

The Descent of the Holy Spirit

Greetings, my beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. May your hearts be filled with the Father's love and joy as we marvel in this great solemnity of Pentecost – the plenitude of God's gift to us, His children. Before our beloved Lord ascended into Heaven,

He told His Apostles: ***"I shall not leave you orphans; I shall come to you."***
(John 14:18)

"I shall ask the Father and He will give you another Paraclete to be with you forever."

(John 14:18)

Who is the Holy Spirit? The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches us that there are three Persons equal and distinct in God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. "This knowledge of faith is possible only in the Holy Spirit: to be in touch with Christ we must first have been touched by the Holy Spirit. He comes to meet us and kindles faith in us. By virtue of our Baptism, the first Sacrament of the faith, the Holy Spirit in the Church communicates to us intimately and personally, the life that originates in the Father and is offered to us in the Son." (CCC #683) Saint Paul tells us: "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit." (1 Cor 12:3) "God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" (Gal 4:6)

The Apostles were united in the Cenacle with our Lady in prayer and as Scripture tells us: "When Pentecost day came round, they had all met together, when suddenly there came from Heaven a sound as of a violent wind which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and there appeared to them tongues as of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different languages as the Spirit gave them power to express themselves." (Acts 2:1-4)

My dear friends, let us make sure that the Holy Spirit lives within us so that the fire of His divine love may burn deep within our hearts as we journey toward eternal life. How can we open ourselves to the action of the Holy Spirit in our lives? The Holy Spirit waits for us to cooperate lovingly in His work of our sanctification by the power of His grace; we are called to active participation through prayer, meditation and works. We need to be attentive and docile to the invitations of the Holy Spirit, as the psalmist tells us: "Oh, today, if you shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts! (Psalm 94:8) The promptings of the Holy Spirit can come to us in the words of Sacred Scripture, from a sermon, the teachings of the Church and various circumstances of life. Let us strive, my beloved friends, to cooperate with these promptings of the Holy Spirit, for He wills to fill us with His gifts of divine love.

After being filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Apostles were empowered to work for God's Kingdom. The fear that had filled them at the time of our Lord's Passion was now replaced with the Holy Spirit's courage and fortitude to go forth and to build up the Kingdom. And so, the more open we are to God, the more grace will flow within our hearts, the more we will learn to trust, the less fear we will have and we will find security in God. We will be moved to work for the Kingdom, relying on the Holy Spirit's power and guidance. O come, Holy Spirit and fill us with the fire of Your love!

In union of prayers, your sister in Christ,
Esther.