

Dear friends, today we are celebrating the solemnity of Pentecost, the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4), the Holy Spirit. Jesus fulfilled His promise to the disciples by sending the Holy Spirit or the Advocate – the Spirit of Truth (Jn.15:26). Again, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit also confirms the prophecy of Joel 3:1 “...I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh”. The celebration of Pentecost brings the Easter season to a close. The Christians’ celebration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit coincides with the Jewish feast of Weeks, fifty days after Passover, which was a time of prayer for good harvest. Pentecost simply means “fiftieth”, 50<sup>th</sup> day after Passover. For us, Christians, the 50<sup>th</sup> day after Easter is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. The feast of the Pentecost is the birthday of the Catholic Church; the day three thousand people were added to the disciples as the result of Peter’s preaching (Acts 2:41). The Holy Spirit brought to the Apostles the light and the strength they needed to preach the Gospel. It was astonishing to see Peter, an illiterate person, preaching to the Jews as any theologian would.

The first reading presents an untold transformation on the disciples and the dramatic descent of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost brought about more than the disciples could have ever imagined. The Spirit enabled them to speak in languages that everyone could understand and transformed their fears, so they were able to proclaim God’s salvation in Jesus Christ with courage, confidence and zeal (Acts 2:4; 11). Luke speaks of fifteen different groups of people, each speaking a different language, who listened to Peter speaking on the day of Pentecost. Peter spoke in Aramaic, but each one present there, heard Peter’s words as if spoken in his own language. Hence, Pentecost restores man to the culture of **unity and love** (cf. Genesis 11:1-9) not the confusion of Babel. The Holy Spirit brings about a total transformation and overcomes walls and barriers that bring unity and love. Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit renews the face of the earth. The Psalms today make this proclamation loud and clear: “you send forth your Spirit...and you renew the face of the earth” (Ps. 103:30). “The Spirit too comes to help us in our weakness. For when we cannot choose words in order to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words, and God who knows everything in our hearts, knows perfectly well what he means...” (Rom.8:26-27). The Holy Spirit also has been guiding the church right from Pentecost up-to-date, and it may interest you to know that at Mass the Holy Spirit transforms the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Let us pray individually for the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. May God grant us the **Spirit of Wisdom** that we may despise the perishable things of this world and aspire only after the things that are eternal. It is the gift of Wisdom that strengthens our faith, fortifies our hope, perfects our charity and promotes the practice of virtue in the highest degree. Two, the **Spirit of Understanding** also enlightens our mind with the light of Divine truth. The Spirit of Understanding enables us to penetrate the inner meaning of revealed truths and through them to be quickened to newness of life. Three, the **Spirit of Counsel** helps us to choose the surest way of pleasing God and gaining heaven. The gift of Counsel endows the soul with supernatural prudence, enabling it to judge promptly and rightly what must be done, especially in difficult circumstances. Four, the **Spirit of Fortitude** helps us to bear our cross and overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose our salvation. Fortitude imparts to the will an impulse and energy, which moves it to undertake without hesitation the most arduous tasks, to face danger, and to endure without complaint. Five, the **Spirit of Knowledge** helps us to know God and know ourselves and grow perfect in the science of the saint. Knowledge guides us by its light, we put first things first, and prize the friendship of God beyond all else. Six, the **Spirit of Piety** helps us to find the service of God sweet and amiable. It inspires us to love and respect God and the things consecrated to Him as well as those who are vested with authority. Seven, the Spirit of the **Fear of God** helps us to be filled with a loving reverence towards God and dread in any way to displease God. It is the fear that is the beginning of wisdom (Prov.9:10; Ps. 111:10).

In conclusion, brothers and sisters, let us pray each and every day for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, as a result of that we may make wise and informed decisions. We constantly need the guidance of the Holy Spirit to keep us in His grace so that we may never sin against God. May God give us His Spirit, as He guides us into the way of peace. Amen!