

Acts 2 • John 20 • 1 Corinthians 12 • The Nicene Creed

“We Believe in the Holy Spirit”

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. Amen.

Over these past weeks, we have been journeying together through the Creed words shaped by the early Church as Christians sought to express the mystery of the God they had encountered. These are not simply ideas about God, but truths born out of prayer, worship, suffering, and lived experience.

We have reflected on God the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, the source from whom all life and love flow. And today, on this great feast of Pentecost, we come to these words Christians have prayed for centuries:

“We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life.”

Perhaps today, more than with any other part of the Creed, we are invited not only to understand these words with our minds, but to open ourselves to them with our hearts and souls.

Pentecost is not simply about remembering something that happened long ago. Pentecost reminds us that the living presence of God is still with us now. The Holy Spirit still breathes life into weary hearts, still speaks into ordinary lives, and still draws people into the love and hope of God.

In our reading from Acts, the disciples are gathered together behind closed doors. They are uncertain, afraid, and waiting. Then suddenly the Spirit comes like wind and fire signs of God’s overwhelming presence drawing near. Fear is transformed into courage, and those who were scattered are brought together as one body in Christ.

What is so important for us to hear today is that the Spirit did not come because the disciples had everything sorted. The Spirit came into their uncertainty, weakness, and waiting. And that is good news for us too. The Spirit of God does not wait for perfect people. The Spirit comes to real people tired people, hopeful people, wounded people, searching people, people just like you and me.

The Creed calls the Holy Spirit “the Lord, the giver of life.” In the Psalm we heard: When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth.

Imagine the breath of God moving over creation. Have you ever stood at sunrise and watched the world awaken to a new day? In moments like that we catch a glimpse of God’s Spirit bringing life once again. The same Spirit who filled the disciples with courage still breathes hope, renewal, and peace into our lives today.

Often the Spirit works quietly and gently. We see the Spirit whenever someone finds strength after grief, whenever forgiveness becomes possible, or whenever peace enters a troubled heart.

Many of us, if we reflect honestly, will recognise moments when somehow we were carried through situations we never thought we could survive. Moments when God felt close, even if we could not fully explain it. Often the longing for healing, peace, or hope is already the beginning of the Spirit's work within us.

In today's Gospel from John, the disciples are once again behind locked doors when Jesus comes among them and says, "Peace be with you." He does not come with anger or disappointment, but with peace and love. Then he breathes on them and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

It is such a tender image the breath of God entering fearful hearts and bringing new life.

And Christ still speaks those same words to us today: "Receive the Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit always draws us closer to Jesus. The Spirit helps us recognise Christ's presence, trust his love, and become more like him. The Spirit is the breath of the risen Christ still moving through the world.

Jesus does not ask the disciples to prove themselves worthy before receiving this gift. He simply invites them to receive. The Holy Spirit is not something we earn or control. The Spirit is God's gift. God's own presence dwelling within us.

Paul reminds us in Corinthians that through the one Spirit we are brought into one body. The Spirit gathers people together and teaches us that we belong not because we are perfect, but because we are loved by Christ.

And perhaps that is the invitation of Pentecost: not simply to think about the Holy Spirit, but to become open once again to the presence of God.

Because the Spirit is not distant. The Spirit is already here.

The deeper question today is not whether we fully understand the Holy Spirit, none of us ever fully will, but whether we are willing to let God come close.

Are we willing to let the Spirit breathe life into the places within us that feel tired, fearful, or wounded? Are we willing to believe that God can meet us exactly where we are?

Pentecost reminds us that God always comes towards us first. The Spirit is God's love poured into human hearts.

So today we proclaim together:

“We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life.”

Not only in the past, and not only in the early Church, but here among us still breathing peace into fear, hope into weariness, and life into all that feels dry within us.

And the beautiful mystery of Pentecost is this: the more we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit, the more we discover the heart of Christ himself, gentle, merciful, healing, and full of love for the world.

So before we move on, let us simply become still for a moment. We do not need to perform or pretend. We simply rest in the presence of God and pray quietly in our hearts:

Come, Holy Spirit.

(Silence)

Closing Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of life.

Fall afresh upon your people.

Quiet our fears, heal what is wounded within us, and strengthen what has grown weak.

Draw us closer to Christ, teach us to trust the Father, and help us to live gently and courageously in your love.

And may we leave this place carrying your peace, your hope, and your life into the world.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.