

## Related topics

*For further study:*

Holy Spirit; mystery of the Church; resurrection/ascension/Pentecost; paschal mystery; ministry in the Church; sacraments; symbols of the Church; evangelisation; prayer; Jesus Christ; salvation; laying on of hands

## Closing Prayer

God of majesty and glory,  
you bring us to the day  
that crowns our joyful Easter feast.

Open for us the fountain of living waters  
promised to the faithful,  
that the outpouring of the Spirit  
may reveal Christ's glory  
and enlighten all who wait in hope  
for the glorious day of redemption.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God for ever and ever.

*Opening prayers. Pentecost, Vigil Mass*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Opening prayers : scripture-related collects for the years A, B and C from the sacramentary / International Commission on English in the Liturgy. – Norwich : Canterbury Press, 1999.*

## Pentecost

### Principal Service readings

Acts 2.1-21                      The Holy Spirit alights on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost  
or Ezekiel 37.1-14              Vision of the valley of dry bones  
Psalm 104.26-36,37b [or 104.26-37] Praise to the wise and benevolent creator  
Romans 8.22-27 or Acts 2.1-21 The Spirit helps us and intercedes for us  
John 15.26-27; 16.4b-15      Jesus tells of the coming of the Holy Spirit

### Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,  
speak to our hearts in the stillness,  
keep us steadfast in the foundation that cannot be shaken,  
lift up our eyes to behold the vision of your glory;  
and perfect our faith, now and always. Amen.

Society of Saint Francis

### Gospel Reading

#### *Jesus tells of the coming of the Holy Spirit*

Jesus spoke to his disciples: <sup>26</sup>When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. <sup>27</sup>You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. <sup>4</sup>I have said these things to you so that when their hour comes you may remember that I told you about them.

<sup>1</sup>I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. <sup>2</sup>But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, "Where are you going?" <sup>6</sup>But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. <sup>7</sup>Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. <sup>8</sup>And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgement: <sup>9</sup>about sin, because they do not believe in me; <sup>10</sup>about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; <sup>11</sup>about judgement, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. <sup>12</sup>I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. <sup>13</sup>When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. <sup>14</sup>He will glorify me, because he will take what is

mine and declare it to you. <sup>15</sup>All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.'

John 15.26-27; 16.4b-15 NRSV<sup>1</sup>

## Comments and Questions

In the middle of a negative section (15.18–16.3) comes the positive news about the coming of the Advocate (NRSV), or Counsellor (NIV), or Paraclete (RNJB) (Greek: *parakletos*). The disciples will be the bearers of the challenging presence of Jesus' revelation of God.

Jesus goes on to describe his departure, a departure that will create sorrow and confusion, but is marked by the critical, judging presence of the Paraclete. Their ignorance therefore is creating their sorrow. There is mention of 'the hour' that is coming (16.4), a Johannine theme. Jesus says that no one asks where he is going (16.5), but Philip has asked exactly that (14.5). The contradiction causes difficulties of interpretation.

The first Paraclete saying indicated that the one who sent the Son also sent the Paraclete, as requested by Jesus (14.16). Almost immediately Jesus then says that the Father and the Son are united in the sending of the Spirit (14.26). This remains so, even in those sayings in which Jesus claims to be sending the Spirit (15.26; 16.7). The cumulative effect of the Paraclete sayings tells the reader that Jesus has an active role in sending the Spirit, which is linked with Jesus' departure, but the Father also sends the Paraclete (14.16, 26).

The judging role of the Paraclete comes out in 16.8, where the verb 'expose' or 'prove wrong' is used. The Paraclete judges those who have judged Jesus. In John's gospel 'the Jews' lay a claim to righteousness, but they are in breach of God's design, as revealed by Jesus. This has already been stated in 12.43: 'they loved human glory more than the glory of God'.

The Paraclete is a guide who will guide the disciples into 'all the truth' (16.13), indicating the ongoing task of the revelation of God. Some translators translate this phrase as, 'to the very heart of the truth'.

<sup>1</sup> *New Revised Standard Version Bible* is copyright © 1989 Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Scholars differ over the role of the Paraclete in declaring 'the things that are to come' (16.13). Some think it is fully eschatological, that is, the Paraclete instructs the disciples concerning the end of time. Others think it is an indication of the apocalyptic nature of primitive Christian prophecy. For others again it is a reference to the events of 'the hour' that are about to come in the story of Jesus.<sup>2</sup> The Paraclete is shown to have a revealing mission in the in-between period when Jesus is absent.

## Quotations

### 1

To put it simply: the Holy Spirit bothers us. Because he moves us, he makes us walk, he pushes the Church to go forward. And we are like Peter at the Transfiguration: 'Ah, how wonderful it is to be here like this, all together!' ... But don't bother us. We want the Holy Spirit to doze off ... we want to domesticate the Holy Spirit. And that's no good. because he is God, he is that wind which comes and goes and you don't know where. He is the power of God, he is the one who gives us consolation and strength to move forward. But: to move forward! And this bothers us. It's so much nicer to be comfortable."

*Encountering truth: meeting God in the everyday* / Pope Francis. 2015

### 2

'Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom,' says Paul. And we are most in line with the Spirit, most faithfully obedient, when instead of trying to manipulate people into faith, we simply live in that freedom and let the Spirit do the work of transformation.

*Chaos and grace: discovering the liberating work of the Holy Spirit* / Mark Galli. 2011

### 3

For Christians it's always a love game ... that He is love itself ... Indeed, some have suggested that one way of understanding the Spirit is to see the Spirit as the personal love which the Father has for the Son and the Son for the Father.

*Simply Christian: why Christianity makes sense* / N.T. Wright. 2006

<sup>2</sup> *The gospel of John* / Francis J. Moloney. – Collegeville, Minnesota : Liturgical Press, 1998. – (Sacra pagina ; 4). – 978-0-8146-5967-0