

Hope: the Spirit of Pentecost

Suggested prayer format (15-20 minutes)

1. access the 'Hope' Resource (www.kildareministires.org.au >about us>vision & mission>hope) via personal device, or if possible on the screen at the meeting
2. turn to recommended slide
3. either one person read for group, or group read in silence as preferred
4. following some quiet reflection time, encourage group members to respond to reflection material – questions provided to assist
5. final prayer to close

The weeks following Pentecost are known as 'Ordinary Time' in the season of the Church. The term 'Ordinary' from 'ordinal' refers to the pattern of numbering the weeks between Easter and Advent, but the word 'ordinary' also invites us to consider how the spirit of the risen Jesus encountered at Pentecost fills our days. In these weeks following the Easter Season we are encouraged to reflect on how our 'ordinary days' are imbued with hope through encounters with the love of God – transforming our ordinary into extraordinary.

Our Celtic heritage provides us with a rich example of the capacity to see God's presence in all that surrounds us. Turn to Slide 6 of the *Hope* Resource and click on the box 'God-intoxicated people'



The God who made the world and everything in it... does not live in shrines made by human hands...

God-intoxicated people

Celtic scholar Professor John Macquarrie used the term 'God-intoxicated' to describe the Celtic people and their way of seeing life, embraced on all sides by divine Spirit. This view of the world was nonetheless mediated through a finite, this-worldly reality, hence we see in the Celtic life a purposeful search for an understanding of one's place in the world, a place integrated within a community of people and with all other aspects of nature.

There is much in this spirituality to resonate with the Christian view of the world. In Acts 17:24-28 Paul addresses the Athenians thus, "**The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands,**²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things ... indeed he is not far from each one of us.

²⁶For "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your own poets have said"

(in reference to the pagan poet Epimenides).

Indeed the Catholic tradition has been enhanced through the preservation of certain elements of the tradition and by allowing fresh insights to grow and newly emerge.

"While the interpretation of the forces of nature as living and acting personally may be an imaginative and poetic projection of the mind, the actual power of nature is real. The storm is real, the power of the land to produce vegetation and crops is real, the power of humans and animals and birds to reproduce themselves is real, along with thousands of other mysterious activities of the elements."

(see Seán Ó Duinn, 'Where Three Streams Meet')

Some questions to guide reflection and conversation...

- ❖ take a moment to reflect silently on encounters of love in your ordinary days
- ❖ consider our ministries... where might our students, clients, staff, families have these opportunities in their ordinary encounters with us?
- ❖ in this time of church in transition can we find new and creative ways for our communities to encounter the love of God in the ordinary?

A blessing for Pentecost

May the enthusiasm of Spirit leap incessantly within you and help you to live a vibrant life.

May the warmth of Spirit's fire be extended through your concern and care for all those who need your love.

May the blaze of Spirit's courage enable you to speak the truth and to stand up for respect, dignity, and justice.

May the undying embers of Spirit's faithfulness support you when you feel spiritually dry and empty.

May the strength of Spirit's love sustain your hope as you enter into the pain of our world.

May the clear light of Spirit's guidance be a source of effective discernment and decision-making for you.

May Spirit's patient endurance be yours while you wait for what is unknown to be revealed.

May the steady flame of Spirit's goodness within you convince you every day of the power of your presence with others.

May the joyful fire of Spirit dance within you and set happiness ablaze in your life.

May the spark of your relationship with Spirit catch afire in the hearts of those with whom you live and work.

May you be mindful of the Eternal Flame within you. May you rely on this Source of Love to be your constant ally and steady guide.

-Joyce Rupp

