[RIGHT SIDEBAR] The Acts of the Apostles recounts how they were infused with the Holy Spirit fifty days after Easter, an event celebrated by the feast of Pentecost. In this plaque, the use of gilding and of enamel over metal foil creates a shimmery effect appropriate to this mystical scene. Along with others of the same dimensions— including three in the main building of the Metropolitan Museum—it once decorated an imposing church furnishing, such as an altar, candlestick, or large cross.

[PHOTO CAPTION] *Plaque with the Pentecost, a 12TH century Dutch presentation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit descending on the Apostles. The photo is reproduced with the permission of the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art (the Met), under its Open Access programme 2025.*

*[PHOTO]*

*INTRODUCTION* This Novena is designed to be recited from the Friday before the Feast of the Ascension to the Vigil Feast of Pentecost Sunday, whether the Feast of the Ascension is transferred to the Sunday, or not. However, as with all novenas, they are free to recite any time by the faithful.

[TITLE] Novena to the Holy Spirit

Our Novena has been amalgamated from two Novenas. The first is the Imprimatur of a Novena granted by Patrick O’Boyle, Archbishop of Washington, to the capital’s Cathedral, in March 1948, with excerpts reproduced from *My Catholic Life*. The second is the special novena drafted by the Westminster Diocese Vocations Team to help us grow in personal holiness, drafted in 2020, especially for pilgrims to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham. There are many similarities between the two; for example, the Consecration to the Holy Spirit, and the dedication of each day of the Novena to a special gift of the Holy Spirit. The language has been updated to modern usage.

Novenas in honour of the Holy Ghost are among the oldest of all novenas used by Catholics. Addressed to the beloved Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, it is a powerful plea for the light, piety, strength, and love needed by all of us. Traditionally, they are substantial bodies of prayer, reflecting the spiritual depth of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

St John Vianney once preached: “When we have the Holy Spirit, the heart expands and bathes itself in divine love. And so, we should say every morning, ‘O God, send me Thy Spirit to teach me what I am and what Thou art.

The Novena begins with an Act of Consecration.

**Act of Consecration to the Holy Spirit**

**(***To be said each day of the Novena)*

I bow before the great multitude of heavenly witnesses and offer myself, body and soul to You, the Eternal Spirit of God. I adore the brightness of Your purity, the unerring keenness of Your justice, and the might of Your love. You are the strength and light of my soul. In You I live and move. I desire never to grieve You by unfaithfulness to grace and I pray with all my heart to be kept from the smallest sin against You.

Mercifully guard my every thought. Grant that I may always watch for Your light, listen to Your voice, and follow Your gracious inspirations. I give myself to You and ask You, by Your compassion to watch over me in my weakness. Mindful of the suffering of Jesus, meditating on His Holy Wounds, trusting in His Precious Blood, and adoring His stricken heart, I implore You, Adorable Spirit, helper of my infirmity, to keep me in Your grace that I may never sin against You.

Give me grace, O Holy Spirit, Spirit of the Father, and the Son to say to You always and everywhere, "Speak Lord for Your servant is listening."

Mindful of your Church and its people, I ask you Father to pour out Your Spirit upon us and grant us a new vision of Your glory, a new experience of Your power, a new faithfulness to Your Word and a new consecration to Your service so that Your love may grow among us.

Lord Jesus, let Your Spirit rest upon our parishes, schools and homes that they may be places of love and truth where the weak are made strong and the strong learn humility and all of us learn the wisdom that alone comes from You.

Holy Spirit, Comforter and Sanctifier, temper our hearts that we may accept Your love. Renew our minds that we may know Your truth. Strengthen our will that we may follow You faithfully, through Christ our Lord. Amen

**Prayer for the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit**

**(***To be said each day of the Novena)*

Lord Jesus Christ, before ascending into heaven You promised to send the Holy Spirit to finish Your work in the souls of Your Apostles and Disciples. Grant the same Holy Spirit to me that He may perfect in my soul, the work of Your grace and Your love.

Grant me the Spirit of Wisdom that I may despise the perishable things of this world and desire only the things that are eternal. Give me the Spirit of Understanding to enlighten my mind with the light of Your divine truth; the Spirit of Counsel that I may always choose the way of pleasing You and gaining heaven; the Spirit of Fortitude that I may bear my cross with You and overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose my salvation; the Spirit of Knowledge that I may know You and myself and grow perfect on the path to holiness; the Spirit of Piety that I may seek to serve You and Your Church; and the Spirit of Fear and Awe that I may be filled with a loving reverence towards You, and dread to displease You in any way. Mark me, dear Lord, with the sign of Your true disciples and inspire me in all things with Your Spirit. Amen.

**Day One – The Gifts of the Holy Spirit**  
*Holy Spirit! Lord of light!  
From Thy clear celestial height,  
Thy pure beaming radiance give!*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:** Our mighty and eternal God, who baptised us by water and the Holy Ghost, has given us the means to achieve the forgiveness of all our sins and to aspire to live in His ways of mercy and love. It is from love and his unbounded mercy that he sent down from heaven His sevenfold Spirit: the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Fortitude, the Spirit of Knowledge and Piety, and fill us with the Spirit of Holy Fear, so that we can know Him, love and serve Him in this world and be happy with Him in the next.

**Prayer:** *Holy Spirit, perfect my soul, to understand Jesus’ grace and love. Grant me the Spirit of Wisdom that I may despise the perishable things of this world and aspire only after the things that are eternal. Grant me the Spirit of Understanding to enlighten my mind and the Spirit of Counsel that I may ever choose the surest way of pleasing God. Give me the Spirit of Fortitude that I may overcome with courage all the obstacles that oppose my salvation. Give me the Spirit of Knowledge that I may know God and know myself and grow perfect in the science of the Saints. Grant me the Spirit of Piety that I may find the service of God sweet and amiable and the Spirit of Fear, that I may be filled with a loving reverence towards God and may dread to displease Him in any way. Mark me, dear Lord, with the sign of Your true disciples and animate me in all things with Your Spirit. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Day Two - The Gift of the Fear of God**

*Holy Spirit, come Thou, Father of the poor!  
Come, treasure which endures!  
Come Thou, Light of all that live.*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:** This gift brings us to our knees in reverence and awe before the glory and greatness of God, like Moses before the burning bush. In the heat of His love, we are confronted with all that is unworthy within us—those attitudes and patterns of behaviour which threaten to separate us from Him. In His greatness, we see our smallness.

And yet, we are not crushed nor led into despair. For the Fear of the Lord gives us not only the desire not to offend God, but also the hope that God will give us the grace that we need in order to truly live lives pleasing to Him.

**Prayer**: *Come, O blessed Spirit of Holy Fear, penetrate my innermost heart, that I may set Thee, my Lord and God, before my face forever; help me to shun all things that can offend Thee, and make me worthy to appear before the pure eyes of Thy Divine Majesty in heaven, where Thou live and reign in the unity of the Blessed Trinity, God, world without end. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Day Three - The Gift of Piety**

*Holy Spirit, thou, of all consolers, best,  
Visiting the troubled breast,  
Dost refreshing peace bestow.*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:**The gift of Piety creates in our hearts a filial affection for God as our most loving Father. It inspires us to love and respect for His sake, persons and things consecrated to Him, as well as those who are vested with His authority. This includes His Blessed Mother and the Saints, our beloved Church, the Pope, and clergy, as well as our parents and families.

The penitent who is filled with the gift of Piety finds the practice of religion not a burdensome duty but a delightful service. Where there is love, there is no labour.

**Prayer**: *Come, O Blessed Spirit of Piety, possess my heart. Encourage in me such a love for God that I may find satisfaction only in His service and, for His sake, and lovingly submit to His Will. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Day Four: The Gift of Fortitude**  
*Holy Spirit, thou in toil art comfort sweet;  
Pleasant coolness in the heat;  
Solace in the midst of woe.*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:** By the gift of Fortitude, the soul is strengthened against natural fear and supported to the end in the performance of duty. Fortitude imparts to the will an impulse and energy which move it to undertake, without hesitancy, the most arduous tasks; to face dangers, and to endure without complaint the slow martyrdom of even lifelong tribulation. Fortitude understands that “He that perseveres to the end shall be saved”.

**Prayer**: *Come, O Blessed Spirit of Fortitude, uphold my soul in time of trouble and adversity. Sustain my efforts to achieve holiness, strengthen my weakness, and give me courage to resist all the assaults of my enemies, that I may never be overcome by them, or by evil, and be separated from Thee, my God, the greatest good. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Day Five The Gift of Knowledge**

*Holy Spirit, Light immortal! Light Divine!  
Visit Thou these hearts of Thine,  
And our inmost being fill!*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:** The gift of Knowledge enables the soul to evaluate created things at their true worth, in their relation to God. Knowledge unmasks the pretence of creatures, reveals their emptiness, and points out their only true purpose as instruments in the service of God. It shows us the loving care of God even in adversity.

Knowledge directs us to glorify Him in every circumstance of life. Guided by its light, we put first things first and prize the friendship of God beyond all else. Knowledge is a fountain of life to those that possess it.

**Prayer** *Come, O Blessed Spirit of Knowledge, and grant that I may perceive the will of the Father; show me the nothingness of earthly things, that I may realise their vanity and use them only for Thy glory and my own salvation, looking ever beyond them to Thee and Thy eternal rewards. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Day Six: The Gift of Understanding**

*Holy Spirit, if Thou take Thy grace away,  
Nothing pure in man will stay,  
All his good is turned to ill.*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:** Understanding, as a gift of the Holy Ghost, helps us to grasp the meaning of the truths of our beloved faith. It enables us to penetrate the inner meaning of revealed truths, and through them to be quickened to newness of life. Our faith ceases to be sterile and inactive. Instead, it inspires a way of life that bears eloquent testimony to the faith within us. We begin to walk worthy of God, act in ways that are pleasing to Him, and come to understand the immense depths of his love, mercy, and glory.

**Prayer**: *Come, O Spirit of Understanding, and enlighten our minds, that we may know and believe all the mysteries of salvation; and may merit at last to see the eternal light in Thy Light; and in the light of glory, to have a clear vision of Thee and the Father and the Son. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Day Seven: The Gift of Counsel**

*Holy Spirit, heal our wounds ~ our strength renew;  
On our dryness pour Thy dew!  
Wash the stains of guilt away!*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:** The gift of Counsel endows the soul with prudence, enabling it to judge promptly and rightly what must be done, especially in difficult circumstances. Counsel applies the principles furnished by Knowledge and Understanding to the innumerable challenges that confront us in the course of our daily duty as parents, teachers, public servants, and as Catholics.

Counsel is common sense. Given by the Holy Spirit, it is a priceless treasure in the quest of salvation. This is why we pray to the Most High, that He may direct us in the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

**Prayer**: *Come, O Spirit of Counsel, help and guide me in all my ways, that I may always do Thy holy will. Incline my heart to that which is good; turn it away from all that is evil, and direct me by the straight path of Thy commandments to that goal of eternal life for which I long. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Day Eight: The Gift of Wisdom**  
*Holy Spirit, bend the stubborn heart and will;  
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;  
Guide the steps that go astray!*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:** Embodying all the other gifts, Wisdom is the most perfect of the gifts. Of Wisdom it is written, “all good things come to me with her, and innumerable riches, through her hands”. It is the gift of Wisdom that strengthens our faith, fortifies hope, perfects charity, and promotes the practice of virtue in the highest degree. Wisdom enlightens the mind to discern and relish things divine. It distances us from those activities that take us away from Jesus. It also helps us understand that the Cross of Christ yields a divine sweetness. As Jesus said: “Accept thy cross and follow me, for my yoke is sweet and my burden light.”

The gift of wisdom is a journey into the heart of God. As the well-known prayer says: “Come, O Spirit of Wisdom! Bend our proud hearts and stubborn wills. Empty us of all folly and façade, and reveal to us the mysteries of Your ways so that we may follow You in humility and trust”.

**Prayer**: *Come, O Spirit of Wisdom, and reveal to my soul the mysteries of heavenly things, their exceeding greatness, power, and beauty. Teach me to love them above and beyond all the passing joys and satisfactions of earth. Help me to attain them and possess them forever. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Day Nine: The Fruits of the Holy Spirit**  
*Holy Spirit, thou, on those who evermore  
Thee confess, and Thee adore,  
In Thy sevenfold gifts, descend:*

*Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they will be created. And you will renew the face of the earth.*

**MEDITATION:** The gifts of the Holy Spirit perfect our virtues by enabling us to practice them with greater docility to divine inspiration. As we grow in the knowledge and love of God, our service becomes more sincere and generous and the practice of virtue, more perfect. Such acts of virtue leave the heart filled with joy and consolation and are known as Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The gifts we have prayed for will bear rich fruit in our lives, not for our own glory but for the glory of God. For which of these fruits do I most hunger? In imitation of the Blessed Virgin, we are invited to give birth to new life through the Holy Spirit working within us. May each one of us, by responding generously to God’s calling, bring forth fruit in the Church as a living branch of the true vine which is Jesus Christ.

**Prayer**: *Come, O Divine Spirit, fill my heart with Thy heavenly fruits: charity, joy, peace, patience, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, modesty, self-control and chastity, that I may never weary in the service of God, but by continued faithful submission to Thy inspiration, may merit to be united eternally with Thee in the love of the Father and the Son. Amen.*

*Please recite one Our Father; one Hail Mary; and seven times the Glory be*

**Additional prayers to the Holy Spirit**

***Veni Creator Spiritus***

*Come Holy Spirit, Creator come, from thy bright heavenly throne. Come take possession of my soul and make it all thine own. Thou who are called the Paraclete, best gift of God above, the living spring, the living fire, sweet unction, and true love. Thou who are sevenfold in thy grace, finger of God’s right hand. Your promise, teaching little ones, to speak and understand. O guide my mind with thy blest light, with love my heart inflame. And with thy strength which ne’er decays, confirm my mortal frame. Far from me drive the deadly foe. True peace unto me bring. And through all perils lead me safe, beneath thy sacred Wing.*

*Through Thee may I the Father know. Through Thee the Blessed Son. And thee the Spirit of them both, thrice blessed, three in one. All glory to the Father be, and his co-equal Son. My love for Thee, Great Paraclete, will last through ages run.*

***A prayer for Help from the Holy Spirit***

*Heavenly Father, hear my prayer. Send me the Paraclete, the Comforter. May He cleanse my heart and my soul, protect me from peril and temptation, enlighten my mind, and create in me a loving and pure heart, in thrall to Thee, so that my life will bear witness to your eternal power and glory. I ask this through Christ,*