

We need the gifts of the Holy Spirit more than ever this Pentecost

**A Reflection by Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
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As we celebrate the great feast of Pentecost this weekend, we acknowledge the urgent need for the many gifts that the Holy Spirit shares with us during this troubled time. Now, more than ever, we need Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of the Lord (cf. Is 11:2-3) to guide us as we continue to protect the vulnerable, slow the spread of COVID-19, and begin the gradual process of recovery in our Church and in society.

Wisdom is needed to make the right choices even when there are disagreements, strong emotions, anxious fears and widespread uncertainty among our leaders and the people we are called to serve. Come, Holy Spirit, help us to grow in wisdom and to be prudent in our decisions for the common good.

Understanding is especially necessary given the scarcity of information and the widespread uncertainty about the accuracy of experts' opinions. Come, Holy Spirit, help us to reflect on your Word and search out the most accurate and reliable information available to us.

Counsel provides encouragement and hope, especially when things seem most desperate and beyond our control. Come, Holy Spirit, enlighten our hearts. Teach us to follow your good counsel and that of Mary, Mother of the Church, and all the saints, as we seek the light of Christ in the darkness caused by this pandemic.

Fortitude allows us to stand firm even when we feel frightened and weak in the face of physical, emotional and economic threats. Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with the fire of your love. Make us bold and uncompromising in our witness to the joy of the Gospel.

Knowledge reveals the wonder of God’s creation and the healing power of God’s love. Come, Holy Spirit, open our minds to the beauty of our common home. Teach our scientists and research professionals to discover the hidden elements that can lead to the prevention and cure of this deadly virus.

Piety reminds us to stay close to God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) and to imitate Mary and all the saints in our love of God and Neighbor. Come, Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with divine love and fervor so that we can serve our sisters and brothers unselfishly.

Fear of the Lord fills us with reverent awe at the majesty of God and the depth of God’s love for us. Come, Holy Spirit, inspire in us true reverence for all that is holy—including the divine image in “the least of these” our brothers and sisters in Christ.

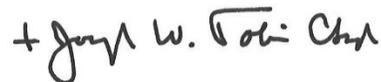
These and all the gifts we receive from the Holy Spirit help to sustain us and empower us as faithful missionary disciples. Now, more than ever, they are powerful resources in our efforts to overcome the coronavirus and recover—safely and responsibly—from the devastating effects of this disease and all the collateral damage it has caused.

Keeping in mind the challenges we are all facing, and the needs of those who are most vulnerable, let’s pray together these beautiful words from the Sequence for Pentecost:

Come, Holy Spirit, Creator blest,
And in our hearts take up Thy rest;
Come with Thy grace and heav’nly aid
To fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

To ev’ry sense Thy light impart
And shed Thy love in ev’ry heart.
To our weak flesh Thy strength supply:
Unfailing courage from on high.

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,



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