

Impact

Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.

COME, HOLY SPIRIT!

Fill our hearts. Come to our aid.

Think about your life for a moment: all that you hope and dream for, the things that fill the minutes and hours of your days, the challenges, joys, and everything in between. Then, remember that in each of those times, in all of the yearning and wondering, ups and downs, ins and outs, the Holy Spirit is with you. Always and everywhere.

It may be easy to lose sight of the Holy Spirit. Unless we are attentive to God's continual offer of grace, we may feel that we are left to face the circumstances of our lives alone. The celebration of Pentecost reminds us that we have been imbued with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, special ways in which the Spirit is present. The gifts are already given; we must be ready to recognize and allow the Spirit to activate them within us when we need them, and in doing so, we will powerfully know the Spirit's presence.

Confused or facing a difficult decision? Ask the Spirit to provide **wisdom**. When uncertain or befuddled by the complexity of life around you, **understanding** awaits. When seeking God's will in demanding situations, ask the Spirit to give you **knowledge**. When you or a friend face a moral or ethical dilemma, rely on the Spirit's **counsel**. Feeling weak and wavering in your commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus? Ask the Holy Spirit for **fortitude**. Seeking meaning and purpose in life and faith? Ask for **piety – reverence for God and God's ways**. Need to see beyond the mundane and understand yourself as a child of God? Invite the Holy Spirit to imbue you with **fear of the Lord - holy awe**.

The Holy Spirit knows our hearts and is already at work within us. The Holy Spirit is love. Love resides within us, awaiting our readiness to live in love boldly, compassionately, trusting that our good God will give us all we need.

In the same way, the Spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings.

Rom 8:26

"True to his nature as giver and gift alike, he is now working through you. Let unifying love be your measure; abiding love your challenge; self-giving love your mission!" Benedict XVI's insight helps us to understand the mystery of the Holy Spirit. Not only does the Spirit give us great and wonderful gifts, the Holy Spirit is the gift!

As with all good gifts entrusted to us by our gracious God, we are called to steward well the gift and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The gifts are not only for us, but for all. There is no doubt the world - the people and circumstances around you - needs wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and holy awe. As a good steward of these gifts, give them lavishly, sacrificially, as a reflection of the giver, the Spirit of God.

Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

We live in mission through the Holy Spirit

Have you ever felt it just isn't possible to live as a disciple in today's world?

There is no doubt, living faith in our daily lives is not always easy. Not only is the world increasingly ambivalent about, sometimes overtly hostile to, faith, it is challenging to consciously live as a follower of Jesus. Doing so requires us to be intentional about our attitudes, decisions, and actions, every day, in every situation.

We are sometimes uncertain whether we are ready to take our relationship with Christ seriously.

It isn't that life is always hard, although we all have difficult periods in our lives. It is simply that living as a Christian raises expectations about the way we should live.

Sometimes it feels as though we're hitting a wall, and are tempted to take the easy way out.

Friends may want us to do things that feel counter to the Christian way of life. We may face ethical dilemmas at work. We may fight selfish and self-centered tendencies when demands are placed on our time. We may be afraid to truly live as a person of faith, for fear of rejection or ridicule.

After Jesus' crucifixion, the disciples were filled with fear.

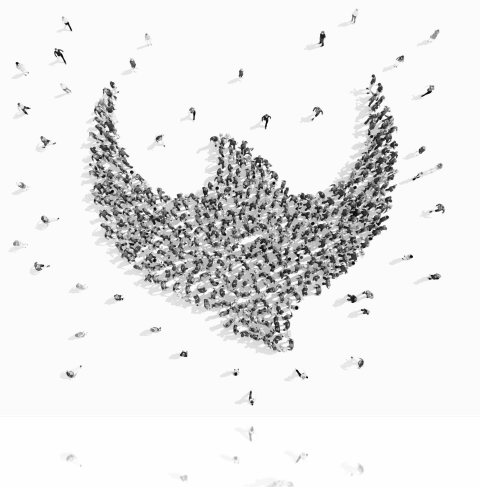
They likely felt they had hit a wall. They remained together, waiting as Jesus had told them, uncertain of what was to come.

On the day of Pentecost, they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Empowered with the strength and courage of the Spirit of God, they they boldly shared the good news of Jesus' resurrection and they never looked back.

Like the disciples, we, too, have a mission. And like them, the Holy Spirit is with us.

In his pastoral exhortation on the call to holiness in today's world, Pope Francis challenges us to live our mission with purpose through the power of the Holy Spirit: "You too need to see the entirety of your life as a mission. Try to do so by listening to God in prayer and recognizing the signs that he gives you. Always ask the Spirit what Jesus expects from you at every moment of your life and in every decision you must make, so as to discern its place in the mission you have received. Allow the Spirit to forge in you the personal mystery that can reflect Jesus Christ in today's world." (GE, 23).



IMPACT THIS MONTH

BE QUIET

Find a place and time for quiet at the end of each day or week.

BE ATTENTIVE

Pay attention when you feel the presence of the Holy Spirit or when you especially need to know God's love.

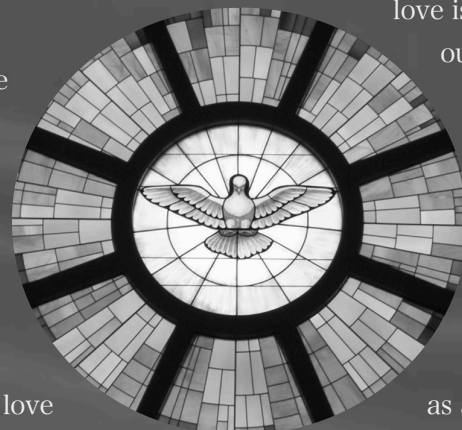
BE OPEN

Be open to the actions, attitudes, sacrifice, or service to which you may be called.

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

We begin and end prayer with the Sign of the Cross, but have you ever thought of the sign itself as a prayer?

The Sign of the Cross invites us into an encounter with God's love, protection, mercy, forgiveness and presence. Through this briefest of prayers, we recall the key mysteries of our faith: that we are created in love and for love by God the Father; we are redeemed through Jesus Christ, whose passion, death, and resurrection lead us to the fullness of life; and we are filled with the Holy Spirit, whose presence empowers us to live as God desires.



These three persons of the Holy Trinity are one God, whose love is overflowing, everlasting, abundant beyond our comprehension.

The Sign of the Cross is a sign of our faith, whether prayed privately in personal prayer or publicly, before meals, at Mass, with friends.

The next time you make the Sign of the Cross, make a renewed commitment to live as a child of God, disciple of Jesus Christ, as one who is anointed and sealed with the Holy Spirit. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen!