
GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT RETREAT

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INTRODUCTION

This retreat time was originally offered through the Murphy Center for Ignatian Spirituality at Fairfield University in celebrating the Feast of Pentecost during the week of May 25 – 29, 2020
<https://www.fairfield.edu/catholic-and-jesuit/murphy-center-for-ignatian-spirituality/programs/index.html>

My hope is for you to become more familiar with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit that are available to all baptized, and Who has been there for us all along. And possibly address a few long-standing questions you may have had. *How do I know I have been open to and been guided and strengthened by gifts of the Holy Spirit?* (The short answer: we will know, for it is the fruits produced).

I do not want to give away all of the answers, for I do not have any. The focus for this time is for you and the Holy Spirit to spend quiet, reflective time together.

Two of the Scriptures and Poems here are from the Handouts for this retreat given to us directors to share with our Directees. Here I have added supportive content – to give you scriptural context and historical teachings from a Doctor of the Church.

The list of the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit has been taken from Loyola Press website, and the commentary of St. Thomas Aquinas and others I took from my textbooks: *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality* and *The New Dictionary of Theology*. I also offer here my own reflection questions from my personal retreat time and retreats I have given in the past for you to consider.

In reflecting upon the Gifts of the Holy Spirit during this time, you can begin to look at a renewing of your understanding of the graces you have received through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. These gifts have been given to us as a promise of God-Self Revealed in the person of Jesus Christ to send us a helper, who has been and will always be with us – God's Spirit, Holy and One within the Trinity.

Begin with: What do you ask of God in this time? What grace do you desire?

I pray for this grace to receive_____.

Example: Where have I seen the effects of these Gifts of the Spirit of God in my life?

Any questions or thoughts, please call.

Blessings,

Karen

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WHAT ARE THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

1. WISDOM helps us recognize the importance of others and the importance of keeping God central in our lives.
2. UNDERSTANDING is the ability to comprehend the meaning of God's message.
3. KNOWLEDGE is the ability to think about and explore God's revelation, and also to recognize there are mysteries of faith beyond us.
4. COUNSEL is the ability to see the best way to follow God's plan when we have choices that relate to him.
5. FORTITUDE is the courage to do what one knows is right.
6. PIETY helps us pray to God in true devotion.
7. FEAR OF THE LORD is the feeling of amazement before God, who is all-present, and whose friendship we do not want to lose.

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/scripture-and-tradition/catholic-basics/catholic-beliefs-and-practices/gifts-of-the-holy-spirit/>

WHERE DO WE FIND THESE GIFTS MENTIONED IN THE SCRIPTURES?

In the Book of Isaiah 11:2-3, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are considered the ones that the future Messiah would have possessed.

Isaiah 11: 2-3 New American Bible (Revised Edition) (NABRE)

The Ideal Davidic King^[b]

¹ a shoot shall sprout from the stump^[c] of Jesse,
and from his roots a bud shall blossom.

² ^[d]The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him:
a spirit of wisdom and of understanding,

A spirit of counsel and of strength,
a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the LORD,

³ and his delight shall be the fear of the LORD.

This passage represents one of the OT's best-known descriptions of the ideal king of the future. Although these seven "spirits" are not listed as such in the NT, it is clear that Jesus is the fulfillment of the messianic text as we see in written in John 1:32 ³² "John (the Baptist) testified further, saying, *"I saw the Spirit come down like a dove from the sky and remain upon him."*

Note: Like a dove: a symbol of the new creation ([Gn 8:8](#)) or the community of Israel ([Hos 11:11](#))

It is through Jesus salvific gift that we receive these Gifts of the Holy Spirit at baptism from the Father and in the Sacrament of Confirmation they are strengthen and sealed.

THE PROMISE OF CHRIST

SELECTIONS FROM THE GOSPEL OF JOHN CHAPTERS 13-17

All the words here were given to the disciples during the Last Supper.

Today we would call such words someone's farewell address, last will and testimony, one's legacy, one's fulfillment of their life's work.

During the Last Supper, after Jesus washed the disciple's feet, he had announced Judas's betrayal. Directly Judas' left.

Jesus then gave them this new commandment *"to love one another as I have loved you first."* He continued on, *"do not let your hearts be trouble; you have faith in God, so have faith also in me."*

He said, *"believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me and whoever believes in me will do the works that I do because I am going to the Father... If you love me, you will keep my commandments, and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth. ... and when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. I have told you this while I am with you. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you. ..Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you."*

Jesus continued on with, *"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. 2 He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit. You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you. Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit because, without me, you can do nothing." "Remain in my love.. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete."*

IN MEDITATING ON THIS SCRIPTURES WHERE HAS CHRIST'S
WORDS SPOKEN TO YOU BEFORE? AND NOW TODAY?

WHERE HAVE YOU KEPT IN HIS LOVE AND EXPERIENCED JOY?

POST RESURRECTION

We have recently walked with Jesus in his Passion, Death, and Resurrection as He continued to fulfill his earthly mission. During His time after the resurrection, He appeared to His disciples and many others, offering consolation in addition to giving Peter his new role as head of His Church on earth. His instructions were to them was to go out and proclaim the good news and to baptize all nations in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

REFLECTION ON THE POST RESURRECTION INSTRUCTIONS: THE BOOK OF ACTS

Chapter 1 The Promise of the Spirit. **1** In the first book, Theophilus, I dealt with all that Jesus did and taught **2** until the day he was taken up, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. **3** He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during forty days^[b] and speaking about the kingdom of God. **4** While meeting with them, he enjoined them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for "the promise of the Father^[c] about which you have heard me speak; **5** for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

The Ascension of Jesus. **6** When they had gathered together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going^[d] to restore the kingdom to Israel?" **7** ^[e]He answered them, "It is not for you to know the times or seasons that the Father has established by his own authority. **8** ^[f]But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." **9** When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight.

CONSIDER USING IGNATIAN IMAGINATION READ AND PRAY
WITH THESE PASSAGE.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO BE THERE?

THE WIND AND FIRE FOR THE MISSION

THE BOOK OF ACTS CHAPTER 2

The Coming of the Spirit. ¹ When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. ² And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. ³ Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues,^[d] as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

⁵ Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. ⁶ At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. ⁷ They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, “Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans?” ⁸ Then how does each of us hear them in his own native language? ⁹ We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God.” ¹² They were all astounded and bewildered, and said to one another, “What does this mean?” ¹³ But others said, scoffing, “They have had too much new wine.”

IMAGINE YOU ARE THERE. WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

WHERE DO YOU ENVISION YOUR MISSION? YOUR CALL?

EXAMPLE IN THE 'OT' OF DISTRIBUTIONS OF THE GIFTS

- Solomon the spirit of wisdom
- Daniel the spirits of understanding and counsel

EXAMPLE IN THE 'NT' OF DISTRIBUTION OF THE GIFTS

“Christ alone received them all and distributed them to all his believers according to their merits.” (Justin Martyr’s *Dialogue with Trypho ch 87*)

1 CORINTHIANS CHAPTER 12: 1-11, 27-29

Unity and Variety. Now in regard to spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be unaware... And no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the holy Spirit. †There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom; to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit; to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy; to another discernment of spirits; to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.

One Body, Many Parts. As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

27 Now you are Christ’s body, and individually parts of it. **28** And God has [u]appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then [v]miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, *and various* kinds of tongues. **29** All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not *workers of* [w]miracles, are they? **30** All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? **31** But earnestly desire the greater gifts.

WHERE HAVE YOU NOTICED THE DIFFERENT GIFTS WORKING?

ROM 8:14

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

WISDOM

‘Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.’ Proverbs 3:5-6.

‘But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.’ James 3:17

‘When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom.’ Prov 11:2

‘By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.’ Prov 24:3

‘Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.’ Rom 12:2

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS ON THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT*

Those moved by the gifts of the Holy Spirit are aided to act in a way that transcends a merely human mode. A believer is not merely passive but active in such a way that one’s responses to the gifts are at one God’s and one’s own. With the gifts, God acts not from the outside but from within us. A human openness to God where one follows the immanent (interior) Spirit’s promptings with docility, joy, and a certain ease. An at onement.

“In distinguishing the Gifts (what God does) from virtues (what we develop) we ought to follow Scriptures’ own way of speaking. There they are spoken as ‘spirits’ rather than gifts.... From this way of speaking, we are obviously given to understand that these seven are in us by divine inspiration.... such denotes a motion coming from the outside.... There are two principles of movement in man: one which is intrinsic to him namely reason; the other extrinsic namely God... now it is evident that the human virtues perfect man insofar as it is his nature to be moved by reason in things he does, both interiorly and exteriorly. There must, therefore, be still higher perfection in man to dispose him to be moved by God. These perfections are called Gifts, not only because they are infused by God, but also because they dispose him to be readily mobile to divine inspiration, here we have a receptivity to divine inspiration. “

FOR ST. THOMAS AQUINAS THESE FOUR ARE RELATED TO THE INTELLECT

Wisdom – the greatest of the seven assists us in seeing and evaluating the aspects of everyday living in relation to God and God's Kingdom, according to principles of faith aided by a judgment of love. Moving beyond ordinary use of reason, the Gift of Wisdom involves a process of coming to glean the deeper meaning, hidden treasures, and sublime harmonies of faith and truths.

WHEN HAVE YOU COME TO A KNOWINGNESS OR INSIGHT THAT OFFERED A COMFORT – SOMETHING THAT WAS NOT OF YOUR OWN MAKING OR FROM YOUR USUAL THOUGHT PROCESS – SOMETHING THAT CAME FROM WITHIN WITHOUT ANY EXTERNAL STIMULUS OR INTENTIONAL MEMORY?

Understanding, like wisdom, is a gift for comprehending the things of life in relation to God for achieving deeper insight into the truths. Self and others are seen as made in the image of God, and in creation are discovered the vestiges of God which point to God the Creator.

WHEN HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED A 'MOMENT OF INSIGHT' SEEING THE BEAUTY OF GOD'S CREATION IN A PERSON WHOM YOU DID NOT EVEN LIKE OR WHO HAD HARMED YOU?

WHAT DEEPER TRUTHS HAVE BEEN REVEALED TO YOU IN YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF OUR INTERCONNECTEDNESS , AS WE MOVE TOGETHER WORKING IN AND THROUGH THIS DIVINE MILIEU?

Knowledge aids in the grasping of divine truths even when they are unsearchable by the human mind. There is an acknowledgment that brings a heightened appreciation of the surpassing greatness of God.

What does this description of knowledge come up in you?

When have you come to finally rest after searching endlessly for an answer, to experience being in a place of consolation knowing it will all be okay somehow?

WHAT DOES THIS DESCRIPTION OF KNOWLEDGE COME UP IN YOU?

WHEN HAVE YOU COME TO FINALLY REST AFTER SEARCHING ENDLESS FOR AN ANSWER, TO EXPERIENCE BEING IN A PLACE OF CONSOLATION KNOWING IT WILL ALL BE OKAY SOMEHOW?

Counsel relates specifically to the practical intellect and is thus connected to the virtue of prudence. The Gift builds openness to the Holy Spirit's inspiration in the activities of reflecting, discerning, consulting, and advising on matters of teaching or acting.

THE OTHER 3 GIFTS HAVE TO DO WITH THE WILL

Piety associated with the virtue of religion orients believers to be devoted to God and in turn to be united with brothers and sisters sharing that devotion. It encompasses worship of God, moments of prayers as well as in our lives to be dedicated to the love of God and neighbor.

Fortitude gives us the courage to bear sufferings in tranquility, to overcome fears, to resist temptations, and to take and carry out difficult tasks for the glory of God and the welfare of others.

Fear of the Lord related to the virtues of hope, love and temperance. The Gift brings proper use of pleasure and the senses on the basis of a sensitivity to the activity of God and reverse for God's majesty. Born of the poverty of spirit (humility), this special kind of fear does not block an intimate union with God, but inhibits our offense of God. We fear offending the ones we love.

WHAT GIFTS DO I NEED TO PRAY FOR TODAY?

WHAT GIFTS DO I THINK GOD'S WANTS GIVE ME TODAY? ASK?

ENDURANCE

Faith, Hope, and Love.¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access [by faith] to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we even boast of our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, and endurance, proven character, and proven character, hope, and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us. **Romans 5:1-5**

WHEN WAS THERE A TIME YOU ENDURED, PROVEN YOUR CHARACTER, AND OR LIVED IN HOPE?

WHAT GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WORKING IN YOU?

WHEN WAS THERE A TIME YOU DID NOT ENDURE, FAILED IN YOUR CHARACTER, OR NOT LIVED IN HOPE? WAS THAT SOMETHING YOU TRIED TO DO ALONE?

REFLECTING ON THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

How do we know if we are accepting the Gifts of the Holy Spirit ?

<https://www.loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/scripture-and-tradition/catholic-basics/catholic-beliefs-and-practices/fruits-of-the-holy-spirit/>

“Just so, every good tree bears good fruit, and a rotten tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a rotten tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. So by their fruits you will know them.” (Matthew 7:17-20)

This passage in Matthew's Gospel helps us to understand the Fruits of the Holy Spirit, which are the observable behaviors of people who have allowed the grace of the Holy Spirit to be effective in them. The tradition of the Church lists 12 fruits:

charity	generosity
joy	gentleness
peace	faithfulness
patience	modesty
kindness	self-control
goodness	chastity

5 WAYS OF REFLECTING ON THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In reviewing each of the 7 consider the following questions, for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are to strengthen us for others.

1. Review each Gift and ask:

- What is my understanding of _____ as Gift?
- Where has the Holy Spirit's Gift of _____ been operating in _____?
 - What has been my experience _____?
- Where have I been able to strengthen others through the Gift of _____ ?

2. What Gifts have you been opened to receiving and seen God's action in others? What Gifts do you desire to have more of?

.....
ISAIAH 50: "THE LORD OPENED MY EAR: I DO NOT REFUSE, DID NOT TURN AWAY."
.....

3. Reflection starting point with Action

- Bring to mind an encounter with another
- Reflect on the fruits of that encounter
- Consider what gifts were provided for you that you cooperated with that allowed you to take such a loving action

4. Reflection starting point with the Effects

- Look at the list of fruits
- What encounter have you had in which you experienced those fruit[s]
- Consider what gifts were provided for you that you cooperated with that allowed you to take such a loving action to experience the fruit[s]

5. Reflection starting point with the Opposite Effects

From the list of the fruits – select one that stands out as what you desired yet you experienced the opposite.

- What action did you take?
- What voice were you listening to?
- What gift of the Holy Spirit would of helped that situation.
- Remember the Gifts (Gifts are God's action {the cause} and Your actions are there always for you for building up others and the community, and the Fruits are what you (effects) experience and possible they may experience too.

ARTICLE: HOW DO WE KNOW IF WE ARE HEARING THE VOICE OF GOD

<https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2020/04/29/how-do-we-know-if-we-are-hearing-voice-god>

Who are we listening to?

THE THREE VOICES

- 1 Holy Spirit (promptings and inspirations)
- 2 Ours – Rational Moral Self (conscience) or Self-Guilt (the would ofs, should ofs, could ofs based upon a false reality)
- 3 Others - other persons based upon past experiences or the enemy of our human nature

Connecting with our interiority in particular to our affective self (emotions, feelings, thoughts, memories) , will give us a clue where we are headed and whose voice we are listening to.

We must use our Faith & Reason

Its what we do with our emotions (reactive) and feelings (experience of the emotions connected with our memory and current thoughts) that is the moral choice.

This is where the first two powers of the rational soul are brought to bear - Intellect and Will related to Knowing and Loving.

DISCERNMENT & THE GIFTS*

IGNATIAN DISCERNMENT

Ignatius speaks about an experience of - complete openness to God - a 'consolation without cause'. It is a Gift of the Holy Spirit, God in action. Ignatian discernment calls for concrete choices to be made on the basis of this 'felt knowledge', this gifted experience of God's presence. Such an experience presupposed that an individual has achieved detachment from lesser objects.

CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO DISCERNMENT

Contemporary approaches to discernment is as assessment of inspirations, intuitions, affective states, and impulses in terms of their sources and their congruity with the overall direction of one's personal spiritual life. The discerning moral agent in part seeks to follow that course of action which is in harmony with the affections evident in the Scriptures in listening to the Holy Spirit as such as a radical dependence on God.

When I Say..."I am a Christian"

by Maya Angelou

When I say... "I am a Christian" - I'm not shouting "I'm clean livin."
I'm whispering "I was lost," - now I'm found and forgiven.

When I say..."I am a Christian" - I don't speak of this with pride.
I'm confessing that I stumble - and need CHRIST to be my guide.

When I say... "I am a Christian" - I'm not trying to be strong.
I'm professing that I'm weak - and need HIS strength to carry on.

When I say... "I am a Christian" - I'm not bragging of success.
I'm admitting I have failed - and need God to clean my mess.

When I say... "I am a Christian" - I'm not claiming to be perfect,
My flaws are far too visible - but God believes I am worth it.

When I say.. "I am a Christian" - I still feel the sting of pain,
I have my share of heartaches - so I call upon His name.
When I say... "I am a Christian" - I'm not holier than thou,
I'm just a simple sinner - who received God's good grace - somehow.

GOD'S GRANDEUR

BY GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.

It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;

It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil

Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?

Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;

And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil;

And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;

There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;

And though the last lights off the black West went

Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs —

Because the Holy Ghost over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

TO LIVE WITH THE SPIRIT

To live with the Spirit of God is to be a listener.
It is to keep the vigil of mystery,
earthless and still.
One leans to catch the stirring of the Spirit,
strange as the wind's will.
The soul that walks where the wind of the Spirit blows
turns like a wandering weather-vane toward love.
It may lament like Job or Jeremiah,
echo the wounded hart, the mateless dove.
It may rejoice in spaciousness of meadow
that emulates the freedom of the sky.
Always it walks in waylessness, unknowing;
it has cast down forever from its hand
the compass of the whither and the why.
To live with the Spirit of God is to be a lover.
It is becoming love, and like to Him
toward Whom we strain with metaphors of creatures:
fire-sweep and water-rush and the wind's whim.
The soul is all activity, all silence;
and though it surges Godward to its goal,
it holds, as moving earth holds sleeping noonday,
the peace that is the listening of the soul.
Jessica Powers – 1905-1988

WHAT HAVE WE DONE TODAY?

by Nixon Waterman

We shall do much in the years to come,
But what have we done today?
We shall give our gold in a princely sum,
But what did we give today?
We shall lift the heart and dry the tear,
We shall plant a hope in the place of fear,
We shall speak the words of love and cheer,
But what did we speak today?
We shall be so kind in the after while,
But have we been today?
We shall bring to each lonely life a smile,
But what have we brought today?
We shall give to truth a grander birth,
And to steadfast faith a deeper worth,
We shall feed the hungering souls of earth,
But whom have we fed today?
We shall reap such joys in the by and by,
But what have we sown today?
We shall build us mansions in the sky,
But what have we built today?
'Tis sweet in the idle dreams to bask;
But here and now, do we our task?
Yes, this is the thing our souls must ask,
What have we done today?

L'Envoi

Ye voices, that arose
After the Evening's close,
And whispered to my restless heart repose!

Go, breathe it in the ear
Of all who doubt and fear,
And say to them, "Be of good cheer!"

Ye sounds, so low and calm,
That in the groves of balm
Seemed to me like an angel's psalm!

Go, mingle yet once more
With the perpetual roar
Of the pine forest, dark and hoar!

Tongues of the dead, not lost
But speaking from death's frost,
Like fiery tongues at Pentecost!

Glimmer, as funeral lamps,
Amid the chills and damps
Of the vast plain where Death encamps!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow [American, 1807-1882]

THE BRIDGE BUILDER

BY WILL ALLEN DROMGOOLE

An old man going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening cold and gray,
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.
Through which was flowing a sullen tide
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
The sullen stream had no fear for him;
But he turned when safe on the other side
And built a bridge to span the tide.
“Old man,” said a fellow pilgrim near,
“You are wasting your strength with building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day,
You never again will pass this way;
You’ve crossed the chasm, deep and wide,
Why build this bridge at evening tide?”
The builder lifted his old gray head;
“Good friend, in the path I have come,” he said,
“There followed after me to-day
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that has been as naught to me
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!”

“PENTECOSTAL HOUR” BY MARK DEBOLT

No zephyr soft
but cyclone strong
bore thoughts aloft
in windy song.
No flicker mild
but flames of red
danced hot and wild
upon each head.
And so fierce was
our thundering word
in languages
of all who heard,
all knew it meant
the Spirit’s power.
This was our Pent-
ecostal hour.

“PENTECOST VILLANELLETTE” BY MARK DEBOLT

Not as a dove the Holy Spirit came
to the disciples gathered in a room,
but as a violent wind and tongues of flame.
A cyclone roared the ineffable name
as fire on each blushing brow did bloom.
Not as a dove the Holy Spirit came
to give sight to the blind and heal the lame
and raise the dead and dispel error’s gloom,
but as a violent wind and tongues of flame.
The Breath of God is anything but tame.
Who dally with it dally with their doom.
Not as a dove the Holy Spirit came,
but as a violent wind and tongues of flame.

“Learning from the Seagulls”

By: Flor McCarthy, S.D.B. (Irish, Contemporary)

It's a chilly day by the seaside,
far too windy for my comfort.
But the gulls don't seem to mind the wind.
In fact, they seem to enjoy it.
I watch them fly about:
they go with it, they go against it,
they soar into the sky, they plunge back to earth.
All the time they are using the wind,
they are availing of its power.
And I reflect on how we, the disciples of Jesus,
are so easily blown off course by the winds of adversity.
Lord, send us the Holy Spirit who will enable us
to turn the hard and easy to our advantage,
so that everything that happens to us
may bear us along the road to your Kingdom