

Easter-Pentecost as a Season of the Holy Spirit

The Easter Season begins and ends with an emphasis on the Holy Spirit. On Easter Sunday we are told that Jesus “breathed on them and said to them ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained’” (*John 20:22-23*). After 40 days of resurrection appearances, before Jesus ascends to heaven, he tells his followers that “I am sending the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high” (*Luke 24:49*); “wait for the ‘promise of the Father...in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit’” (*Acts 1:4-5*); “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit come upon you, and you will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth” (*Acts 1:8*); “All devoted themselves with one accord to prayer, together with some of the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers” (*Acts 1:14*).

In the novena before Pentecost (nine days the disciples prayed between the Ascension and Pentecost) let us intercede with Pope John XXIII who prayed for a “New Pentecost” for the Church. **Whether individually, in our prayer groups or in our dioceses, let us unite in prayer, especially for CHARIS, the new international services to the worldwide Renewal which began Pentecost 2019.** For more information visit the following websites:

www.charis.international
www.nsc-chariscenter.org
www.burningbushinitiative.com

Come Holy Spirit! Fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love!

How To Pray During These Three Special Times:

- 1) Set a time (at least 30 minutes) on the day (s) to read this brochure prayerfully and use the Scriptures to pray that each of us, and the whole Church, is able to receive more of the gift of the Spirit.
- 2) Pray for the National Service Committee of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal that God grants the gifts, wisdom and finances needed to continue his efforts to promote the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church.
- 3) Fast, or another sacrificial act, to seek God’s grace for renewal in the Spirit.
- 4) Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how he is calling you to grow in the presence, gifts and fruits of the Spirit at this time in your life.
- 5) Pray for a greater understanding of the role of the Spirit in the Church, and the desire to grow in the fullness of this role.
- 6) Give copies of this brochure to your prayer group members, and go through it with them. Agree to make these intercession days an important priority.

THREE TIMES OF INTERCESSION FOR THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ON THE CHURCH



**National Service Committee of the
Catholic Charismatic Renewal**

Three Special Times of Prayer:

- 1) Feast of Christ the King
(Sunday before Advent begins)
- 2) Friday before Ash Wednesday
(Friday before Lent begins)
- 3) Nine Day Preparation for Pentecost
(Ascension of Jesus to Pentecost Sunday)

The Holy Spirit is important in three major Liturgical Seasons of the year:

- 1) **Advent:** Preparing for the Messiah, the Christ, the Anointed of the Spirit (*Isaiah 11:1-9; 42:1-9; 61:1-3*).
- 2) **Lent:** Jesus is led into the desert by the Spirit and returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit (*Luke 4: 1-21*).
- 3) **Easter:** Jesus breathes the Spirit on the apostles on Easter (John 20:19-23), and calls all the disciples to prepare for the coming of the Spirit who will descend on **Pentecost** (*Luke 24:44-53; Acts 1:1-14; 2:1-47*).

Advent as a Season of the Holy Spirit (The Anointed Messiah):

Advent prepares us for the final coming of the Messiah and remembers his first coming. The Hebrew word, Messiah, means “Anointed One,” the one anointed by the Spirit, who has the fullness of the Spirit. The word, Messiah, is translated into the Greek word, “Christ.” In the Hebrew Scriptures priests, prophets and kings were considered “anointed ones” because they were anointed with the Spirit (often with oil) for God’s service. Isaiah and other prophets foretold a final Messiah who would:

- 1) Have the fullness of the Spirit: “A shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse...The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him...” (*Isaiah 11:1-9*); “Here is my servant whom I uphold...Upon whom I have put my Spirit...” (*Isaiah 42:1-9*); “The Spirit of God is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the brokenhearted...” (*Isaiah 61:1-3*);
- 2) Impart this Spirit to all God’s people: “Then afterward I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind. Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams,

your young men shall see visions; even upon the servants and the handmaids, in those days, I will pour out my Spirit” (*Joel 3:1-2; Acts 2:14-21*).

The three major figures in Advent, who prepare us for the coming of the Messiah, each teach us about the Holy Spirit:

- 1) **Isaiah, the prophet:** He proclaims the “Holy Spirit anointed” Messiah (*see #1 above; Isaiah 11, 42, 61*);
- 2) **John the Baptist:** The one who “prepares the way of the Lord” (*Luke 3:3-6*); who is “filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother’s womb” (*Lk 1:15*); who goes before the messiah “in the spirit and power of Elijah” (*Lk 1:17*); and proclaims that “one mightier than I is coming...he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (*Luke 3:15-16*).
- 3) **Mary, the Mother of Jesus:** She is told by the angel, Gabriel, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God” (*Luke 1:35*). Mary manifests the presence and gifts of the Holy Spirit in her visit to Elizabeth (*Luke 1: 39-45*) and in her prophetic prayer (often called the “Magnificat,” *Luke 1:46-55*).

On the Feast of Christ the King let us prepare for the Season of Advent by interceding with Mary, John the Baptist and Isaiah (with prayer and fasting) that “The Spirit...bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God...and joint heirs with Christ” (*Rom 8:16-17*), and we, and the whole Church, come to a greater understanding of Jesus as the Christ, the anointed of the Spirit, who wants to baptize us with the Holy Spirit. Let us pray for the second coming of the Messiah: “Marana tha! Come, Lord Jesus! (1 Cor 16:22; Rev 22:20).

Lent as a Season of the Holy Spirit (Unlock the Power):

The 40 days of Lent come from the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert before starting his public ministry. After Jesus’ baptism by John, Luke’s Gospel says, “Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil” (*Luke 4:1-2*).

An important part of the Holy Spirit’s work is to bring inner transformation in our lives. The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at his baptism, but he did not begin his ministry in the power of the Spirit until he first let the Holy Spirit overcome the devil’s temptations to use his power for self-centered purposes. In Lent, we allow the Spirit to work in us overcoming our self-centered temptations (the world, the flesh, and the devil). *Galatians 5:13-26* describes this process of inner transformation in which we overcome the works of the flesh (immorality, impurity, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, etc.) and put on the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control). In overcoming these temptations we learn in a deeper way to “live by the Spirit” (v.16); be “guided by the Spirit” (v.18); “live in the Spirit” and “follow the Spirit” (v.25).

On the Friday before Ash Wednesday, let us intercede (with prayer and fasting) for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Charismatic Renewal, and the whole Church. Let us especially pray that we, and all the Church, are open to the Spirit’s work of inner transformation, overcoming temptations and the influence of the flesh, so that we can live more fully in the Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit. Lord, unlock the power of the Spirit for your people!