

There appeared to them
tongues as of fire,
which parted
and came to rest
on each one of them.
And they were all filled
with the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 2:3-4



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PENTECOST SUNDAY

MAY 23, 2021

COME, HOLY SPIRIT, COME!

Come, Holy Spirit! Today we celebrate Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the first disciples and on all who are baptized. We also commemorate the birth of the Church. Before Pentecost, the disciples remained hidden and uncertain; at Pentecost, those who were gathered were filled with the Spirit and proclaimed the wonders of the Good News of Christ to all. The Spirit guides us to the truth of Christ's love and mercy and strengthens us to live as disciples. Without the Holy Spirit, we would perish; with the Spirit, we have life to the full. Relying on the Spirit, we are given the grace to turn away from the many temptations that we face each day and prefer instead what is good and holy. Come, Holy Spirit, come!

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

As followers of Jesus, we are called to direct our minds and hearts to Christ's love, turning away from all that is not of God in order to be more Christ-like in our daily lives. The more we invite the Holy Spirit to draw us close to God's heart, the more readily we will avoid sin and choose life, faith, and love. In the letter to the Galatians, we hear a list of things that those who live in the Spirit are to avoid. Things like immorality, hatred, jealousy, and selfishness. At first glance, we might think to ourselves, "of course I want to avoid those things," and yet, if we are honest with ourselves, we likely recognize some of those patterns in our lives. Upon further reflection, however, we also see that these negative behaviors pose temporary pleasure while the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control—lead to a life of deep and lasting fulfillment.

NOTHING WILL STAND IN THE WAY

The Jewish people who had gathered in Jerusalem for the festival of Pentecost came from every corner of the world. They spoke many languages and yet were drawn to hear the message of Christ from the disciples who had just experienced the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They were astonished by what they heard—not only the message, but the way in which it was conveyed, in their own language, and by the messengers, people whom they would have considered ordinary and unremarkable, rather than the acknowledged religious leaders of their time. We, too, are called to share the love and mercy of Christ through word and action, even when we feel small and insignificant. We need only to look at the witness and experience of those first disciples and all the saints who have preceded us to know that we are capable of much when we place our lives in God's hands. Nothing can stand in the way of the incredible love of God when we are filled with the power and presence of the Holy Spirit!

***This Week at St. James
the Apostle***

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Pentecost - Birthday of the Church

The Church was born on the day of Pentecost,
The Apostles thought that everything was lost.
Afraid, they were hiding in the upper room,
Their hearts were heavy with deep sorrow and gloom.

Suddenly there appeared a sound from heaven-
Like a strong wind, and the whole house was shaken.
The apostles were covered with tongues of fire,
Filled by the Holy Spirit, they were on fire.

They spoke different tongues prompted by the Spirit,
Some mocked, "They're under the influence of the spirit!"
All were amazed at the change in the apostles,
Suddenly they became Jesus' brave soldiers.

The Holy Spirit blessed them with different gifts,
Everyone marveled at their gift of the gaps.
They boldly preached about Jesus of Nazareth,
Their fears gone, they spoke with supernatural strength.

The apostles spoke with faith and conviction,
People had their hearts burning for conversion.
The apostles worked many signs and wonders,
The Church grew fast beyond everyone's wonder.

The early Church was built on strong communion,
United in Christ, people had a mission.
They shared everything for common distribution,
And supported the Church by their contribution

Questions:

1. Which stanza reminds you of your experience in church?
2. Why are you motivated to come to church?
3. What can you do to deepen your connection with the Holy Spirit?

Reflections:

It is hard to believe that Christ founded the Church on the rustic men of Galilee who, while they were with Him, did not seem to possess any extra-ordinary qualities of leadership. As a matter of fact, upon the death of Jesus, this cowardly band of men almost gave up their hope in Jesus and many of them returned to fishing, the only profession they knew well. Jesus had assured them that He would not leave them as orphans, but that He would send them a Helper, the Holy Spirit. For more than two millennia, the church has had the same administrative structure, making it the longest standing institution in the world with such a history. For this reason alone, there can be no doubt the Church has been sustained and guided by the third Person of the Holy Trinity. Jesus entrusted the Church to Peter, the rock, without any backup plan. Since then, Peter has been succeeded by 266 popes. Our newly elected Pope Francis is the first non-European pope, hailing from Argentina, whose election was a great surprise to many people worldwide. Jesus did not call the qualified; rather, He qualified the ones He called. Indeed He did qualify the apostles by empowering them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost was the turning point in their lives, when the Holy Spirit came down mightily upon them and anointed them for the mission with which Jesus had entrusted them. Each left behind a brilliant legacy of faithfulness, commitment, and unflinching sacrifice for the cause of the Gospels. The Church has been strongly anchored by the blood of the apostles, and no power in the world can ever destroy it.

From its inception, the Church has been constantly attacked by every possible problem or schism. Look at the church today; she has been divided into numerous divisions and denominations. Each group claims to have a monopoly on Jesus. Several crusades have been fought in His Holy and Blessed name, with the participants committing outrageous acts as though they were somehow doing a favor for Him. Man, blinded by selfishness and arrogance, has repeatedly blasphemed and misused the name of Jesus. I am sure Jesus is having a good laugh, watching the enemies of the Church in

their futile effort to destroy what He built. Shamefully many of the enemies of the church are operating from within its rank and file membership. We are aware of the scandals that the church witnessed in the recent past, which severely tarnished the name of the church and her faithful. Those with vested interests will always try to defame the church. The church has survived all kinds of storms and turmoil for more than two thousand years, but despite this will continue to remain a force for good in the world until the end of time, because the Holy Spirit is the Custodian of the church.

Until Pentecost, the apostles had been earthly bound, with ambitious plans and dreams for their lives. In their human frailty they had nearly given up hope that Jesus would establish a new kingdom here on earth, and were likewise unable to grasp the idea of a heavenly kingdom. Pentecost changed everything.

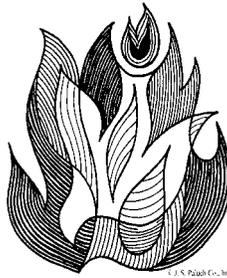
With the descent of the Holy Spirit onto the Apostles, they were transformed into a band of spiritual men fully committed to the Gospels. They were blessed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and began to work signs in the name of Jesus. They spoke languages they had never learned and spoke in those languages so that everyone could understand their preaching. The previously cowardly men of Galilee were suddenly changed into powerful orators, defending the life and death of Jesus, whom the people had crucified. They preached the Gospel of conversion just as their Master Jesus had done when he began His ministry, inviting

people to turn away from sin. Their words were deeply sincere, and their lives confirmed their words, motivating many to join them. Thousands of new members were quickly added to the church, which grew and spread through the world like wildfire. The early Christians were a very united community, and there were no divisions or rivalries among them. Jesus was the unifying force, and they found joy in their service of others. There was no place for competition. They experienced a sense of belonging and ownership with the church. They contributed to the church because each one realized that they were living stones in the church.

Over the years the church lost its initial fervor and enthusiasm. Personality conflicts and competitions replaced what used to be committed and dedicated ministries. In this process, Christ has been slowly sidelined, and many people have forgotten that Jesus is the only reason for their existence and life. The Church without Christ is a dead church. The Church is not an institution, but is the Mother, who nourishes and sustains her children. A college girl told a friend, "I believe in God, and I believe Jesus is God's Son, but I don't believe in the Church." Her friend said, "But that's impossible! You can't separate Jesus and the Church. Both are one just like Jesus and His Father are one. You cannot have God for your Father if you don't have the Church for your mother." It is important to believe that the church is each one of us. But we must choose whether to represent God's live church by acting according to His will, or to be our own dead church by acting according to our own will. When we say "Thy will be done" are we truly expressing our intentions with regard to the church? We should experience both a sense of belonging to the church as well as a sense of ownership. These two characteristics are required to bring about a revival in the Church, which can only be a product of the Holy Spirit. Revival begins with me. One day, a Catholic pastor was standing by the gate of parish when he saw one of his parishioners walking home. When he saw the pastor he stopped and said, "Father, I have not been attending church for some time because I am fed up with those hypocrites who come to the church. I can't stomach them." As he turned to leave, the priest gently told him, "There is room for one more." As human beings we are all imperfect. But God embraces us all.



**MESSAGE
FROM
FR. ANTONY**



PARISH CALENDAR 2021

May 25	Pastoral Council 7:00pm
May 27	Bishop Begin Assembly 3546 Bus. Mtg 7:30pm
June 4	First Friday
June 7	KofC Officer's Meeting 7:30pm
June 13	Novena Prayer for the Unborn after 10am Mass Our Lady of Fatima Devotion 7:00pm
June 14	St. Vincent de Paul Meeting 7:00pm
June 21	KofC Business Meeting 7:30pm
June 24	Bishop Begin Assembly 3546 Bus. Mtg 7:30pm
June 29	Pastoral Council 7:00pm

If you or someone you know is in need, please consider calling

St. Vincent de Paul 510-796-5494.

Please remember those in the Armed Services:



Evelyn Surla (Air Force) Spec. Tara Mueller, Sgt. Kristan Jofel T. Carado, Major Jenny Ryan, Captain David Evans

We pray for our Parishioners and friends who need our prayers or who are ill:

Nancy Jacobs, Martha Torres, Agnes Harris, Arnold Ecija, John Angeles, Suzanne Dalton, Susan de Dios, Monica Horton, Ron Lord, Nina Monela, Santos Monela, Bob Nehls, Cris Oteyza, Joe Parrish, Aryan Preetish, Hermie Ramos, Anita Sacramento, Arturo Sevilla, Laura Skaff, Priscilla Verdeflor, Ruth Welch.



We especially pray for all those suffering from COVID-19.

To update this list, please send an email to bulletin@sjapostle.net or phone the parish office at 510-792-1962 and leave a message.

COLLECTIONS MAY 9

1st Collection	\$5164.00
Other Capital Improvement	\$2548.00
2nd Collection - Communication Campaign	\$1144.00
Bishop's Appeal	\$96.00

Retrouvaille - a Marriage program that helps couples in struggling marriages restore and rebuild a healthy and loving marriage. The Oakland Retrouvaille Program will be hosting a VIRTUAL Weekend Program starting Thursday, June 24 - Sunday, June 27, 2021. For more information or to register, please check the website at www.HelpOurMarriage.com or leave a message at (510) 709-6063. Retrouvaille provides marriage help! You are not alone!

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon: Gn 3:9-15, 20 or Acts 1:12-14; Ps 87:1-3, 5-7; Jn 19:25-34
 Tues: Sir 35:1-12; Ps 50:5-8, 14, 23; Mk 10:28-31
 Wed: Sir 36:1, 4-5a, 10-17; Ps 79:8, 9, 11, 13; Mk 10:32-45
 Thurs: Sir 42:15-25; Ps 33:2-9; Mk 10:46-52
 Fri: Sir 44:1, 9-13; Ps 149:1b-6a, 9b; Mk 11:11-26
 Sat: Sir 51:12cd-20; Ps 19:8-11; Mk 11:27-33
 Sun: Dt 4:32-34, 39-40; Ps 33:4-6, 9, 18-20, 22; Rom 8:14-17; Mt 28:16-20



MOTHERS IN HEAVEN MASS AND OFFERING, MAY 28TH

In memory of all Mothers in Heaven, St. James the Apostle Parish will be offering a special Mass in their honor on Friday, May 28th, at 7:00pm, beginning with the Rosary followed by the Mass.

If you would like to offer a special prayer or petition for them, please complete the Mothers in Heaven Form that is on the St. James website (www.sjapoatle.net) on or before Thursday, May 27th, and submit it along with your offering through the St. James online giving site. Offertory envelopes for the Mothers in Heaven Mass will also be available through the parish office as well as during the weekend Masses. Please include up to two names per envelope or offertory. Feel free to bring a photo of your mother to be displayed in front of the altar during the Mass. Photos will need to be brought home thereafter.

Thank you for your love and generosity. May God bless you and your families abundantly!



LORD, SEND OUT YOUR SPIRIT

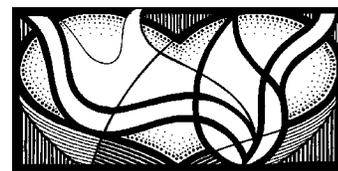
In today's responsorial psalm the Church sings out: "Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth." All three readings describe how God has answered that prayer already.

In the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles and in the Gospel passage from John, we read of astonishing events that called covering disciples to step out of hiding and proclaim news that would condemn them and change the world forever! In the second reading Paul's words reach out into the future to us: "we were all given to drink of one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13).

It is our task to truly pray today's psalm response. Let us together beg the Holy Spirit to renew the earth by renewing the Church, sending many more men and women to serve in its various ministries. Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

FEAST OF FAITH

Liturgy: Work of the Spirit
 The Spirit of God who hovered over the waters at the dawn of creation—the Holy Spirit who descended upon the disciples at Pentecost in ever-changing forms in the sound of a mighty wind or tongues of flame—hovers also over our celebration of the liturgy, giving it life, making it real. It is the Spirit of God who draws us, gathering us together, Sunday after Sunday. It is the Spirit of God who called loudly to the inspired writers of the scriptures and who continues to whisper to us, revealing ever-new facets of God's word, granting insight just when we need it. It is by the Spirit's power that, when Christ's words are uttered by the priest, the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. And it is surely the Spirit who inspires us—that is, breathes in us—when, sent forth from the assembly, we seek ways to serve our brothers and sisters, to allow the gospel to come to life in the world. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and kindle in them the fire of your love.



Corinna Laughlin, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

ST. JAMES THE APOSTLE PARISH OFFICE HOURS

The office is closed due to the COVID shutdown. You can call and leave a message. 510-792-1962 (Parish Office)

MASS SCHEDULE (outside during the COVID shutdown.)

Monday-Saturday Mass: 8:30am
Saturday Mass: 5:00pm
Sunday Masses: 8:30am, 10:00am, 12:00noon

NEW TO THE PARISH?

Warmest welcome to all who worship in our Community. Please complete a registration form available online. (Parish Info)

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please call the Parish Office when a parishioner is home-bound or hospitalized to arrange for Holy Communion and Anointing of the Sick.

MARRIAGES AND BAPTISMS

Please leave a message at the Parish Office at least 6 months in advance for weddings and 3 months in advance for Baptisms.

BAPTISMS

To have your child baptized, please call to **make an appointment** with Father Antony. For details, please go to the Church website (Parish Info) or contact Marcial Vasco 650-303-7106.

Baptism Preparation/Training class: First Saturday of the month from 11:00 am - 12:30 pm in the Small Chapel.

Baptism Celebration: Last Saturday of the month 11:30am-12:30pm in the church

FUNERALS

We recommend using Catholic Funeral and Cemetery Services / Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Holy Angels Funeral and Cremation Services. You may contact Bill Russell @ 510-901-2191.

MOTHER TERESA CENTER RESERVATIONS.

Call 510-999-5940, email MTC@sjapostle.net. (No prices or quotes are given over the phone or in an e-mail.)



Fr. Antony Vazhappilly, Pastor
Ernie Dandan, Deacon

Welcome, New Members!

We encourage you to register in the parish so that you can receive communication via email or regular mail. Registration information is essential for the office to respond to requests, send important parish and diocesan information and verify donations for tax purposes. If you need a letter of good standing to be a sponsor or Godparent for a baptism or marriage, registration is very important.

Please fill out this form and place it in the collection basket and we will mail you a Parish Registration form. You can also find a registration form on the website (sjapostle.net) - Parish Info - Parish Membership.

Name

Address

Phone

Email



BISHOP'S APPEAL 2021

It is time for the 2021 annual Bishop's Appeal. Your pledge for this drive goes to the Oakland Diocese who distributes the monies to several important ministries such as Religious Education and Faith Formation, Clergy Formation and Support, Priest Retirement and Care, etc.

It is still quite difficult for many families, even though we are starting to come out of the restrictions due to the pandemic.

Our goal is the same as last year, \$23,000. We know that you contribute to the St. James parish family but we ask you to contribute to the diocese as well. We have a responsibility to them as well.

Make checks payable to: **Bishop's Appeal 2021** or if you wish, you may contribute online at: www.oakdiocese.org/giving.



Letters from Heaven



Start with the letter in the shaded square. Draw a path from letter to letter to complete the Biblical statement. Move one square at a time, up, down, right, left and diagonally until all letters are used once. Ignore any black squares.

Jesus breathed on his disciples and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive ...

	I	G	A
V	E	R	R
N	E	E	O
T	H	F	M

A _____."

Answer: *are forgiven them*

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St. James Website
<https://sjapostle.net>.

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