



Feast of Pentecost - 23rd May 2021

The JPIC document *Being the Artisans of Hope in Our Blessed and Broken World* emphasizes the importance of transformation at all levels that can be brought about only by the work of the Holy Spirit. It likewise stresses “our personal transformation” as a basic element of this process.

As we celebrate the feast of Pentecost, let us ask for the grace to be more open and alert to the urgings of the Spirit so that we can become better instruments of God’s work of transformation.



Jana Parkes, *Transformation of the Heart*

Let us begin by invoking the Holy Spirit. Perhaps you have a favorite “*Come, Holy Spirit*” prayer. Recite it slowly, then stop and stay with the phrase that touches you and leads you to quiet contemplation.

This has been my favorite Prayer to the Holy Spirit for some time:

*Come, Holy Spirit.
Replace the tension within us with a holy relaxation.
Replace the turbulence within us with a sacred calm.
Replace the anxiety within us with a quiet confidence.
Replace the fear within us with a strong faith.
Replace the bitterness within us with the sweetness of your grace.
Replace the darkness within us with your gentle light.
Replace the coldness within us with your loving warmth.
Replace the night within us with your day.
Replace the winter within us with your spring.
Straighten our crookedness. Fill our emptiness.
Dull the edges of our pride. Sharpen the edge of our humility.
Light the fires of our love. Quench the flames of our lust.
Let us see ourselves as You see us, that we may see You as You have promised,
and be healed according to your Word. Amen.*

Source: <https://www.vaticansite.com/come-holy-spirit/>

Or, we can just repeat the invocation, “*Come, Holy Spirit,*” simply until we quiet down and are led into prayer.

Allow me to share one of my little experiences....

Once when I was entering into prayer, I felt rather tense and restless. My mind was busy rushing around. I was repeating “*Come, Holy Spirit*” again and again, when suddenly I felt I heard “I’M HERE! I’m already here. I’ve been with you all the time.” I was then able to quiet down. Now in my old age, I am no longer as busy as I was when I was in my 40s, 50s, or 60s; but I am still rushing within me — even if not physically.

“Don’t overtake the Holy Spirit.” This I heard from Mother Britt rscj when I was a student, and it has come back to me these last few years. Recently, I realized its similarity with one of the famous maxims of St. Madeleine Sophie, “*Ah, if I were given to live again, it would be to obey and act only through the Holy Spirit....*” (letter to Adrienne Michel, 1811). In order to obey, and not overtake, the Holy Spirit, I want to become more conscious of the constant Presence within me, without being anxious; and I simply beg for this grace.

To help me not to overtake the Spirit, I hold an image within me. Since I could not draw nor find a photo to capture this, I will describe the image in words.

Imagine a family of four — father, mother, and two young children, a boy and a girl — riding bicycles in a single file led by the father. The boy pedals with all his might, with full confidence in his skill, and is close to overtaking the father. The girl, who is younger and is on a smaller bicycle, is not so skilled and tries hard not to lose sight of the father. The mother is at the rear. The father turns back from time to time and smiles at the daughter encouragingly, while he calls out to the son telling him not to go too fast or get ahead as he might lose the way.

In the evenings when I go over the day with God, I realize that very often my failures in thought, word, or deed are caused by overtaking the Holy Spirit, being too sure that I know the right thing to say or the right way to act. Being so involved in my own plans and ideas, I go ahead following my impulse or inner urge without stopping and quieting myself down to listen to the soft whisper of the Spirit. In other words, by overtaking the Holy Spirit, I inadvertently block the process of transformation that I have been praying for. This realization is a gift and I thank the Spirit for this humbling reminder.

*We ask for the grace to recognize the moments
when we “overtake the Holy Spirit.”*

In humble silence, let us be open to what the Spirit may reveal to us.

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