

31st May

**May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart
be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.**

As you walk, how many natural elements can you see around you?

- Earth
- Wind
- Water
- Fire

Read Acts 2:1-12

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. ⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? ⁹Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." ¹²All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

Since Jesus' ascension about ten days before the disciples have been waiting to receive the power of the Holy Spirit and here it is. Filling the entire house that they are in. This is a big event for them, but remembering the different ways that Jesus has been appearing to them since his death, this is a great finale. The disciples now know that the time has come for them to step back into society and tell people about what Jesus has done in their lives.

- What has intrigued, provoked, disturbed, challenged or surprised you about this passage?
- Have you experienced the Holy Spirit in a special way?
- How do you live out being a person filled with God?

Remember the line 'as the Spirit gave them ability' not everyone is given the same abilities, ask God to help you realise your abilities and know they are of God and make you, you and that is who is called.

Activity: Pentecost

We have travelled through the Easter season, following the appearances of the resurrected Jesus until he ascended. The Holy Spirit settled as tongues of fire upon the disciples.

Light up the world!

Through prayer

Through your words

Through your actions

Through signs and symbols

31st May The Way of Light Week 7

Today is Pentecost! The day the Spirit was felt in wind and fire. 50 days after Jesus died and rose from the grave, he has ascended into heaven and promised the disciples the gift of the Holy Spirit on them. The Holy Spirit has brought us together today so that we can celebrate God's presence with us. Let us worship together.

SFT 494 Come thou font

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 Come, thou fount of every blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace ;
streams of mercy never ceasing
call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious measure
sung by flaming tongues above ;
O the vast, the boundless treasure
of my Lord's unchanging love !</p> | <p>2 Here I find my greatest treasure :
'Hither by thy help I've come,'
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wandering from the fold of God ;
he, to rescue me from danger,
interposed his precious blood.</p> |
| <p>3 O to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be !
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
prone to leave the God I love ;
take my heart, O take and seal it,
seal it from thy courts above !</p> | |

Robert Robinson (1735-1790)

Let us pray

**O LORD, our Sovereign,
how majestic is your name in all the earth!
When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honour.**

Lord we praise and adore you, for by the wood of the cross and the light of the resurrection you have redeemed the world.

We praise you for.....

We thank you for....

Hear us Lord as we praise you. Amen

STF 4

- 1 Father in heaven,
grant to your children
mercy and blessing,
songs never ceasing,
love to unite us,
grace to redeem us —
Father in heaven,
Father our God.
- 2 Jesus, Redeemer,
may we remember
your gracious passion,
your resurrection.
Worship we bring you,
praise we shall sing you —
Jesus, Redeemer,
Jesus our Lord.
- 3 Spirit descending,
whose is the blessing,
strength for the weary,
help for the needy,
sealed in our kinship
yours be our worship —
Spirit descending,
Spirit adored.

Daniel Thambyrajah Niles (1908–1970)

Reading Acts 2:1-33

Reflection

Well, what more needs to be said!

We like the disciples have journeyed the Via Lucis, the Way of Light. From that first morning when the tomb was found empty and that evening when the disciples locked themselves away, to shared moments on a road and over breakfast on a beach. We have seen the risen Lord. To then watch him ascend back to heaven, we can truly see that this was indeed the Son of God. The mystery of God is portrayed and the love of God revealed.

One thing that resounds for me through this passage is that the gifting of the Spirit is not something that was only meant for the eleven disciples, nor for one portion of society or one country. The disciples were a broad ranging group of people, some called by Jesus personally, some who may have been healed, some who may have been drawn by the teachings of Jesus and there were probably those who came because their families made them.

These people received the Spirit.

The wonderful long list of countries that then heard these disciples speaking, shows that even more were blessed by the gift of the Spirit and then the words of Peter, in verses 32-33, really bring it home for me, that everyone who has been impacted by Jesus' life are now witnesses to the gospel. Although we say that this is the day when the Spirit came, the power of the Holy Spirit has been and will always be with us, reminding us that the filling of the Spirit is an ongoing and enduring experience.

We can easily look at this passage and say I could never do that or God's never given me those gifts, but going back to verse four it says that the Spirit gave some the ability to speak in the other languages. For me this says that not everyone is going to be given the same gifts yet everyone is filled by the power of the Spirit. We are all needed and part of the picture. A bit like a jigsaw puzzle

piece. On our own we may be pretty or plain, but when joined together the picture is complete and reveals what might have been blurry shapes to be greater detailing than we could ever imagine. God has sent his promised Spirit to each one of us to guide us, lead us and strengthen us for the journey ahead. Hallelujah!

Prayers for others

Lord, through your death, resurrection and ascension you show us that you are free: free from the constraints of human existence, outside the limitations of time and space; free to be here with us now, in our worship and fellowship; and free to be with us always; for in your freedom you have bound yourself to us with a promise: 'I am with you always even to the end of time.'

Loving God, We ask for the gift of your Holy Spirit to help us pray as we ought.
Holy Spirit: **Help Us.**

We ask for the energy and vision of your Spirit for those who are tiring in the battle against injustice and oppression: for those exhausted by the struggle with poverty and hunger.
Holy Spirit: **Help Us.**

We ask for the hope and comfort of your Spirit for those whose lives are overshadowed by illness or pain;
for those whose lives are darkened by sorrow or bereavement.
Holy Spirit: **Help Us.**

We ask for the peace and joy of your Spirit for those living in the shadow of war and violence; for those eaten up by guilt and anxiety and whose Christian life has become hard and dry.
Holy Spirit: **Help Us.**

We ask for the guidance and strength of your Spirit for those uncertain how to use their time, talents and gifts; for those tempted to do what is wrong.
Holy Spirit: **Help Us.**

We ask for the love and courage of your Spirit for those reaching out to comfort the distressed; for those reaching out to others with the Good News of Christ.
Holy Spirit: **Help Us.**

Loving God, We ask for the assurance of your Spirit to know your presence with us in our daily lives: in our relationships; in our work and service; in our worship; in our times of joy and pain.
Holy Spirit: **Help Us.**

Through the Via Lucis, we have shared our pilgrim journey with risen Lord. As servants and witnesses of Christ, let us now pray in the way our Saviour taught us:

Lord's Prayer

STF 503

- 1 Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art ;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.
- 2 Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive ;
suddenly return, and never,
never more thy temples leave.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

- Thou we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.
- 3 Finish then thy new creation,
pure and spotless let us be ;
let us see thy great salvation,
perfectly restored in thee :
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise !

Blessing

Go out into the world,
and labour to bring forth new life.
Dream dreams, pursue visions
and speak of God's goodness
in the words of those who would hear.

And may the God who breathed life into creation be your delight.
May Christ Jesus give hope to your dreaming,
and may the Holy Spirit, your advocate and supporter,
.....set your hearts ablaze with a passion for peace.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,
...In the name of Christ. Amen.