

# Pentecost Novena

## *Introduction*

The Pentecost Novena is the first of all novenas, nine days of prayer that naturally fall between the Ascension of the Lord Jesus into heaven and the feast of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles “together with several women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers” whom we are told had been in continuous prayer since their return to Jerusalem from Mt. Olivet (Acts1:14). When on that day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit comes it is in fulfilment of the promise of Jesus last repeated just before his Ascension to the Father. (Luke 24:49).

“The pious exercise of the Pentecost novena, widely practised among the faithful, emerged from prayerful reflection on this salvific event.

“Indeed, this novena is already present in the Missal and in the Liturgy of the Hours, especially in the second vespers of Pentecost: the biblical and eucological (prayer) texts, in different ways, recall the disciples' expectation of the Paraclete. Where possible, the Pentecost novena should consist of the solemn celebration of vespers. Where such is not possible, the novena should try to reflect the liturgical themes of the days from Ascension to the Vigil of Pentecost.

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On 15<sup>th</sup> May 1897, Pope Leo XIII gave to the Church the first major teaching document (at least in modern times) on the Holy Spirit in which he declared: “We decree and command

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<sup>1</sup> DPP No. 155

that throughout the whole Catholic Church, this year and in every subsequent year, a novena shall take place before Whit-Sunday (Pentecost), in all parish churches.”<sup>2</sup>

The two threads that run through this novena are i. the passages from the gospels in which Jesus speaks of the Holy Spirit accompanying the disciples after his passion, resurrection and departure from them, and ii. a brief consideration of the Gifts of the Spirit (Isaiah 11:2). These seven days are begun with the briefest consideration of prayer and concluded with a reflection on Mary who was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit so many years earlier. The pattern and much of the text remains for the same each day, but the focus changes. Many of the ‘Church Teaches’ readings are from the encyclical *Spiritus Paraclitus* (The Holy Spirit the Comforter) of P. Benedict XV a hundred years ago on St. Jerome, whose 1600 anniversary this year has been part of the prompt behind the **2020 God Who Speaks** project of the Church in England and Wales.

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<sup>2</sup> DIM No. 13

## ***Outline***

### **Introduction**

#### **Invitation to Praise**

✠ Let us bless our Heavenly Father, source of every perfect gift.

✠ Glory to you forever

✠ Let us bless Christ, wellspring of every blessing

✠ Glory to you forever

✠ Let us bless the Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life

✠ Glory to you forever

### **Greeting**

### **Scripture Reading**

#### **After the Reading<sup>3</sup>**

✠ Spirit of wisdom and understanding

✠ Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful.

✠ Spirit of counsel and fortitude. ✠

✠ Spirit of knowledge and piety. ✠

✠ Spirit fear of the Lord. ✠

### **Church Teaching Reading**

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. Isaiah 11:2

Intercessions

The Lord's Prayer

Prayer

Blessing

