



*Small Group Newsletter*  
*St. Mary of the Visitation Parish*  
*Cambridge, (H) ONT.*



**PENTECOST SUNDAY**  
**May 20, 2018**

**Introduction to the Word:**

Life has some real moments of challenge and decision. Sometimes shifting your perspective during some of life's most defining moments can make the difference - those moments can be real Game Changers.

**Warm-up Activity:** (5-10 minutes)

The feast of Pentecost celebrates the unseen, immeasurable presence of God in our personal lives, in our gathering as community, in all our relationships, in our Church, in the Eucharist, and in our world. If you had to explain the role of the Holy Spirit in your life – how would you?

**Let us pray together our Heart to Home Prayer:**

*God Our Heavenly Father, we long to make our thoughts your thoughts,  
and our ways your ways. As we prepare with attentive mind and open heart  
to hear your Word Lord, we long to be empowered with your Spirit  
so that we may bring your Word to our families, our parish and our communities.  
This, our prayer, we make through the intercession of Our Lady of the Visitation and in name of  
Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

**GOSPEL** (John 20.19-23)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

It was evening on the day Jesus rose from the dead, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**[Listen to the Message](#)**



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**Reflection:**

John's Gospel portrays Jesus bestowing the Spirit on His disciples. As the fearful disciples were huddled together for mutual protection, Jesus became present among them, blessed them with His peace, and breathed His own Spirit on them, empowering them for the ministry of reconciliation. Just as Jesus had offered peace to His failed disciples, they were commissioned to do the same for others, freeing them from being defined by a sinful past so that they could enjoy peace with God.

After Pentecost, the disciples "got it". They were different...bold instead of timid, enthused instead of fearful, fascinated instead of depressed. They were commissioned to go out to those whose closed minds or systems impede the spread of God's peace in the universe. The ones whose sins are retained are those who are closed in on themselves. In the words of Pope Francis, "*Their hearts are open only to the limited horizon of their own immanence and interests, and as a consequence they neither learn from their sins nor are they genuinely open to forgiveness*" (*Joy of the Gospel*).

Pentecost was a real Game Changer for the disciples – The previously terrified disciples were all filled with the dynamic power of God—the power that refreshes and re-creates, that comforts and heals. Now *this is our day*. We now have a chance to show others that "the Lord Jesus is risen indeed!" It changed what they were about and the direction of their lives and it can for us too – we too can have game changing moments.

Over the next few weeks in our new message series we will look and examine how these moments do in fact change our purpose, our plans and our priorities. We begin with this Sunday and in our readings see the three signals of a Game Changer on the horizon (listen to the message for them in detail) but they are: Openness to The Breath of God, Being Lead by God and Speaking the Truth of God. When we look for these in our life then we have the traits of being a Game Changer and we are well on our way to receive the Graces of a new Pentecost. May that be our common prayer!

**Questions for Discussion:** (15-20 minutes)

- ✓ What small acts of love can you extend to someone to help them see the Spirit at work in you?
- ✓ What trait of being a Game Changer do you want to cultivate? Try to spend a few minutes at the end of each day to see how well you've done.

[Watch this Video by Jeff Cavins](#)

- ✓ Discuss together the video, how can you as a group be part of God's plan and be game changers?

**Moving Forward in Prayer** (15-20 minutes)

*This time is reserved for quiet prayer as well as for an action-response to the communal reflections. You may wish to create and add petitions of prayer at this time. It is also intended to provide moments to "outreach" to the community.*

- Our [Neighbourhood](#) Ministry is looking for ways to reach out to people in need in our parish – can your Small Group help? How about choosing as a group to be part of "Provide a Meal" ?
- Service Saturday is May 26<sup>th</sup> – can your Small Group participate? How will you?

Leader: **Let us seek the intercession of the Patroness of our Parish as we pray: Hail Mary**