

Pentecost Sunday



Infuse Us with Life

God, the Holy Spirit,
you who sent wind and flame,
and gave the first disciples
the gift of many languages,
send us that same infusion of life.
We live in narrow boxes,
seeking people like ourselves.
Make us bold,
finding you in many cultures,
speaking out about your deeds
of power.

Help us be “amazed and astonished”
at the miracles you work daily
within our lives.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Sunday, May 19, 2013
Drawing on the Gift of the Spirit

Today's Readings: Acts 2:1–11; Psalm 104:1, 24, 29–30, 31, 34 (see 30); 1 Corinthians 12:3b–7, 12–13; John 20:19–23. The Easter readings that have surged with life-giving inspiration reach a climax in today's Scriptures. To fully appreciate them, remember a time when you acted surely, strongly, and confidently, convinced you were doing the right thing. It may have been difficult, but it was obviously *right*. Savor that life-giving memory for a few minutes. Then reread the passages from Acts, Corinthians, and John. Which passage resonates most clearly with that experience?

They all describe an empowerment that transcends human limits. Even something as specific to each culture as language miraculously communicates with all. In a contemporary version of Acts, imagine the residents of Baltimore, Moscow, Beijing, Rio de Janeiro, Kabul, Frankfurt, and

Rome all chatting merrily. That's a glimpse of what transpired in Jerusalem one special day.

According to 1 Corinthians, our unique gifts are different manifestations of one Spirit. So when we explored the memory of a sure, strong action, we drew, perhaps unknowingly, on that source of energy and creativity that filled the first disciples and the saints. Just as they received Christ's powers to forgive and create, so do we. Furthermore, we're bonded to each other, so that one's strengths compensate for what another lacks.

Why could they, and we by extension, do such extraordinary things? The answer is contained in John. The peace of Christ which fills us supersedes meaner inclinations, anxieties, and flaws. If we trust Jesus's gift of the Spirit thriving within, we can mercifully forgive, compassionately minister, and competently heal the wounded body of Christ.



This Week and Beyond

Ordinary Time

The Fifty Days of Easter has ended, and the long period of Ordinary Time opens before us. Here are some memorials, feasts, and solemnities to anticipate.

Sunday May 26

Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity

In today's Gospel, Jesus names the other two persons of the Trinity: the Father and the Holy Spirit. The simplest explanation of the Trinity for any children in the household might be: it's no fun to play alone. Early Christians used a Greek word for the Trinity's inner life: *perichoerisis* or "dancing around." Thus, music, dance, and words together evoke God's creativity. The Trinity's dance fills the universe, and we participate in it as God's partners. Today's Readings: Proverbs 8:22–31; Psalm 8:4–5, 6–7, 8–9 (2a); Romans 5:1–5; John 16:12–15.

Sunday, June 2

Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ

"You give them something to eat" was Jesus's instruction to the Apostles in the deserted place where five thousand had gathered to hear the Teacher. And so began the Lord's demonstration of how to care for the people. What was it like to be one of the Twelve, confronted with these lessons? We have the distance of time and space in which to contemplate Christ's teachings; how might we hold up "on the spot," learning how to help feed? Perhaps we learn best how to be nurturing by simply allowing ourselves to be fed by Christ's body and blood. Today's Readings: Genesis 14:18–20; Psalm 110:1, 2, 3, 4 (4b); 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; Luke 9:11b–17.

Monday, June 24

Nativity of John the Baptist

This day is celebrated six months before Christmas Eve. John was a wild prophet who helped prepare for Christ. He had

odd eating habits (locusts and honey), strange dress (camel hair), and fiery preaching. Today's Gospel tells of his remarkable birth, that caused neighbors and relatives to ask, "what then will this child become?" Some in your family could draw John, or sculpt his figure from foil, placing it in a dish of water to signify the Jordan River where he baptized Jesus. Today's Readings: Isaiah 49:1–6; Psalm 139:1–3, 13–14, 14–15 (14a); Acts 13:22–26; Luke 1:57–66, 80.

Monday July 22

St. Mary Magdalene

Let's take this opportunity to correct a mistake—that a great saint, Jesus's friend and apostle to the Apostles, was a prostitute. Nothing in Scripture supports that; the taint came from the conflation of three Biblical women by Pope Gregory the Great in the seventh century. Mary Magdalene was a first witness to the Resurrection, who announced what all Christians should say, "I have seen the Lord" (John 20:18). Today's Readings: Exodus 14:5–18; Responsorial Psalm: Exodus 15:1bc–2, 3–4, 5–6 (1b); John 20:1–2, 11–18.

Monday July 29

St. Martha

Outspoken, perceptive, the patron saint of chefs, Martha was one of the few to recognize Jesus's true identity, saying: "I believe you are the Messiah, the Son of God" (John 11:27). Today's Readings: Exodus 32:15–24, 30–34; Psalm 106:19–20, 21–22, 23 (1a); John 11:19–27 or Luke 10:38–42.

Thursday, August 15

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Today's Gospel recounts why Mary was so blessed as to be assumed into heaven. Celebrate Mary by gathering some of the season's harvest of flowers, fruits, and vegetables. Give thanks for her and for all God's gifts as you enjoy them! Today's Readings: Revelation 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab; Psalm 45:10, 11, 12, 16 (10bc); 1 Corinthians 15:20–27; Luke 1:39–56.

