

SEQUENCE

Holy Spirit, Lord of Light, From the clear celestial height
Thy pure beaming radiance give.

Come, thou Father of the poor, Come with treasures which endure
Come, thou light of all that live!

Thou, of all consolers best, Thou, the soul's delightful guest,
Dost refreshing peace bestow

Thou in toil art comfort sweet Pleasant coolness in the heat
Solace in the midst of woe.

Light immortal, light divine, Visit thou these hearts of thine,
And our inmost being fill:

If thou take thy grace away, Nothing pure in man will stay
All his good is turned to ill.

Heal our wounds, our strength renew

On our dryness pour thy dew Wash the stains of guilt away:

Bend the stubborn heart and will Melt the frozen, warm the chill
Guide the steps that go astray.

Thou, on us who evermore Thee confess and thee adore,

With thy sevenfold gifts descend:

Give us comfort when we die Give us life with thee on high
Give us joys that never end.

JOHN 20:19-23

In the evening of the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you', and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, '*Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.*'

After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven;

for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

COMMENTARY: Peace is the gift of the Risen Jesus. This peace is easily shattered by sin, so, the Church is commissioned to forgive sin. As well, the word 'retain' means to keep under control. Forgiveness includes the grace of strengthening us to keep our darker side under control.

Liturgy of The Word

May 19
PENTECOST



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

Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are,
How many are your works, O Lord!
The earth is full of your riches.

You take back your spirit, they die,
returning to the dust from which they came.
You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth.

May the glory of the Lord last for ever!
May the Lord rejoice in his works!
May my thoughts be pleasing to him.
I find my joy in the Lord.

ACTS 2:1-11

When Pentecost day came round, they had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues 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 foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.

Now there were devout men living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven, and at this sound they all assembled, each one bewildered to hear these men speaking his own language. They were amazed and astonished. 'Surely' they said 'all these men speaking are Galileans? How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; people from Mesopotamia, Judaea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya round Cyrene; as well as visitors from Rome – Jews and proselytes alike – Cretans and Arabs; we hear them preaching in our own language about the marvels of God.'

COMMENTARY: The Spirit of God brings a change in our whole understanding of life. Jesus is now the centre. The fire of God has burned away the old and brought about the new. The effectiveness of the Spirit is proved by the way the apostles went out and preached about Jesus, without fear. It is helpful to reflect on how Peter, who denied knowing Jesus during his Passion, eventually went off to Rome and preached at a time when Christ believers would almost certainly suffer persecution. Then St Paul, a firm persecutor of believers had his miraculous conversion on the road to Damascus.

GALATIANS 5:16-25

If you are guided by the Spirit you will be in no danger of yielding to self-indulgence, since self-indulgence is the opposite of the Spirit, the Spirit is totally against such a thing, and it is precisely because the two are so opposed that you do not always carry out your good intentions. If you are led by the Spirit, no law can touch you. When self-indulgence is at work the results are obvious: fornication, gross indecency and sexual irresponsibility; idolatry and sorcery; feuds and wrangling, jealousy, bad temper and quarrels; disagreements, factions, envy; drunkenness, orgies and similar things. I warn you now, as I warned you before: those who behave like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. What the Spirit brings is very different: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control. There can be no law against things like that, of course. You cannot belong to Christ Jesus unless you crucify all self-indulgent passions and desires.

Since the Spirit is our life, let us be directed by the Spirit.

COMMENTARY: Galatia was a region in Turkey during St Paul's time. Paul travelled extensively through this country and various communities grew up as a result of his preaching. These communities would have consisted of people who converted from paganism or worship of false gods.

Here, Paul points out the two paths: one of self-indulgence, the other – the way of the Spirit. We know it is the Spirit of God when we experience love, joy etc.

The road of self-indulgence leaves us feeling empty. The path of the Spirit gives us a sense of fulfilment and meaning and it lasts. It is always important to identify feelings of emptiness in ourselves. And it is helpful to note the peace that prayer brings.