

On Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the first disciples.

WE GATHER

✝ Holy Spirit, come to live among us.

Has anyone ever helped you to change something about yourself, for example, the things you eat or the way you play sports? If so, who was it and how did you change?

WE BELIEVE

Jesus called all of his disciples to be his witnesses. He wanted them to spread the message of God's Kingdom. After his Resurrection, Jesus sent his apostles to preach in his name and to baptize those who believed in him.

Jesus told his apostles that they would not be alone in this work. He promised to send the Holy Spirit to guide and help them. They would be changed by the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Jesus promised, "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" (Acts of the Apostles 1:8).

After Christ ascended to his Father, the apostles returned to Jerusalem. Mary, the mother of Jesus, and some other disciples were there, too. While they were gathered in Jerusalem the Jewish feast of Pentecost was celebrated. The word Pentecost comes from a Greek word *pente*, meaning "the fiftieth day." This fiftieth day after Passover was a harvest festival for the Jews. On this day, the Jewish people thanked God for all their blessings, especially for the fruits of the earth.

It was during this time that the Holy Spirit came as Jesus had promised. This is the way the coming of the Holy Spirit is described in the Acts of the Apostles.

📖 Acts of the Apostles 2:1-47

"When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then 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 and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim." (Acts of the Apostles 2:1-4)

The people outside heard all of this, but they did not know what was happening. The apostles went out into the crowd. Peter told the people that God the Father had indeed raised Jesus. He said that what they had just seen and heard had been the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Each person heard this good news of Christ in his or her own language. The people in the crowd were amazed. They asked Peter and the others what they should do. Peter told them to be sorry for their sins and to repent. He told them to be baptized and receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit. About three thousand people believed and became disciples that day.

Each year on Pentecost we celebrate in a special way the coming of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost is also a feast of gratitude for the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. On Pentecost, the apostles began to go into the world as Jesus had asked.

Jesus calls all people to follow him and share his good news with others. Strengthened by the Holy Spirit, we are all God's workers in the world.

WE RESPOND

How can the Holy Spirit help you to be a witness to Christ today?

👤 In groups role-play the story of Pentecost as if it were happening today. Where would the disciples be? Who would be among the crowd? How would you give witness to Christ and help others to believe?