3 great spring feasts

Pentecost: The Coming of the Holy Spirit

On May 19 we celebrate Pentecost, the day the Holy Spirit descended on Mary and the apostles, empowering them to boldly preach the Gospel message.

The word Pentecost means “fiftieth.” In the Jewish calendar, it referred to the fiftieth day after Passover and commemorated the giving of the law to Moses on Mount Sinai. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit bestowed the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. We receive these same seven gifts at our confirmation.

Rejoice and Celebrate the Coming of the Holy Spirit

- Wear “fire colors” to Mass – red, orange, yellow and fuchsia.
- Decorate cupcakes with red frosting to symbolize the tongues of fire that descended on the apostles.
- Put trick candles that won’t blow out on your cupcakes. Explain that just as the candles can’t be extinguished; neither can the presence of the Holy Spirit.
- Cut out red and white streamers and place them outside in the breeze as a symbol of the coming of the Spirit as a wind.

Trinity Sunday: Three Persons in One God

The first Sunday after Pentecost is Trinity Sunday. Celebrated this year on May 26, it honors the Triune God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Although the Church baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit from the very beginning, a universally celebrated feast day for the Trinity for the

entire Church wasn’t established until 1334. The liturgical color for the feast is white.

Rejoice and Celebrate the Trinity

- Go on a “three-hunt.” Look for everything you can find that comes in threes, such as plant leaves, movie trilogies, book series, names, etc.
- Pick a clover or get a shamrock from a florist and tell the story of how St. Patrick converted the Irish by explaining that just as there are three petals on one leaf, so there are three divine persons but only one God.
- Cut out equilateral triangles and use them to make colorful place mats. The triangle shows the equality of the three persons of the Trinity.

Corpus Christi: The Body of Christ

The traditional day of celebrating this feast is the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, but many dioceses move it to the following Sunday. St. Juliana of Liège, a 13th-century nun, had a special devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Through her efforts, Corpus Christi started in her diocese and eventually spread throughout the Church. It is customary to have a procession of the Blessed Sacrament, followed by Benediction, on this day.

Rejoice and Celebrate the Body and Blood of Christ

- If your parish offers Benediction after Mass, be sure to attend.
- Hang a crucifix in your home if you don’t already have one.
- At 5 p.m. Rome time, the pope presides over an hour of Eucharistic Adoration in St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican. Join him and the entire world for prayer.

- Watch Corpus Christi processions around the world on www.youtube.com.