

Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Today is Pentecost and Confirmation Day! Today we remember that we are filled with the Holy Spirit. We also celebrate with the confirmands on their milestone of becoming adult members of Saint Nicholas and the continuation of their journey of faith throughout their lives.

Our biblical texts for today mention the Spirit in one way or another. In our first reading from Acts the Spirit came in a violent wind and brought with it divided tongues of fire that rested on the followers of Jesus that gathered in one place. And then, an amazing thing happened. They all spoke in different languages.

Many gathered after they heard the wind and were shocked to hear words in their own language about God's deeds of power from Galileans. And at first, the group thought that the disciples were drunk. But Peter refuted their claim and told them that God poured out his Spirit upon them.

In our first lesson the Spirit allowed the followers of Jesus to communicate with all who came to see what had happened. The people spoke in many languages making it possible to share the gospel with the world.

The Spirit that Paul describes is the same Spirit, but he talks about it in a different way. Paul talks to the Romans about all people who are led by the Spirit are children of God. The Spirit guides us and reminds us that God is our Father. We are children of God and heirs with Christ. We are part of God's family and led by the Holy Spirit throughout our lives. Through the Holy Spirit, in baptism we are adopted, gathered and welcomed into Christ's body, the church.

Finally, our gospel reading from John mentions the Spirit in yet another way. John talks about the Spirit of truth. The world does not know this Spirit because it doesn't see it or understand it. We know the Spirit because it abides in us. The Gospel reading ends with Jesus telling the disciples that the Father will send them an advocate the Holy Spirit.

We have the Spirit in our lives. The Spirit is our guide, our advocate through life. The Spirit is teaching and reminding us of Jesus in our midst, claiming us in baptism, feeding us during the sacrament of Holy Communion, and sending us in the world as disciples – to share the good news of Jesus Christ.

Later/Earlier this morning, the confirmands will be making promises to God as they are confirmed. They will renounce evil, the devil, and all his empty promises and profess their faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed. After they make public profession of their faith they will be asked if they intend to continue living in the covenant that God made with them in their baptism:

- To live among God's faithful people
- To hear His Word and share in his supper
- To proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed
- To serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus
- And to strive for justice and peace in all the earth

The confirmands' response is I do, and I ask God to help and guide me. Following their response we pray for the Holy Spirit to fill them and confirm their faith, guide their life, empower them in serving, give them patience in suffering, and bring them forth to everlasting life.

We pray for the Spirit to come into the confirmands' lives to help them. We are all reminded through the rite of confirmation that the Spirit is our advocate and guide. Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Listen to the Spirit and let it guide you to:

- To live among God's faithful people – let us be in relationship with those around us, here in this place and people outside of these walls.
- To hear His Word and share in his supper – come and worship; participate in the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion; worship at home with family and friends.
- To proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed – share God's love by telling the story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection and by doing good works for others.
- To serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus
- And to strive for justice and peace in all the earth – Finally we should try serve those who need help; speak out against injustice and promote and seek peace by being in relationship with God.

Be filled with the Spirit as God gives it to you, in baptism, through a mighty wind and tongues of fire, or the peace of knowing that the Spirit abides within you. Be filled with the Spirit and plant seeds of faith in others by participating in the sacraments, telling the story of Jesus, by helping others, and by being an advocate for those who need us, and to strive for peace in God.

Be refreshed and filled with Holy Spirit so that we might grow and empower disciples for God's work in the world.

Now the peace of God which surpasses all human understanding be in your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus the Lord. Amen.