

Homily for the Feast of Pentecost Year A

When Saint Pope John Paul II was 14 years old, he had a very difficult time concentrating on his studies. Knowing that his Father taught him to pray to the Holy Spirit. The prayer is: “Come O, Holy Spirit; give your grace to remember what I learn.” Till his last breath he recited the same prayer.

The story teaches that the Holy Spirit is our constant helper, guiding our mind, strengthening our memory, shaping our character, deepening our faith, and accompanying us always in our life throughout our lives.

This Sunday we celebrate *the Feast of Pentecost, the feast of the Holy Spirit*. This is celebrated fifty days after Easter. Pentecost is one of the three great feasts of the Church. **Easter** is the greatest feast of the Church. **Christmas** is another great feast of the Church; and **Pentecost** is the third great festival of the Church.

The Feast of Pentecost is often referred to as *the birthday of the Church* because it marks the moment the Holy Spirit empowered the apostles to begin their mission.

Once an invitation was sent out to the parishioners. It read like this: **You are cordially invited to a birthday party.**

When: Pentecost

Where: Your Parish

Why: To celebrate the Church’s birthday

Today is the birthday of the church. It was on Pentecost, the apostles went out among the people and began proclaiming the message of **Jesus Christ**, marking the beginning of the Church’s mission in the world.

Today's first reading taken from the Acts of the Apostles says that the apostles were huddled in the upper room after the death of their Master and were hiding behind locked doors. But when the Holy Spirit came like wind and fire, everything changed. *Fear became courage. Silence became proclamation. Weakness become strength.*

This is what the Holy Spirit still does today. He enters our lives and gives us the courage to live our faith boldly.

In the Gospel Jesus appears to the disciples, says **“Peace be with you,”** and breathed on them, and gives them the **Holy Spirit**, Finally, He sends them out: **“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”** The Spirit is not only for comfort, but for the mission to forgive, to love, and to bring healing to others.

As we celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, let us open our hearts to the Holy Spirit. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to remove our fears, strengthen our faith, and fill us with peace and become instruments of forgiveness, love, and healing in our families and in our community. May God bless all of us. Amen.