Spirituality



A scene from Pentecost is depicted in a stained-glass window in Queen of Apostles Chapel at the Maryknoll Society Center in Maryknoll, New York. (CNS/Gregory A. Shemitz)

by Dan Schutte

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May 21, 2020

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Editor's note: *NCR is sharing with our readers a nine-day Novena for Pentecost resource created by board member and composer Dan Schutte. Schutte writes, "if*

there's ever a moment when we all could use the light and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, it's now. While we wait till we can be together again for Sunday worship, this is a way we can join our hearts in prayer." The entire Novena for Pentecost can be found here.

Feast of Pentecost

I'm sure many of us wish we would wake up one morning soon and realize that these past few months have been a terrible dream. But we're slowly learning to live in a new reality where we can't even welcome our friends with a strong embrace or even a handshake. We're not unlike those first disciples who had to get used to a new reality, a reality that didn't include the physical presence of Jesus, their Lord and teacher. Like them, we are afraid and some days would rather lock ourselves away rather than face this new way of being.

Those early Christians didn't know how to be church. When Jesus of Nazareth left the future in the hands of his followers, he didn't present them with a handbook of how to do it. But he promised them his own Spirit to dwell with them and in them to be their hope, their comfort and their guide. All they had to do was listen to the quiet, gentle voice in their heart of hearts that spoke of love and truth and mercy.

The most powerful message we preach to the world is in the way we treat each other, especially at times like this when we are afraid and tired and confused. "By this shall they know that you are my disciples: by the way you love one another." This is where Pentecost begins. This is how we become the church.

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Opening hymn: Holy breath of God

Scripture reading: Acts of the apostles

Psalm response: On this most holy day

Pentecost Gospel: John 20

Homily

Preparation of altar and gifts

Prayer at the table: Mass of Christ the savior

This solemn prayer marks the high point of the entire liturgy. The documents of the church call this prayer "the center and summit of the entire celebration." It's called the Eucharistic Prayer from the Greek word "eucharistia," which means to give thanks and praise. Everything in this night's liturgy up till now has been leading us up to this moment where we proclaim our thanks and praise to a God who has blessed us with such abundance even in the midst of our darkness and brokenness. And so, together we lift our hearts in thanksgiving.

Lamb of God litany

Communion hymn: Our hope is in the Lord

Closing hymn: The wondrous news

And now it is time for us to go forth, sent by the Spirit of Jesus to be disciples of hope in the world. Surely this is a time in the story of humanity when hope is needed in a very real and particular way. We pray together that these nine days of praying the novena might have nourished our own hope and encouraged us to be beacons of hope to our sisters and brothers. And next year, may we again gather as community in our churches and chapels and embrace each other with the peace of Christ.

This story appears in the **Novena for Pentecost with Dan Schutte** feature series. View the full series.