engage in open, frank and honest communication. We currently find ourselves in that part of the liturgical year when we reflect more deeply upon the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Feast of Pentecost, on this Sunday and Wesley Day tomorrow. The work of the Spirit is diverse, multifaceted and complex. For some the Holy Spirit is the most neglected part of the Trinity. Certainly, we have great difficulty in framing words that help us have some understanding of both the Trinity and the Holy Spirit. Maybe picture language helps us more. St Patrick's famous shamrock illustration or St Augustine's image of the River may help us. Maybe it also helps to concentrate on what the spirit does. The Holy Spirit's power in our life equips us to do God's work, to do those many things that we know that we would never be able to do in our own strength. One of the major functions of the Holy Spirit is to help us communicate the Gospel message of Love and Forgiveness and Reconciliation with God. We do not know fully how the spirit works but we do know the signs, Love, Joy, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control (Galatians 5 v22). When I see this list, I know for sure that I have a lifetimes work set before me, but surely these are the very things that we would want to nurture and develop in our own lives and communicate verbally and non-verbally to those around us. The Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost proved to be the best and most effective communicator of all time. Using a diversity of language, all present heard the spirit speaking in their own language. To speak another's language is more than a question of learning a different dialect, it is about a willingness to be alongside and listen very carefully to the stories of those around us. To train our hearts and minds to discern God's story weaving its way in the lives of others, to be very open to learn from all we meet. I am convinced the Holy Spirit, as a guide, helps to understand the language of those who grieve, the language of those who carry terrible burdens, the language of the mentally ill. When other means of communication break down or fail completely, we have in the Holy Spirit a very real helper and guide. This does not mean a quick fix, rather a sustained living presence that will help challenge, inspire and enrich all of our living. The Holy Spirit of God is seen in a unique way on the day of Pentecost, giving the infant church a much-needed surge of energy. However, we must not limit the work of the Spirit to Pentecost alone. The work of the Spirit began at Creation and continues today. May God the Holy Spirit fall fresh on us all. Amen. Hymn - Spirit of the Living God - STF 395 (Daniel Iverson) Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me. Spirit of the living God, fall fresh on me. Prayers of Intercession (followed by your own time to pray for others) Holy Spirit of God, moving of the face of the waters at Creation, teach us we pray to care for both people and planet. Holy Spirit of God, giving life to dry bones, we pray for who are suffering in body, mind or spirit. Holy Spirit of God, give your strength we pray, to all leaders seeking to bring liberty, justice and freedom. Holy Spirit of God, bring we pray, your powers of healing and reconciliation to a world in great need. Holy Spirit, speak into broken relationships and broken hopes and dreams. Holy Spirit of life, breathe your life into those who are experiencing grief and loss. Holy Spirit of God, touch transform your church worldwide, that she may ever be true to her calling to follow Christ. (Your own Prayers of Intercession) Our Father... Hymn - Come O Everlasting Spirit - STF 375 (Charles Wesley) Come, O everlasting Spirit, bring to every thankful mind All the Saviour's dying merit, suffering still for humankind True recorder of his passion, now the living faith impart, now reveal his great salvation, preach the gospel to our heart. Come, O witness of his dying, Come, remembrancer divine, let us feel your power, applying Christ to every soul, and mine. The Grace The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you this day and ever more. Amen. Hymns reproduced under CCLI License No. 9718 Come, Holy Spirit. We remember your outpouring. On the day of Pentecost, you settled like tongues of fire On all flesh, both young and old. Displaying your glory to pilgrims from every nation. Come, Holy Spirit. We seek your refreshment. Wash over us with peace that passes understanding. With gratitude for our daily bread. With love for our neighbors and for ourselves. And with courage for the journey set before us. Come, Holy Spirit. We await your transformation. Send us out with power to love those whom the world calls unlovely. To strengthen those who have faltered along the way. To bind up the brokenhearted. To employ your gifts in the struggle for justice. Come, Paraclete. Be our Helper as we help the neediest among us. Be our Comforter as we comfort those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Be our Advocate as we advocate for the voiceless and the parentless. Change us, we pray. Move us and send us into the world under your power, for your glory. Amen. Alternative Opening Prayer (1998 ICEL Missal) Send down, O God, upon your people the flame of your Holy Spirit, and fill with the abundance of your sevenfold gift the Church you brought forth from your Son's pierced side. May your life-giving Spirit lend fire to our words and strength to our witness. Send us forth to the nations of the world to proclaim with boldness your wondrous work of raising Christ to your right hand. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit. God for ever and ever. Introduction to the Scripture Readings Acts 2: 1-11 The evening of the first Pentecost may be described. Romans 8: 8-17 God gives us life through the Spirit and sets us free from the law of sin and death. John 14: 15-16, 23-26 The Holy Spirit remains with all Jesus has said. HIDDEN PRAYERS reproduced by the President Conscientious and the Spirit praying within us, let us present our petitions with confidence. That the Spirit may put new life into Pope Leo and all the bishops (pause for silent prayer) Lord, hear us. That the Spirit may help those baptised and confirmed this year to grow in grace (pause for silent prayer) Lord, hear us. That the Spirit may be close to Christians persecuted for their faith (pause for silent prayer) Lord, hear us. That the Spirit may bring healing to all who suffer (pause for silent prayer) Lord, hear us. That the Spirit may help young people preparing for exams (pause for silent prayer) Lord, hear us. That the Spirit may give fresh enthusiasm to all who minister in this parish (pause for silent prayer) Lord, hear us. The Presider prays for the dead: That the Spirit may raise to life those who have died (especially N & N), and lead all the faithful departed home to heaven (pause for silent prayer) Lord, hear us. Conclusion (by the Presider) God our creator, your Spirit brings us to life and sustains us: hear the prayers we are inspired to make, through Christ our Lord. Amen. PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS Remember, O God, the promise of Christ your Son: in your mercy send the Holy Spirit to reveal more completely the mystery of this sacrifice and to disclose to our hearts the full light of truth. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. PREFACE (Pentecost) It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, holy Father, almighty and eternal God. To bring the paschal mystery to completion, you bestowed the Holy Spirit this day on those you made your adopted children by uniting them to your only-begotten Son. At the Church's beginning your Spirit imparted to all peoples the knowledge of the living God and gathered the many languages of the earth into one voice to profess a single faith. Therefore, the universe resounds with Easter joy, and the choirs of angels sing the endless hymn of your glory: HOLY HOLY HOLY EUCHARISTIC PRAYER III (with interpolation for Pentecost) Lord, you are holy indeed, and all creation rightly gives you praise. All life, all holiness comes from you through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, by the working of the Holy Spirit. From age to age you gather a people to yourself, so that from the rising of the sun to its setting a pure offering may be made to the glory of your name. And so, Lord God, we celebrate the feast on which your Holy Spirit came down in wind and fire upon the first disciples, and, rejoicing that you have made us your people, we humbly pray: by the power of your Spirit sanctify these gifts we have brought before you, that they may become the living faith impart, now reveal his great salvation, preach the gospel to our heart. Come, O witness of his dying, Come, remembrancer divine, let us feel your power, applying Christ to every soul, and mine. The Grace The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you this day and ever more. Amen. Hymns reproduced under CCLI License No. 9718 Come, Holy Spirit. We remember your outpouring. On the day of Pentecost, you settled like tongues of fire On all flesh, both young and old. Displaying your glory to pilgrims from every nation. Come, Holy Spirit. We seek your refreshment. Wash over us with peace that passes understanding. With gratitude for our daily bread. With love for our neighbors and for ourselves. And with courage for the journey set before us. Come, Holy Spirit. We await your transformation. Send us out with power to love those whom the world calls unlovely. To strengthen those who have faltered along the way. To bind up the brokenhearted. To employ your gifts in the struggle for justice. Come, Paraclete. 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Holy Spirit, today we ask for godly counsel and direction. As it says in Psalm 37:4 to delight yourselves in the Lord, so we boldly seek to do so today. Following the will and heart of the Father is our greatest desire, for we know His plans are best for us and, in the end, glorify the kingdom. Holy Spirit, please lead us by Your wisdom, discernment, and kindness throughout our lives. Holy Spirit, we praise and thank You for the love lavished upon us. Holy Spirit, we seek and so earnestly crave to be in Your presence, to feel the inner work of You in our own hearts and minds. You so graciously give comfort, truth, and love. Holy Spirit, we welcome You this very day. In the Name of Christ Jesus, Amen. (by Callie Logan) Thank You for The Spirit Dear Jesus, Thank You for leaving the Holy Spirit here with us as our protection and provision. Thank you that we can have that power at work in our lives if we are only mindful of it and remember to draw from it. Please help me to be obviously different to everyone I encounter and to reflect You in my life so that people will know, "The Lord is with me." In Jesus' Name, Amen. (by Marybeth Whalen, Proverbs 31 Ministries) A Prayer to Access the Power of the Holy Spirit. Lord, sometimes I forget that I even have the power of the Holy Spirit in me. I stumble about like I'm spiritually blind rather than walk surefooted like an empowered child of the King. Help me to access the power that You have already given me. Help me to understand what that power looks like. Help me to understand the person of the Holy Spirit better. In Jesus' Name, Amen. (by Sharon Jaynes, Girlfriends in God) What Happened at Pentecost? As stated in our article on 5 Important Things to Know About Pentecost Sunday, it's important to note that Pentecost fell during the Jewish festival of Shavuot. Not only did this allow people from all walks of life to head to Jerusalem and hear Peter's message, but the holiday also celebrated God's provision. God did not have the two events fall on the same day by accident. God has provided the Holy Spirit that day, to empower believers and to inaugurate them into God's kingdom. Interestingly enough, Shavuot celebrated when God gave the Israelites the 10 Commandments and revealed the Torah to Moses, which many consider the start of the Old Testament canon. It's only fitting that the new chapter of the Early Church would commence on such a holiday. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit found the disciples waiting in one place. The Holy Spirit descended on them like tongues of fire. They were indwelt with the Spirit, just as Jesus had promised. The followers of Jesus went into the town, speaking in tongues. The people around them thought, at first, that they had too much to drink. But Peter庄ributes this and speaks clearly—showing he is not inebriated. Peter shares the Gospel message with them and calls for the crowd to repent and be baptized. Three thousand people in the crowd accepted this message and received the Holy Spirit that day. This was the birth of the church, and the numbers grew from those who dedicated their lives to Christ that day. When Is Pentecost This Year? Pentecost always falls 50 days after Easter (or 50 days total, including Easter). The holiday always occurs on a Sunday. Pentecost in 2024 falls on Sunday, May 19th. Below, we've compiled the dates of Pentecost for the next few years. 2025: Sunday, June 8/2026: Sunday, May 24/2027: Sunday, May 16/How Do We Celebrate Pentecost? Many Christian churches won't do much in terms of celebration beyond having a sermon about Pentecost on Pentecost Sunday. However, some more traditional denominations may do more to celebrate the holiday. Before Pentecost, people in the church may participate in something known as novena: nine days of prayer. After all, the disciples, after Jesus ascended, dedicated the next days to prayer until the Holy Spirit arrived. Historically, Churches have thrown feasts on Pentecost Sunday, calling it the church's birthday. Other churches today may have depictions or symbols of fire or a rushing wind to remember how the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples that day. There's no "right way" to celebrate Pentecost, as the church has differed in its celebrations throughout the years. But we should remember this day that the church began as we know it. Perhaps we can gather with our families and pray the Scriptures below to celebrate 2000 years of history in which God has remained faithful to his people. Other Fun Facts about Pentecost Pentecost fulfills prophecies: "Pentecost fulfills the ancient prophecies of Holy Scripture. Peter was saying that "the festival of harvest" had then yielded untold bushels of cataclysmic change in the universe as a result of the empowering of the disciples by the Holy Spirit." —Dr. Michael A. Milton Peter would not have been the church's first pastor. "He is the one who constantly puts his foot in his mouth, constantly is having to be corrected by Jesus, but is in the inner circle. And because of grace and mercy, he is chosen to be the one who stands up in front of this throng, probably thousands, maybe tens of thousands of people to proclaim the gospel, there in the midst of a Hebrew celebration that was intended to remind the Hebrews of how God had always protected them." —Dr. Ray Pritchard The apostles were very different than before Easter Sunday. "The second obvious change in the lives of the disciples was in their spiritual strength. After Pentecost, they were different people. No longer did they flee like sheep without a shepherd. Instead, they turned the world upside down. They turned the world upside down because they fully understood two simple things: the "where" and the "why" of Jesus' departure." —Receiving Joy and Strength. More Scriptures to Pray over for Pentecost this Year Romans 8:26: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words." 1 Corinthians 14:15: "What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also." Philippians 4:6: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." 1 John 5:15: "And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him." Colossians 3:16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Pentecost is a time for celebration and reflection. After all, the birth of the church took place on that day 2,000 years ago! Let's use this holiday to rejoice in the moving power of the Spirit and anxiously await for Christ to return again and bring about the new heaven and new earth. Just as he said Photo credit: ©GettyImages/Javier Art, PhotographyHope Bolinger is an acquisitions editor at End Game Press, book editor for hire, and the author of almost 30 books. More than 1500 of her works have been featured in various publications. Check out her books at hopebolinger.com for clean books in most genres, great for adults and kids. Check out her editing profile at Reedy.com to find out about hiring her for your next book project. This article is part of our Prayer resource meant to inspire and encourage your prayer life when you face uncertain times. Visit our most popular prayer if you are wondering how to pray or what to pray. Remember, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, and God knows your heart even if you can't find the words to pray. The Lord's Prayer Prayer for Peace Morning Prayers Good Night Prayers Prayer for Healing Prayer for Protection Prayer for Anxiety Prayer for Strength Now available is our new Daily Prayer devotional and podcast! An easy way to start your day with prayer: read or listen to today's prayer and sign up to receive it by email. Originally published May 19, 2021.