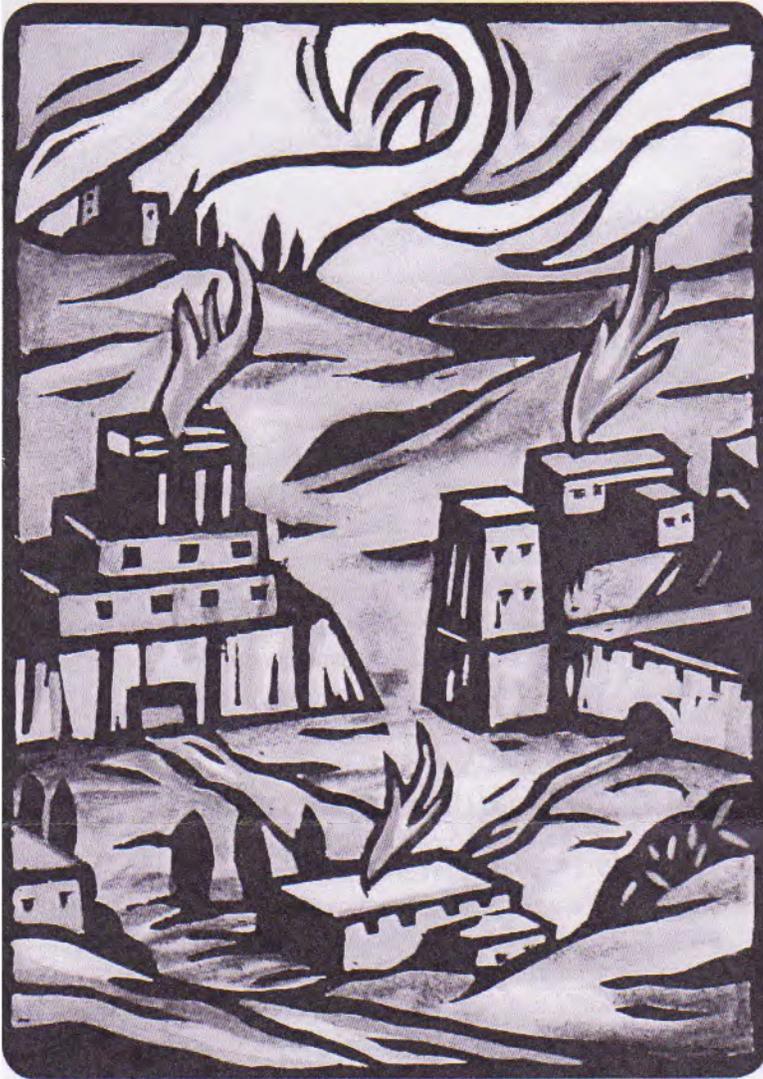


Pentecost



A Pentecost Prayer

O God of wind and flame,
you who inspirited
the first disciples
so that they were understood
in many languages,
and could take good news to the world,
make us also a Pentecost people.
Help us to speak with clarity
and conviction,
to unite, not divide,
to bring your justice into our world,
and above all to act with love.
We ask this through our Lord
Jesus Christ,
your Son, who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever. Amen.

Sunday, May 27, 2012 Ongoing Creation

Today's Readings: Acts 2:1–11; Psalm 104:1, 24, 29–30, 31, 34 (see 30); 1 Corinthians 12:3b–7, 12–13 or Galatians 5:16–25; John 20:19–23 or John 15:26–27; 16:12–15. Breath—how often we take it for granted! How important it is for both physical and spiritual life! Today, Jesus' breath over the disciples (in John 20:22) echoes back to Genesis. When all was chaos, "a wind from God swept over the face of the waters" (Genesis 1:2). The gradual process of Creation began, culminating in God breathing life into human beings.

So too, chaos reigned in the house where the disciples locked themselves after Jesus' Crucifixion. Fear, confusion, and uncertainty predominated. Then Jesus gave them his presence, his reassuring peace, his commissioning, and his

breath. His gift ("receive the Holy Spirit") was the gift of his presence that would be with them from then on.

We know that Creation didn't just happen once; it is an ongoing event. So we ask the Holy Spirit's presence in areas of our lives that seem chaotic or lifeless. We ask Jesus to dispel our fears and draw us deeper into his love. If we must make a sacrifice, challenge an unjust situation, question a life-draining relationship, or protect the vulnerable, we ask for the Spirit's guidance.

On Pentecost we celebrate both the mission Jesus gives us: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21), and the Spirit's peaceful strength we need to accomplish the task.



This Week and Beyond

Now that the Easter season has ended, here are some memorials, feasts, and solemnities to look forward to during Ordinary Time.

Thursday, May 31

Feast, Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Readings: Zephaniah 3:14–18a or Romans 12:9–16; Responsorial Psalm: Isaiah 12:2–3, 4bcd, 5–6 (6); Luke 1:39–56. Mary and Elizabeth have reasons for fear. In that culture, Mary risks being stoned to death for an out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Elizabeth is old, with few medical resources to assist her pregnancy. Yet they break into praise. They remember their foremothers, other prophets filled with the Spirit, and like them, sing God's goodness.

Sunday, June 3

Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

Readings: Deuteronomy 4:32–34, 39–40; Psalm 33:4–5, 6, 9, 18–19, 20, 22 (12b); Romans 8:14–17; Matthew 28:16–20. A week after the coming of the Holy Spirit, these readings give help us ponder the relationship of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the Trinity, the central mystery of our faith.

Sunday, June 10

Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

Readings: Exodus 24:3–8; Psalm 116:12–13, 15–16, 17–18 (13); Hebrews 9:11–15; Mark 14:12–16, 22–26. The Body of Christ is carried in procession through the streets as a visible sign of his presence living among us. Processions symbolize that Christians are a people on the move, purposefully passing through this life into eternity. So in today's Gospel, the disciples, after eating and drinking Christ's body and blood, sang hymns and processed to the Mount of Olives.

Friday, June 15

Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

Readings: Hosea 11:1, 3–4, 8c–9; Responsorial Psalm: Isaiah 12:2–3, 4, 5–6 (3); Ephesians 3:8–12, 14–19; John 19:31–37. In the seventeenth century, Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque had a strong sense of God's presence and then a series of revelations about the Sacred Heart. These had a eucharistic focus and encouraged adoration and reparation. Showing her the divine heart that in today's Gospel had poured out its last drop of life, Jesus asked a return of love for love.

Thursday, June 28

Memorial, Saint Irenaeus

Readings: 2 Kings 24:8–17; Psalm 79:1b–2, 3–5, 8, 9 (9); Matthew 7:21–29. Ordained in Lyons, France, where he eventually became Bishop, Irenaeus lived through the brutal persecution of Christians by Romans. He saw a greater danger to the Church, however: the threat of Gnosticism. This heresy makes a clear-cut distinction between evil matter and virtuous spirit. Irenaeus reminded people that when Christ became incarnate, he blessed and redeemed the flesh. In the imagery of today's Gospel, Irenaeus tried to restore the Church's firm foundation on rock.

Friday, June 29

Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul

Readings: Acts 12:1–11; Psalm 34:2–3, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9 (5b); 2 Timothy 4:6–8, 17–18; Matthew 16:13–19. Saint Peter is one of the most human characters in the Gospel. His frequent stumbling never restrained his enthusiasm. Two verses after his dramatic affirmation in today's Gospel, Jesus has to reprimand him: "Get behind me, Satan!" (16:23). Despite his failings, he went on to a faithful life of leadership, including imprisonment, arduous travel, and martyrdom. Saint Paul's letters to the early Christians are like precious heirlooms, passed along to us today. In honor of Paul, read 2 Timothy 4: 6–8, 17–18, today's Second Reading.

