***Pentecost Vigil Moments***

*A Spirit-Filled Alternative for Opening Prayer at any Gathering*(Let’s make room for the Holy Spirit!)

**What is *a “Pentecost Vigil Moment?”***   
A “vigil” is a time of prayerful waiting. A religious novice in a monastery spends a night in prayerful vigil before proclaiming his/her vows. A medieval squire would spend a night in prayerful vigil before becoming a knight. Each year at the Easter Vigil, the Church prayerfully awaits Jesus’ Resurrection.

We all know the story of Pentecost found in Acts. But we often forget the important event that took place during the 9 days before Pentecost... The disciples of the risen Jesus spent 9 days in prayerful vigil, awaiting the coming of the Holy Spirit. These 9 days became the very first Novena, or Pentecost Vigil Event!

Imagine... Women, men and young people, laborers, theologians, and mothers… all intentional disciples of the risen Jesus, gathered to share their faith experiences, listen, and pray for guidance and inspiration!

A *Pentecost Vigil Moment* is a simple (and shorter) experience that invites today’s disciples to take a few minutes to open our minds and hearts to the guidance of the Holy Spirit within ourselves, and to open our eyes and ears to the Voice of the Holy Spirit within those gathering with us.

**We are called to be a “Listening Church”**  
This ancient practice of respectful, prayerful listening was encouraged by St. Benedict in the late 400’s. Pope Francis renewed the tradition during his preparations for the 2023 Synod on Synodality. The process is based on our belief that the Holy Spirit speaks to all God’s People. We can only discern God’s plans and direction by calling upon the Holy Spirit, and prayerfully listening to each other, especially those on the margins.

**How to use Pentecost Vigil Moments for Opening Prayer**The model on the next page is designed to be used as a powerful alternative to any group’s opening prayer.  
The goal is to create an opportunity for participants to renew their faith priorities and be spiritually fed before focusing on the tasks or agenda of the day. It essentially creates room for the Holy Spirit to join the gathering.

**First, try this sample prayer moment**

Use the image below and follow the steps on page 2.The title of the image is “A Pentecost Vigil Moment.”

**Next: adapt the model for future opening prayer opportunities**Adapt the model by simply changing the “Prayerful Ponderings.” If your participants liked reflecting on the Pentecost image, try using a meaningful image associated with your parish or gathering, or a photo of a real-life situation in your community. Try a piece of music instead of an image. Or just have a bit of scripture and a reflection question (limit to 3 items). The goal is to create room for the Holy Spirit to renew faith priorities, spark personal inspirations and to re-establish the art of respectful, prayerful listening.

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| ***Pentecost Vigil Moments***  *A Spirit-Filled option for Opening Prayer  at any Meeting or Gathering* (Let’s make room for the Holy Spirit!) | **A picture containing text, van  Description automatically generated** |

**Part One: Synodal-style Prayerful Listening - Our Personal Experience**Leave an empty chair or space for the Holy Spirit!

***Step 1: Pray for the Holy Spirit’s guidance***(As you pray, sign your ears, forehead, lips, and heart in the manner of the signing before the Gospel at Mass)   
**Come, Holy Spirit and fill our hearts with the fire of your Love.   
Open our Ears that we may Listen (+), our Minds that we may Learn (+),   
our Mouths that we may Speak with prudence (+),   
and our Hearts (+) that we may Love each other as Christ Loves Us. Amen.  
  
*Step 2: 2 Minutes of Silence:*** Quietly reflect on the “Prayerful Ponderings” below...

* What is my personal experience of this? (or lack) Reflect and write in silence.
* Identify 1 personal insight. Avoid second-hand information, social media info, etc.

**Prayerful Ponderings:**

* **Prayerfully become present to the Pentecost image and allow it to speak to your heart.**
* **“You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses...  
   to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)**
* **“The Holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—will teach you everything and remind you of all that [I] told you.” (John 14:26)**

***Step 3: Share and Listen*** Each person speaks for one minute (use a timer)

* Share 1 personal insight from your prayer. (Others listen with open hearts and without comment.)

**Part Two: Synodal-style Reflection - Connecting Our Story to the Church’s Story**

***Step 1: Pray for the Holy Spirit’s guidance:*** Again, pray the Holy Spirit prayer together

Diagram

Description automatically generated with medium confidence ***Step 2: Silent Reflection, Listen to the Spirit*** One more minute of silent reflection

* + How has another person’s insight influenced my own experience? Reflect in silence.
  + Is the Spirit calling me to new paths? Is the Spirit calling this faith community to new paths?

***Step 3: Share and Listen*** Each person speaks for an additional one minute.

* + How has another person’s insight influenced me? (Show that you have listened deeply)
  + Is the Spirit calling me to new paths? Is the Spirit calling this faith community to new paths?

**Closing Prayer** (pause at the end of each sentence)  
**+ Breathe into us, Holy Spirit, that our thoughts may all be holy.   
Move in us Holy Spirit, that our work, too may be holy.   
Attract our hearts, Holy Spirit, that we may love only what is holy.   
Strengthen us Holy Spirit, that we may defend all that is holy.   
Protect us, Holy Spirit, that we may always be holy. Amen. +** (Adapted from St. Augustine)