

PENTECOST (alternative readings - Year C) 2022

A) INTRODUCTION

- In the Creed every Sunday, we say that we believe in "the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life."
- Today we celebrate the great feast of Pentecost, the out-pouring of that Spirit on the disciples in Jerusalem, giving life, giving birth to the Church.
- Perhaps today we could think a little bit about the ways in which the Holy Spirit is the great Giver of Life.

B) HOLY SPIRIT IS GIVER OF LIFE (OT)

- In Genesis, where it describes the beginning of creation, the spirit hovered over the waters of chaos.
- God gradually established order, and created all kinds of beings.
- When he created man, he breathed into him the spirit or breath of life.
- He made him in his own image and likeness
- And he saw that what he had done, what he had created was very good: it filled him with joy.

C) HOLY SPIRIT IS GIVER OF LIFE (NT)

- At the beginning of Luke's Gospel we hear how the Holy Spirit would come upon Mary, and breathe a new life into her
- The First Reading describes coming of the Holy Spirit upon Our Lady and the Apostles in the Upper Room in Jerusalem.
- Breathing new life into them, transforming them, creating something entirely new, a new people, a new family which would grow and endure down through the ages

D) GOSPEL

- In today's alternative Gospel, Jesus is speaking to his disciples at the Last Supper
- he is consoling them and reassuring them, in spite of his imminent departure, in death and in resurrection
- he promises them the Paraclete or Advocate, someone who will stand by their side in times of trial and difficulty
- this someone is the Spirit of Jesus himself, who will strengthen and encourage and guide
- he will lead them into all truth, into a deeper understanding of who Jesus is and why he came and what he taught
- and this Spirit will enable the disciples, in their turn, to teach, and guide and strengthen and encourage
- and so enable future generations to come to share in the life of God himself

E) LORD AND GIVER OF LIFE

- He is LORD because he is God, just as the Father is God and Jesus is God.
 - He is equal to them in power and majesty, and love and mercy.
 - And he is GIFT, Christ's life-giving gift to the Church at Pentecost, and Christ's life-giving gift to each one of us too. -
 - The Holy Spirit was given to us in our Baptism, and came to us in a fuller, more complete way in our Confirmation.
 - And for us too he is the Giver of Life.
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- He is the God who lives in us, makes himself completely at home in us.
 - He turns our very bodies into his own temple, and makes them holy places.
 - He is the one who prompts us and inspires us to seek the will of God.
 - He is the one who helps us to know and understand what God wants of us.
 - He is the one who gives us courage and strength to be faithful to that will, even in the midst of difficulties and trials.
 - He is the one who helps us to pray, and turns even our unspoken and formless desires and hopes into prayer.
 - he enables us to cry out, "Abba, Father!"
 - He is the one who breathes new life into us through the Holy Eucharist, through the Sacrament of Forgiveness, and through all the other sacraments we receive.
 - He is the one who helps us face up to and live through our own death and resurrection experiences.
 - He is the one who leads us to recognize and accept the truth about ourselves.
 - He is the one who draws order and beauty out of the chaos of our lives.
 - He is the one who fills our emptiness with love and compassion. He is the one who sanctifies us, making us more and more Christ-like, more and more as God intended us to be.
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- He is the LORD to whom we try and surrender ourselves completely.
 - And he is the GIVER OF LIFE, life as it is meant to be lived here and now, and life for ever in the happiness of heaven.

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