

## Feast of Pentecost / Acts 2:1-11; I Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13; Jn 20:19-23

Today we celebrate the great feast of Pentecost – the birthday of the Church and the day the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles. But Pentecost is not only an event from the past. It is a living reality. The same Holy Spirit who came upon Mary and the apostles continues to work in our hearts today.

An old beggar lay on his deathbed. His last words were to his young son who had been his constant companion during his begging trips. “Dear son,” *he said*, “I have nothing to give you except a cotton bag and a dirty bronze bowl which I got in my younger days from the junk yard of a rich lady.” After his father’s death, the boy continued begging, using the bowl his father had given him. One day a gold merchant dropped a coin in the boy’s bowl, and he was surprised to hear a familiar ring. “Let me check your bowl,” the merchant said. To his great surprise, he found that the beggar’s bowl was made of pure gold. “My dear young man,” *he said*, “why do you waste your time begging? You are a rich man. That bowl of yours is worth at least thirty thousand dollars.”

Many of us live our spiritual lives in the same way. We often forget the treasure God has placed within us. Through Baptism and Confirmation, the Holy Spirit lives in us. We are not empty or abandoned people. We are temples of the Holy Spirit. Yet sometimes we live with fear, discouragement, resentment, or hopelessness, forgetting the strength and grace God has already given us.

In today’s first reading from the Acts of the Apostles, we see frightened disciples hiding behind closed doors. They were confused, weak, and uncertain about the future. But when the Holy Spirit came upon them like a mighty wind and tongues of fire, everything changed. Fear gave way to courage. Silence turned into joyful proclamation. Those ordinary men became powerful witnesses to Christ.

That same transformation is possible for us. The Holy Spirit still gives courage to the fearful, hope to the discouraged, and peace to troubled hearts. The Spirit strengthens us in our struggles, guides us in difficult decisions, and helps us remain faithful even when life becomes heavy.

Saint Paul reminds us in the second reading that the Spirit gives different gifts to each person for the good of all. Not everyone is called to do the same thing, but everyone has a gift to offer. Some bring kindness and compassion. Others encourage, teach, pray, serve, or quietly support those who suffer. In every act of love, the Holy Spirit is at work building up the Church.

In the Gospel, Jesus appears to His disciples and says, “Peace be with you.” Then He breathes on them and says, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” It is beautiful that the first gift of the Risen Christ is peace. The Holy Spirit brings healing where there is hurt, forgiveness where there is sin, and unity where there is division.

Our world today deeply needs that, Spirit. We live in a time filled with anxiety, anger, loneliness, and division. Many people carry wounds silently in their hearts. As Christians, we are called to bring the peace of Christ into our homes, our parish,

and our community. We do this not by our own strength, but by allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us each day.

So today, let us open our hearts once again to the Spirit of God. Let us ask Him to renew our faith, deepen our love, and help us to live as true disciples of Jesus.

And with Saint John Henry Newman, let us pray:

“Come, Holy Spirit.  
Make our ears to hear,  
our eyes to see,  
our mouths to speak,  
our hearts to seek,  
and our hands to reach out  
and touch the world with your love. Amen.”