



# Parish of St Peter and St Paul

ARCHDIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER

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## Seventh Sunday of Easter (Year A) 21<sup>st</sup> May 2023

SUNDAY MASS: 9:45am & 12noon

WEEKDAY MASS: Monday & Friday 12.30pm; Tuesday & Wednesday 8am

CONFESSIONS: (on request)

**C**OME, Holy Ghost,  
send down those beams,  
which sweetly flow in silent streams  
from Thy bright throne above.

O come, Thou Father of the poor;  
O come, Thou source of all our store,  
come, fill our hearts with love.

O Thou, of comforters the best,  
O Thou, the soul's delightful guest,  
the pilgrim's sweet relief.

Rest art Thou in our toil, most sweet  
refreshment in the noonday heat;  
and solace in our grief.

O blessed Light of life Thou art;  
fill with Thy light the inmost heart  
of those who hope in Thee.

Without Thy Godhead nothing can,  
have any price or worth in man,  
nothing can harmless be.

Lord, wash our sinful stains away,  
refresh from heaven our barren clay,  
our wounds and bruises heal.

To Thy sweet yoke our stiff necks bow,  
warm with Thy fire our hearts of snow,  
our wandering feet recall.

Grant to Thy faithful, dearest Lord,  
whose only hope is Thy sure word,  
the sevenfold gifts of grace.

Grant us in life Thy grace that we,  
in peace may die and ever be,  
in joy before Thy face.  
Amen. Alleluia.

During these nine days, from Ascension to Pentecost, the Church prays this prayer more and more intensely. It is called in Latin "*Veni Sancte Spiritus*".

Why don't you try it? Try to read it.  
Once in the morning, once in the evening.  
Every day.

You will see that at one point the prayer will begin to 'speak' to you. You will hear a promise made to you, concerning your life, your hopes and sufferings.

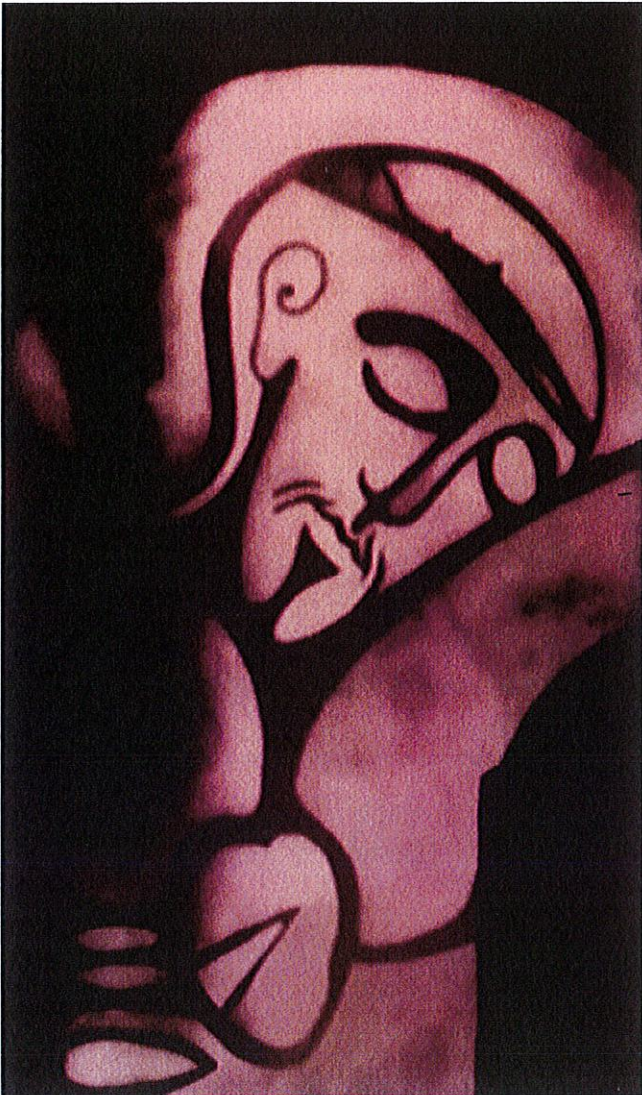
You will hear about God and about you, together.  
You will hear about a 'work', the work of the Holy Spirit in you, his gifts for you, his presence in you.

We remember in prayer Maya & Jayden,  
Reginald, Scarlett & Georgia, who will be  
confirmed on Friday May 26<sup>th</sup> at St. John's



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# "Give blood, receive the Spirit"



"COME HOLY SPIRIT..." repeats the Church during these nine days leading to Pentecost Sunday. The same Church, with the wisdom of the ancient fathers of the desert, repeats: "GIVE BLOOD...".

We are at the door of the Feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the 50th day of Easter, the 'coronation' of every Christian with the gift of Holy Spirit. The 'highest gift' because it means to be with God, to 'be' God, to have the same life of God, and not less sublime, to be at peace with everyone, to love everyone.

We cannot receive this love from philosophy or from thinking. We cannot receive and keep this love alongside passions contrary to it. As the desert fathers say: "Give blood, receive the Holy Spirit".

This is not bodily blood, of course not. It is not about turning to Pelagianism either, denying grace and relying on effort alone. Not at all. It is about what the Church calls the 'spiritual battle', the Christian ascetic combat.

Abba Longinus, one of those monks whose wisdom is recorded in the Sayings of the desert fathers, said: "A woman knows she has conceived when she stops losing blood. So it is with the soul. She knows she has conceived the Holy Spirit when the passions stop coming out of her. But as long as one is held back in the passions, how can one dare to believe that one is sinless? Give blood, and receive the Spirit."

This is the struggle we enter when we do things against our fallen will and we elevate it over our fallen being. When we keep silent when someone hurts us and we answer good to evil. When we do this, it is as if blood pours out somewhere from our heart and a wound seems to occur. Your heart pours out blood, a silent blood. This wound is not harmful, but it gives new life. This wound is similar to the one of Jesus on the cross. This wound revives us, restores us, heals.

There is no Spirit without Blood.

There is no mysticism without ascetism.

There is no inner peace without spiritual battle.

Follow Christ, follow Christ, follow everlasting life...

*Christos Anesti, Alithos Anesti* (He is Risen indeed, Alleluia!)

*fr. Ivano*

Father Ivano