

# Impact

**Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.**

## COME, HOLY SPIRIT

**Come, Holy Spirit, come! And from your celestial home shed a ray of light divine!**

When we pray, "Come, Holy Spirit!" it is not as though the Spirit is not already with us. Rather, asking the Holy Spirit to come is a way of inviting God to give us an increased sense of God's holy presence, to draw close to us, recognizing what we need even if we cannot put our hopes and longing into words. When we ask the Spirit to come, we open ourselves to the Spirit's life and work within and among us, now, in this time and place. If there were ever a moment in which we need to invite the Holy Spirit to come, it is now, as we grapple with the lingering uncertainty of pandemic and long for God's healing, protection, and peace for ourselves and all in our world.

## RENEW US

**Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

Jesus promised his disciples an Advocate, one who would be with us always. In times when we are dismayed and troubled, it is good for us to remember that the Holy Spirit is always with us. In this season, we may echo the words of the psalmist who cried out, "Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth." Who among us does not need to be renewed at this time? As temples of the Holy Spirit, we must be ready to invite the Spirit to renew us in mind, heart, spirit, and faith, to be built into a spiritual house that witnesses and shares this new life of Christ with others.



## INSPIRE US

**May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a Spirit of wisdom and revelation.**

To be inspired is to have the breath of God flowing through us. Through the Holy Spirit, God is revealed, and God's life, love, and wisdom is poured into our minds and hearts, giving us ideas, creativity, and the insight that is needed at this very moment in time.

## FILL US WITH THE FIRE OF YOUR LOVE

**Fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.**

The Holy Spirit is at once gentle and powerful, ready to instill in us the courage we need when we are called to act in Christ's name, and at the same time giving us peace when we are troubled. We may often think of the Holy Spirit as the quiet, inner presence of God within us, and so the Spirit is. Yet, ancient Celtic people saw the Holy Spirit not only as a calm dove, but as a wild goose, unpredictable and untamable. The Pentecost narrative speaks of a driving wind and tongues of fire that descended as those who were gathered were filled with the Holy Spirit. Wild, untamable, strong, fire. Perhaps we sometimes minimize these qualities of the Holy Spirit, uncertain if we are ready for an outpouring of *that* Spirit upon us! And yet this powerful presence of the Lord may be just what our world needs. The Spirit of the Lord is always with us, the quiet, subtle Spirit and the strong and powerful Spirit. Let us this day invite the Holy Spirit to come, renew, and inspire us. Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love!

# Impact this month

This month, ask the Holy Spirit to guide your heart and life in God's love. Invite the Spirit of the Lord to renew you in spirit and strengthen you to be all God desires. Use the prayer below from St. Augustine if you find it helpful.

*Breathe into me, Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Move in me, Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Attract my heart, Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy. Strengthen me, Holy Spirit, that I may defend all that is holy. Protect me, Holy Spirit, that I may always be holy.*



## FAITH 2020

Faith gives us much-needed perspective.

As the new year 2020 began, few could have foreseen the devastation of a worldwide pandemic which has taken thousands of lives, forced much of the world's population to shelter in place, and as a result, plunged the global economy into recession.

As we are still in the midst of the crisis, we lack the perspective of time and distance, through which we might reflect

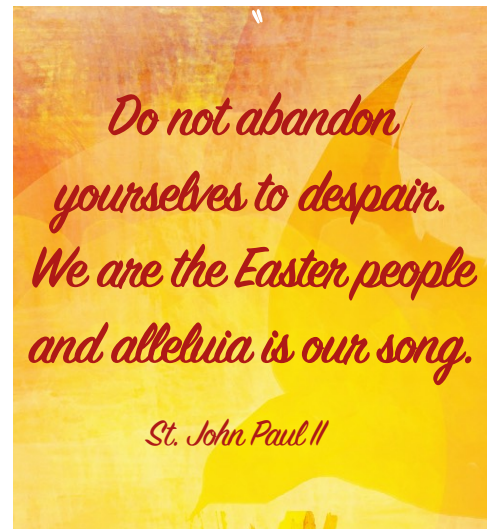
on our experience as individuals and as citizens of our hurting world.

What we do have now is the perspective of faith. We journeyed through Lent and Holy Week, aware of our human frailty in an unusually deep and profound way. As we maintained physical distance from family, friends, and neighbors, we realized our need for each other and for community. Our hearts ache with those whose loved ones have died and swell in gratitude for the courageous care of medical staff and those who provide essential services.

In the face of each person, we see the face of God, the sick face, grieving face, lonely face, selfless face, determined face. In this most unusual of seasons, we join our suffering world to Christ's passion on the cross. And while our Easter joy was tempered by absence from the Eucharistic feast, we are steadfast in our belief that Christ put death in its place and reigns victorious

over it once and for all.

Now in this Easter season, we hold fast to the hope of the resurrection. Our Easter alleluia is not a glib denial of the pain and uncertainty of this moment. Rather, we take heart, perhaps more deeply now than ever before, in the truth that there is nothing beyond the love of Christ, not even a world-wide pandemic.



## AWAKE. AWARE. ALERT.

Even in the most troubling of times, there is much to be grateful for.

Benedictine Brother David Steindl-Rast points to the importance of gratitude even in (or especially in) the most difficult of times. He offers three steps for practicing gratitude that seem especially appropriate today.

**Step One: Wake Up:** What surprises you, what helps you to not take life and goodness for granted? "Surprise may provide a jolt, enough to wake us up and to stop taking everything for granted. But we may not at all like that surprise. 'How can I be grateful for something like this?' we may howl in the midst of a sudden calamity. And why? Because we

are not aware of the real gift in this given situation: opportunity."

**Step Two: Be Aware of Opportunities:** As we wake up to the many blessings in our lives, we realize that these gifts offer us opportunities to find God's grace in our midst.

**Step Three: Respond Alertly:** Aware of the gifts we have been given, we must be alert to opportunities to respond by sharing the goodness and grace with others.

"This recipe for grateful living sounds simple - because it is. But simple does not mean easy," writes Brother David. Nurturing a grateful heart requires us to intentionally be awake to the grace of God in our lives and to be committed to



living differently as a result.

How are you awake, aware, and alert to your gifts? How might these gifts give you opportunities to show and to share Christ's life and love?

For more: <https://gratefulness.org/resource/awake-aware-and-alert/>