



PENTECOST SUNDAY

CYCLE A

Acts 2:1-11

1 Corinthians 12: 3-7, 12-13

John 20:19-23

GATHERING

(Small votive candles, one for each member, stand unlighted on a table covered with a red cloth.)

In last week's scripture we witnessed both Jesus and the disciples at prayer. We were likewise challenged to be people of constant prayer. This week we celebrate the feast of the Spirit, the one who animates our prayer. *(Members are invited to share briefly how prayer was a part of their lives last week and how it strengthened them.)*

OPENING PRAYER

(The votive candles are distributed to the members. The facilitator lights the candles from a taper as the community sings, "Send Us Your Spirit". The song may be found on the Internet. When the song is completed, the community prays silently for several minutes.)

Leader: Come Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Living God.
Be with us here today as we seek your Wisdom.
We ask for the gifts of listening, understanding and
patience as we strive to give shape to the future
and to carry out faithfully your mission in the world.

We ask this with confidence
and in the name of Jesus.

All: Amen.

(The lit candles are placed back on the table.)

Focus Question

Name something or someone that *took your breath away*.

SCRIPTURE SHARING AND REFLECTION

(The scriptures are proclaimed aloud with a pause between readings.)

In our human experience *taking a breath* is essential to life. We have all had experiences when we have *lost our breath*. Maybe it was a moment of great excitement. Maybe it was being dunked in a pool. In such a moment we felt scared, uncertain of what was going to happen to us. On vacation we may have experienced a *breath of fresh air* in the mountains. It is in moments like these that we become aware of the constant need we have to breathe, and of the beauty and power of breath.

Throughout the scriptures we hear of God's Spirit described as wind and breath. God's Spirit is a creative and animating force. We see this most clearly on this feast.

On that first Pentecost, it was the power and force of God as Spirit that moved the disciples in the upper room. It was with this breath of God's Spirit that they were empowered to speak in tongues, "to express themselves . . .and make bold proclamations".

In the gospel we learn that Jesus wished the disciples peace and breathed his Spirit upon them. Filled with this life-giving breath of Christ, they were propelled to announce God's forgiveness to the whole world.

The one Spirit gives us many gifts, not only for our own sake, but also, says Paul, "for the common good". God's Spirit animates us and challenges us, gives us life and calls us to be healing and life-giving for others.

Depending solely on our own resources, we may be filled with fear. But in touch with the Spirit breathing deep within, we will discover the power to speak our faith with courage and the strength to act boldly for the sake of the gospel. Open yourself to the Spirit. *Take a deep breath!*

FAITH SHARING AND INTEGRATION

1. How does the gift of the Holy Spirit affect your daily life?
2. Describe a worship experience that surprised you.
3. How has forgiveness changed you?
4. When have you spoken *boldly* for gospel values?
5. How conscious are you of God's Spirit breathing within you these days?

RESPONSE IN ACTION

1. In a chance encounter this week with someone of a different cultural background, say something that helps the two of you *connect*.
2. Initiate a conversation with someone who has not apologized to you for some offense in a way that makes an opening for reconciliation.
3. Share your belief in the power of God in your life with someone at home, at work or at school.
4. Missionaries in the third world are always in need of support. Call your diocesan Mission Office to see how you can help. .

SENDING FORTH CLOSING PRAYER

(The lighted candles are once again distributed to the members. Members pray in two alternating groups for the renewal of the gift of the Spirit.)

A Pentecost Sequence

- I. Come, Spirit who is our Light.
Shine among the shadows within.
Warm and transform our hearts.
- II. Come, Spirit, Comforter and Consoler.
Heal the wounded. Soothe the anxious.
Be consolation for all who grieve and ache.
- I. Come, Spirit, consuming Fire of Love.
Fill us with enthusiasm for your vision.
May the desire for truth be vibrant in us.
- II. Come, Spirit, strength of wounded ones.
Be warmth in hearts of those grown cold.
Empower the powerless. Rekindle the weary.
- I. Come, Spirit, source of our Peace.
Deepen in us the action of peacemakers.
Heal the divisions that ravage the earth.
- II. Come, Spirit of wisdom and insight.
Draw us toward your goodness and light.
Direct our growth and guide our path to you. Amen.

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- All: Come Holy Spirit, may your breath in us make us more daring in our faith. Fill us with your love. Inspire our minds with your wisdom. Nourish us with your love. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our brother. Amen.

(The facilitator invites members to take the votive candle with them and to light it during their prayer time in the coming week. The session concludes with the exchange of a sign of peace.)