



# Pentecost

## SUNDAY

MAY 31, 2020

Jesus breathed on them and said to them,  
“Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them,  
and whose sins you retain are retained.”

John 20:22-23

### THE SPIRIT MOVES US

Today we celebrate Pentecost, the day when the Holy Spirit was given by Jesus and received by the disciples. The readings from Acts and the Gospel of John offer accounts of that day while First Corinthians offers an analysis of the many gifts that resulted from the infusion of the Holy Spirit. The psalm and the sequence read today are filled with praise for the work of the Spirit. Today represents a culmination of all the difficult days that have gone before, the triumph of Holy Thursday, the death and despair of the Cross, the astonishing Resurrection, and the appearances of a familiar but transformed Jesus to his disciples. It represents the pivotal transition for the disciples from people of uncertainty and fear to people of commitment and action. The Spirit moves the disciples and moves us as well.

### SAFETY IN NUMBERS

The apostles and all the believers in Jesus have been through a tumultuous time. They have experienced the heights of Holy Thursday and the depths of Good Friday, the uncertainties of Easter Sunday, and the multiple appearances of Jesus after his death and resurrection. They have not recognized Jesus, and when they have, they have demanded reassurance from him. Throughout most of this time they have stayed together. Acts describes them all in one place, together, when wind fills the house and tongues of fire rest on each of them. They then find themselves able to communicate with and be understood by those who had not understood them. Everyone recognizes this as a mighty act of God. John reminds us and the disciples that receiving the Spirit brings with it peace and the need for action. They receive the Spirit so they can be sent into the world to forgive sins.

### ACTION IN THE SPIRIT

When our world has been turned upside down, when we are faced with uncertainties about what is real, when we are unsure about what lies ahead for us, when we don't know what we should do next, we do not want to be alone. Neither did the apostles and all those who loved Jesus. They wanted to be together when they needed to make sense of what was happening to them and what was going to be asked of them. There is safety in numbers but neither the apostles nor we can remain huddled together. The Spirit requires that we act. All the manifestations of the Spirit are given in order to benefit us and our world. The many different gifts given by the Spirit demand that we do many kinds of work, many forms of service. But we do not work alone. The Spirit is always with us.

### TODAY'S READINGS

Acts 2:1-11  
Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34  
1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13  
John 20:19-23









