

JUNE 2022

BRING FAITH TO LIFE.
FIND LIFE IN FAITH.

Impact

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

Wind. Fire. Presence.

Do you sometimes feel uncertain and confused? Does your life need direction? Are you tired, stressed, anxious, or afraid? Most of us have moments when we could answer yes to all of those questions!

The disciples waited in the upper room at Jesus' command, uncertain, confused, and fearful. After the experience of Jesus' passion, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, they needed to be assured of God's presence. They needed direction. They waited in hope for the promised Advocate to come, even though they were not sure what they were waiting for. They may have sung Psalm 104 as they waited and prayed: "Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth." On Pentecost the Holy Spirit came, and their lives were forever changed! Imagine their surprise when, filled with the Holy Spirit, their uncertainty and confusion was transformed into clear and compelling witness; their fear turned into bold proclamation of God's saving love, and the Church was born.

Words often fail us when we try to describe the Holy Spirit. Images don't come easily either. We read in the Acts of the Apostles about tongues of fire. Yet, after that first outpouring

of the Holy Spirit, those tongues of fire have not again appeared. That does not mean that the Holy Spirit is not present. In faith, we rely on the Spirit to fill our hearts and minds, to strengthen us when we are weak; give us wisdom in baffling situations; and prompt us to live good and holy lives. Sacred Scripture tells us that we cannot follow Jesus without the Holy Spirit! (1 Cor 12:3B, Second Reading at Pentecost)

The Holy Spirit is the presence of God's love, abundant, overflowing, greater than we can ask or imagine. That power of love dwells within us, through the outpouring of the Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation. God's unfailing love, which is stronger than death and all of the confusion, anxiety, and uncertainty in our lives, is always with us.

The same Spirit who gave the apostles direction and courage is within you. God waits for you to call, "Lord, send out your Spirit!" Open yourself to the surprising strength and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Allow the Spirit to act. Let yourself be renewed in God's love. Then, through the presence of the Spirit, everyone you encounter may be touched by the abundant love of God. Then, through your cooperation with the Holy Spirit, the Lord will renew the face of the earth!

"We stand before you, Holy Spirit, conscious of our sinfulness, but aware that we gather in your name.
Come to us, remain with us,
and enlighten our hearts.
Give us light and strength to know your will, to make it our own, and to live it in our lives.
Guide us by your wisdom, support us by your power, for you are God,
sharing the glory of Father and Son.
You desire justice for all: enable us to uphold the rights of others; do not allow us to be misled by ignorance
or corrupted by fear or favor.
Unite us to yourself in the bond of love and keep us faithful to all that is true.
As we gather in your name may we temper justice with love, so that all our decisions may be pleasing to you, and earn the reward promised to good and faithful servants.
You live and reign with the Father and the Son, one God, forever and ever. Amen.



Impact this month

Reflect on the gifts of the Holy Spirit. How does each give you what you need to live as a follower of Jesus in your daily life?

- Wisdom
- Understanding
- Knowledge
- Right Judgment
- Courage
- Reverence
- Wonder and Awe of the Lord

Take time at the end of each day or each week this month to think about any situations in which you needed or used these gifts of the Holy Spirit. Thank God for these gifts and ask the Spirit to activate them anew!



Filled with the presence of God

Picture in your mind your favorite painting or photograph. Hear the familiar sounds of the recording you most enjoy. Think of your favorite movie, the background of its setting, the soundtrack, lighting and costumes.

In each, what is not seen or heard is essential to our experience of that which is central. A painting, without the color or light in the background would have no clear image upon which to gaze; music without the pauses, an endless stream of noise; a movie without the background falls flat, and does not capture our attention. **This could be one way of thinking about the Holy Spirit in our lives.** People

sometimes say they have a difficult time perceiving the Holy Spirit, and yet, the presence of the Holy Spirit within us is like the background in a painting that allows the image to shine through: as people created in God's image and likeness, it is the power of the Holy Spirit that infuses us with the gifts, guidance, wisdom, and courage to live as Christian disciples and stewards. We often only recognize the Spirit's presence in hindsight, much as we only recognize the background in the movie as we reflect on it over time. **Once we draw our attention to the unseen and yet holy within and around us, we recognize the Spirit's action in our minds and hearts, and we perceive the presence of God in others.** We see the eyes of Christ in the eyes of the poor and the lonely; we hear the voice of the Lord in the call of a child or an elder; and we become ready to witness to the love of God in the course of our daily lives. We share our presence, gifts, and resources as stewards through the power of the Holy Spirit, grateful people whose lives are filled with the presence of God.