

Revd Michael Burns
Christ Church West Wimbledon
Sermon : 8:00am, Pentecost ~ June 4, 2017

Pentecost commemorates the day when the Holy Spirit filled the disciples after Jesus' ascension into heaven, and the birth of the church. Christmas and Easter centre around us receiving a gift - a saviour and salvation - whereas Pentecost is also about receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit – but is also about sharing the news of that gift with others. Can I suggest some of the things that you might wish to pray about on this feast of Pentecost.

1. The gifts of the Holy Spirit

A number of the gifts of the Spirit feature in the story of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost. Paul urges believers to eagerly desire these great gifts and to know how to identify them. As believers we've all received the gift of the Holy Spirit but sometimes we're unsure about what this means. Why not say a prayer asking for that we may come to discover our gift and how to use it.

2. The confidence to evangelize

After the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter stood and preached to the crowd. We don't all have the confidence to evangelize to one person, let alone 3,000, but this confidence is maybe something that we can pray for.

3. The fruits of the Holy Spirit

Maybe we can pray that in the coming days we'll be able to demonstrate one or more of the fruits that we might struggle with – there are nine of them to choose from according to Paul in his Letter to the Galatians, where he writes: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

4. Those who don't know Jesus

Thousands of people chose to accept Jesus as their Saviour following Peter's proclamation and billions more have since, but there are still many people who don't know the peace that He can bring. Perhaps we can pray that our loved ones and those we don't know will accept the Christian message.

5. The presence of the Holy Spirit

Many Christians long for an experience similar to the one that the disciples had, so that we can realise the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. But maybe it requires us to concern ourselves less with what we can **do** and more with what the Spirit can **do in us**. Perhaps we can find a place free from distractions – like a Church – and pray that we can come to know the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives – and what better time to start than on this feast of Pentecost 2017?