



In today's Gospel reflection, Father Ian VanHeusen presents a spiritual exercise based on the readings for Sunday's Mass.

St. Ignatius of Loyola explains, "By the term "Spiritual Exercises" is meant every method of examination of conscience, of meditation, of contemplation, of vocal and mental prayer, and of other spiritual activities.

"For just as taking a walk, journeying on foot, and running are bodily exercises, so we call Spiritual Exercises every way of preparing and disposing the soul to rid itself of all inordinate attachments, and, after their removal, of seeking and finding the will of God in the disposition of our life for the salvation of our soul."

This week, we invite you to first prayerfully read the first reading for Pentecost Sunday, Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11, then watch the video, and finally go through Father VanHeusen's spiritual exercise.

### **A reading from the Acts of the Apostles (2:1-11)**

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were.

Imagine this scene and consider the gift of the fear of the Lord (or wonder and awe)... have you ever felt this kind of sensation? Describe it.

Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

Imagine the gift of counsel, that you are able to speak to the needs of others in ways that they understand. Imagine your receive this gift through the Holy Spirit descending like tongues of fire. Do the same with each gift of the Holy Spirit.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God."

## The Word of the Lord

### A Spiritual Exercise based on the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Examine yourself according to each gift and anticipate how you can face challenges that arise. Keep in mind that we do not engender these gifts by an act of the will, but rather they are a gift of God's grace. With each one, examine your heart and pray that God will move each gift within you.

#### 1) Wisdom

Do you build into your day spiritual rest? Do you make time to reflect upon your experience in the light of the Holy Spirit? Wisdom is the fruit of a loving knowledge of God that comes from contemplation. Pray for this grace. Anticipate parts of your life where you need this.

#### 2) Understanding

Do you see creation in the light of Divine Revelation? Do you make time to understand what the Church teaches about creation and created realities? Do you take time to learn daily? Understanding is an illumination based on the Holy Spirit in which we come to a greater understanding of created realities. Pray for this grace. Anticipate parts of your life where you need this.

#### 3) Counsel

Do you recognize members of your community who give good counsel? Do you listen to others with the harmony of the Holy Spirit or do you judge by appearances? Counsel is the gift by which we are able to discern concrete actions which effect the living out of Christian discipleship. Pray for this grace. Anticipate how you can activate this gift in your life.

#### 4) Knowledge

Do you study the Bible? Do you study the Catechism? Do you thirst for sound doctrine? Knowledge indicates a deeper penetration of revealed truths. Pray for this grace. Anticipate ways that this can nourish your mind.

### 5) Fortitude

What are your fears? Are you afraid of death? Fortitude is a gift whereby one overcomes the natural fear of death and other fears associated with it. Pray for this grace. Anticipate how your life might be different if you were not afraid.

### 6) Piety

Are you reverent around sacred things and places? Do you have a reverence for the more intimate parts of your relationships, such as intimacy with your spouse? Do you treat the sacred as special? The gift of piety instills in us a sense of reverence for sacred things and attentiveness to the sacred. Pray for this grace. Anticipate how you can cultivate it in your family and in your life.

### 7) Fear of the Lord

Are you ever amazed by the grandeur of God? Do you feel wonder and awe at spiritual realities and allow yourself to savor that profound sense of mystery? The fear of the Lord is a gift whereby one experiences the mystery of God's glory. Pray for this grace. Desire that the Lord will show you his glory.

Extracted from CatholicLink: <http://catholic-link.org/2017/06/02/holy-spirit-transform-gospel-reflection-acts21-11/>