

Pentecost



In preparing for Pentecost Sunday, many Catholics pray the Novena to the Holy Ghost, in which we ask for the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The novena traditionally is prayed beginning on the Friday after the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord and ends on the day before Pentecost. You can, however, pray the novena throughout the year.

Prayer is one way that we can get ourselves ready to mark such a monumental event. Appreciating the significance of Pentecost is the first step in deciding what we want to pray for to tie in with its message. Essentially, Pentecost commemorates the day when the Holy Spirit filled the disciples after Jesus' ascension into heaven, and the birth of the church. In a way, both Christmas and Easter center around us receiving a gift - a savior and salvation - whereas Pentecost is about receiving (the gift of the Holy Spirit) but also about sharing the news of that gift with others.

If you're still not sure about what Pentecost is, for more on what you need to know about the day itself read Mark Woods' 9 key things to know about Pentecost.

Here are some key things you can pray for in the lead up to Pentecost.

1. The gifts of the Holy Spirit

A number of the gifts of the Spirit - words of wisdom, knowledge, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues - feature in the story of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost. Paul urges believers to eagerly desire these great gifts (1 Corinthians 12:28) and to know how to identify them. As believers we've all received the gift of the Holy Spirit but sometimes we're unsure about what this means. Why not say a prayer asking for that you may come to discover your gift and how to use it.

2. The confidence to evangelize

After the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter stood and preached to the crowd, Acts 2:14-41. Considering that evangelism is a fundamental part of the Pentecost story, it's fitting to commemorate it by telling someone about Jesus, just like Peter did. We don't all have the confidence to evangelize to one person, let alone 3,000 but this confidence is something that we can pray for.

3. The fruits of the Holy Spirit

Are you struggling with self-control, or finding it difficult to find joy in life? These are just two of the fruits of the Holy Spirit which you can come to know by opening up your heart to Jesus and allowing yourself to be filled by the Spirit. Maybe you'd like to pray that in the coming days you'll be able to demonstrate one or more of the fruits you commonly struggle with.

4. Those who don't know Jesus

Thousands of people chose to accept Jesus as their Savior following Peter's proclamation and billions more have since, but there are still many people who don't know the peace that He can bring. Why not pray that your loved ones and those you don't know will accept Jesus and his message.

5. The presence of the Holy Spirit

Many of us long for an experience similar to the one that the disciples had, so that we can truly experience the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. But the internal presence isn't something that we can develop ourselves. It

requires us to concern ourselves less with what we can do and more with what the Spirit can do in us. Why not find a place free from distractions and pray that you can come to know the presence of the Holy Spirit.