



# FAITH & THE HOLY SPIRIT

## *Spiritual Exercises*

**Day 1:** Throughout the ages, prophets predicted that the day would come when God would give His Spirit freely to men. Those who turned to Him and received His Spirit would be changed. They would be new people with a new life.

*"I will sprinkle clean water on you and make you clean from all your idols and everything else that has defiled you. I will give you a new heart and a new mind. I will take away your stubborn heart of stone and give you an obedient heart. I will put my spirit in you and will see to it that you follow my laws and keep all the commands I have given you." (Ezekiel 36: 25-27)*

What might this new heart and new mind look like for you?

**Day 2:** Jesus promised before He died that He would give His followers the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will live in you and give you a new life. The promise of Jesus is for everyone. Jesus says:

*"If you love me, you will obey my commandments. I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, who will stay with you forever. He is the Spirit, who reveals the truth about God. The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and is in you...you will not be left all alone..." (Jn. 14:15-18)*

The Holy Spirit is your Helper. "You will not be left all alone." What does this mean to you?

**Day 3:** On the day of Pentecost, Jesus' disciples were gathered together in one room in prayer, and the Holy Spirit which Jesus promised came on them. From that moment on, they were changed men.

*"When the day of Pentecost came,...They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak." (Acts 2:1a&4)*

The Holy Spirit transforms. Ask him to transform you.

**Day 4:** You can experience the Holy Spirit the same way the first disciples did. Whether you have been a Christian for a while or have never believed in Christ before, you can receive whatever is missing in your experience of the life of the Spirit. What happened to the disciples at Ephesus can happen to you.

*"When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Paul placed his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them; they spoke in strange tongues and also proclaimed God's message. They were about twelve men in all." (Act 19:5-7)*

How can you be open to the Holy Spirit's action in your prayer, thoughts, decisions, and experiences today?

**Day 5:** When the Holy Spirit is released in you, you will begin to experience a new kind of life. You will know God in a new way. That new life will grow in you until you become a changed person. St. Paul describes the result by saying:

*“But the Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control.”* (Gal. 5:22-23a)

Which of these fruits of the Holy Spirit do you already see active in your life? Which do you desire to see in your life?

**Day 6:** As you grow in faith in the Holy Spirit in you, you will begin to experience him working in you in new ways so that you can serve others. He will help you overcome your weakness and pride by empowering you to be able to witness for Jesus to others. Jesus promised:

*“But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”* (Acts 1:8)

Empowered by the Holy Spirit - what might this look like in your life?

**Day 7:** God gives the Holy Spirit so that we can be joined to the body of Christ (the Church, the faith community). The new life in the Spirit will allow you to be more closely united with other Catholics in your parish and to experience a communion with them in the Spirit. God’s word teaches:

*“So then, you Gentiles are not foreigners or strangers any longer; you are now citizens together with God’s people and members of the Family of God. You, too, are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being Christ Jesus Himself. He is the one who holds the whole building together and makes it grow into a sacred temple dedicated to the Lord. In union with Him you too are being built together with all the others into a place where God lives through His Spirit.”* (Ephesians 2:19-22)

You are a member of "the Family of God". Sit with this truth today.

## NEXT WEEK’S FOCUS: COMMITMENT & TRANSFORMATION

*Please Read: Acts 2 & Acts 18:24-19:7*

*Take some time each day to slowly read and meditate on the Spiritual Exercise for the day:*

1. Read once through simply for content, to get a big picture idea of the topic and scripture.
2. Read a second time slowly to see what words or phrases stand out to you. Talk with God about these words or phrases asking:
  - Why do they stand out to you? What meaning do they have for you currently in your life?
  - What emotions or feelings do they bring up and why?
  - What might they reveal to you about God? About yourself? About some future course of action God is inviting you to?
3. Read the passages one final time lifting up the words as prayer and asking God to help you live the truths he has revealed to you during the time of reflection.