



Celebrating the feast of Pentecost

reminds us of the power and presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church and in the life of the individual Christian. In fact, the Acts of the Apostles, where we read of the first Pentecost, is also called "The Gospel of the Holy Spirit" because it chronicles the birth, growth, and victory of the Holy Spirit's work in the life of the Apostles.

Even though Christ ascended bodily into heaven following his resurrection, the Holy Spirit will always remain with us. Jesus said to his Apostles before His ascension into heaven: "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you" (John 14:26).

Although the distinct Third Person of the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit is still One and the same God. The Blessed Trinity—the Triune God—is the greatest mystery of the Christian faith and the end for which we were created. The faithful in heaven will be perfectly united to the Holy Trinity in a bond of supernatural love for all eternity.

While in this life we should prepare our hearts for heaven by catechizing ourselves as best we can about each Divine Person of the Blessed Trinity and their contributions to our sanctification and salvation, especially the Holy Spirit which is given to us as our helper, guide, and advocate.

Here are a few great resources from the saints, our teachers and forebears, that will help us to meditate on the Person of the Holy Spirit during this octave of Pentecost:

St. Irenaeus on the Holy Spirit

"Know thou that every man is either empty or full. For if he has not the Holy Spirit, he has no knowledge of the Creator; he has not received Jesus Christ the Life; he knows not the Father who is in heaven; if he does not live after the dictates of reason, after the heavenly law, he is not a sober-minded person, nor does he act uprightly: such an one is empty. If, on the other hand, he receives God, who says, 'I will dwell with them, and walk in them, and I will be their God,' such an one is not empty, but full."

Catechism of the Holy Spirit by St. John Vianney

"O my Children, how beautiful it is! The Father is our Creator, the Son is our Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost is our Guide. . . Man by himself is nothing, but with the Holy Spirit he is very great. Man is all earthly and all animal; nothing but the Holy Spirit can elevate his

mind, and raise it on high. Why were the saints so detached from the earth? Because they let themselves be led by the Holy Spirit. Those who are led by the Holy Spirit have true ideas; that is the reason why so many ignorant people are wiser than the learned. When we are led by a God of strength and light, we cannot go astray.

The Holy Spirit is light and strength. He teaches us to distinguish between truth and falsehood, and between good and evil. Like glasses that magnify objects, the Holy Spirit shows us good and evil on a large scale. With the Holy Spirit we see everything in its true proportions; we see the greatness of the least actions done for God, and the greatness of the least faults. As a watchmaker with his glasses distinguishes the most minute wheels of a watch, so we, with the light of the Holy Ghost, distinguish all the details of our poor life. Then the smallest imperfections appear very great, the least sins inspire us with horror. That is the reason why the most Holy Virgin never sinned. The Holy Ghost made her understand the hideousness of sin; she shuddered with terror at the least fault.

Those who have the Holy Spirit cannot endure themselves, so well do they know their poor misery. The proud are those who have not the Holy Spirit. . . (Continue reading the *Catechism of the Holy Spirit* by St. John Vianney).

St. Basil on the Holy Spirit

“[W]e are compelled to direct our thoughts on high, and to think of an intelligent being, boundless in power, of unlimited greatness, generous in goodness, whom time cannot measure. All things thirsting for holiness turn to Him; everything living in virtue never turns away from Him. He waters them with His life-giving breath and helps them reach their proper fulfillment. He perfects all other things, and Himself lacks nothing; He gives life to all things and is never depleted. He does not increase by additions, but is always complete, self-established, and present everywhere. He is the source of sanctification, spiritual light, who gives illumination to everyone using His powers to search for the truth—and the illumination He gives us is Himself. His nature is unapproachable; only through His goodness are we able to draw near it. He fills all things with His power, but only those who are worthy may share it. He distributes His energy in proportion to the faith of the recipient, not confining it to a single share. He is simple in being; His powers are manifold: they are wholly present everywhere and in everything. He is distributed but does not change. He is shared, yet remains whole.

Consider the analogy of the sunbeam: each person upon whom its kindly light falls rejoices as if the sun existed for him alone, yet it illumines land and sea, and is master of the atmosphere. In the same way, the Spirit is given to each one who receives Him as if he were the possession of that person alone, yet he sends forth sufficient grace to fill all the universe. Everything that partakes of His grace is filled with joy according to its capacity—the capacity of its nature, not of His power.”

