

On Pentecost, we pray and sing, “Come, Holy Spirit, come.”

Indeed, this is our plea: “Come, Holy Spirit, come,”

a plea that followers of Jesus have prayed, sung, proclaimed and signed
through the ages: “Come, Holy Spirit, come.”

Fall fresh on us. Melt us. Mold us. Fill us. Use us. “Come, Holy Spirit, come.”

Inspire us with the breath of God that called creation into being.

Renew us to enter the wilderness of doubt and uncertainty.



Yet, still, I wonder . . . do we know what we are asking?

Beloved, the Holy Spirit is radically free and unpredictable,

undomesticated and inconvenient, uncomfortably close and intrusive,
expectant and elemental.

Wind and flame obey; locked doors of wood and steel, mind and heart

do not deter the Holy Spirit.

Still, we pray and sing and plea: “Come, Holy Spirit, come.”

Do we know what we are asking? I wonder.



I wonder . . . do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to come among us?

This same Spirit who drove Jesus into the wilderness after his Baptism,
the wilderness where we, like him, are exposed and vulnerable.

I wonder . . . do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to melt and mold us?

This Holy Spirit, who has the unmitigated gall,

as Paul teaches us in 1 Corinthians, to say to you and me:

Do you want to be healed, delivered, and made free?

Do you want to be transformed, to be changed for good?

Do you need strength to forgive and love?

Do you need strength to accept forgiveness and love?

Do you need to know that you are not alone?

Do you need a place where folks love the hell out of you,

where you discern, cultivate, and share your spiritual gifts,

a place where you are challenged to live at full stretch?

Well then, set your roots here; find the abundant life that you are seeking

in this vibrant and flawed, inspired and imperfect community.

Do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to come among us?

Do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to melt and mold us? I wonder.



I wonder . . . do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to fill us?

This Holy Spirit who, in wind and flame, called the disciples out –

out from behind locked doors, out into the world.

This Holy Spirit who, amid the winds of violent change and flames of

divisive rhetoric calls us out into this beautiful and brutal, messy and

miraculous, vibrant and violent, fragrant and funky world.

Do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to fill us? I wonder.



I wonder . . . do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to use us?

This Holy Spirit, the breath who carried Jesus' words,

“Peace be with you,” words that invited the disciples

to see the wounds in his hands and side . . . and dare to hope.

This Holy Spirit who was the gift Jesus breathed on his disciples
with the words, “Receive the Holy Spirit,”

the same gift who made each of the disciples a new creation.

Do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to use us?

To use *us*, scars and all, to witness the presence of Jesus.

To use *us*, scars and all, to stand squarely with Jesus

in the mess between memory and hope

in the creative ferment that exists

on the other side of fear and grief, change and loss.

To use *us*, scars and all, to speak peace and to offer forgiveness.

To use *us*, scars and all, to pray and sing and plea a new world into being,

to co-labor with God who “send[s] forth [the Holy] Spirit

[to renew] the face of the earth” (Ps. 104:31).

Do we really want *this* Holy Spirit to use us? I wonder.



Beloved, I wonder. Maybe I always will.

Because to pray and sing and plea, “Come, Holy Spirit, come,”

means that we must be willing to invite and risk

openness, change, and vulnerability.

Because to pray and sing and plea, “Come, Holy Spirit, come”

Means that we must be willing to invite and risk

transformative encounter with the Holy Spirit

whose power we cannot manufacture, manage, or mimic,

but whose help we need to seek and serve Jesus in others and in ourselves.

Beloved, I wonder. Maybe I always will.

Yet, my time among you tempers my wonderment.

I have served this parish for

four years, ten months, eight days, and eight/ten hours.

And I can say unequivocally: the Holy Spirit is moving in this place;

you are a community of faith, people,

who, as they pray and sing and plea, “Come, Holy Spirit, come,”

really do want to be melted and molded and filled and used

by the Holy Spirit.

Beloved, I wonder. Maybe I always will.

And yet, God continues to give me hope . . . and so do you.

Hope for today.

Hope for tomorrow.

Hope to continue to pray and sing and plea, “Come, Holy Spirit, come.”

Hope to sing with renewed meaning,

Have thine own way, Lord.

Have thine own way.

Hold o’er my being absolute sway.

Fill with thy Spirit till all shall see,

Christ only, always, living in me.

Amen.