Stewardship link

Gratitude for gifts is not simply a matter of saying 'thank you'; the gift must be nurtured and allowed to bear fruit – often in unexpected ways.

To do

Each gift that we receive must be received with gratitude, nurtured and allowed to bear fruit. Gifts from God come in many, and often unexpected forms. Fruits also come in many and unexpected guises. Our call as Christians is to bear this fruit in the world.

Very often we look for fruits and gifts in the obvious places of parish life - but God calls us to use our gifts primarily outside the visible structures of the Church. It is in our homes, workplaces, friendships, the marketplace or wherever we find ourselves that we are called to bear fruit.

Spend some time thinking and praying about the gifts and fruits that you have received. How can you express these practically in an area of your daily life? This may be a time when you need to seek the gifts of others by taking advice. Try to commit to something that will give glory to God and demonstrate in its fruitfulness that you love Him.

Take some time to note your responses in your notebook. You may wish to spend some time reviewing the entries in your notebook as you have journeyed through Lent and Eastertime. What insights do you want to remember?

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Diocese of Portsmouth

Stewardship Reflection

Pentecost Year C

'If you love me
you will keep my commandments.'

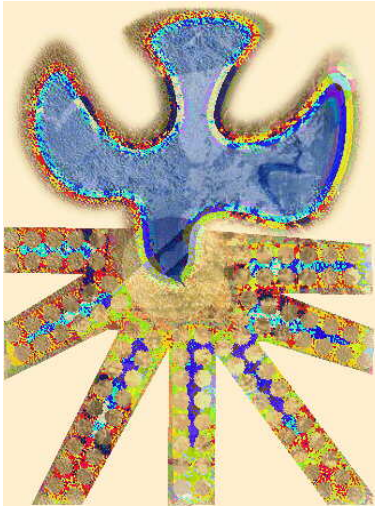
(John 14:15))

Opening prayer

Leader:
Let us pray
that the Spirit will work through our lives
to bring Christ to the world.

Response:
God our Father,
let the Spirit you sent on your Church
to begin the teaching of the gospel
continue to work in the world
through the hearts of all who
believe.

(Opening Prayer for Pentecost)



To share

What insights have you had in the last week? Is there something in your notebook that you would like to share with others in the group?

To listen

John 14:15-16, 23-26

To think about

Pentecost is a time in the Church's year when we focus on the idea of gifts. Unlike Christmas or birthdays, though, we are not thinking of things wrapped in attractive paper but something more lasting.

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are:
wisdom understanding counsel fortitude knowledge piety fear of the Lord.

Each is a grace from God to help us follow Christ to the Father. And yet, whilst Jesus talks of gifts in the readings for Pentecost, he also emphasises that our love for Him will be shown by how our lives bear fruits.

There are twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit:

charity	joy	peace	patience
kindness	goodness	generosity	gentleness
faithfulness	modesty	self-control	chastity.

Christ sends the Holy Spirit to bring us great gifts that we are called to receive with gratitude. These gifts are unconditional but are sent with a purpose. They are not given so that we may simply be comforted and strengthened, but that we might go out and bear fruit.

To reflect on

Choose one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and take some time to reflect on its meaning and experience in your own life.

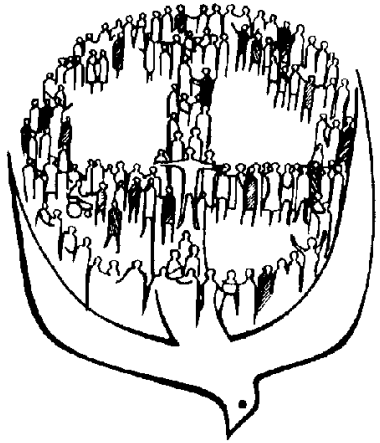
Next, choose one of the fruits. How are you aware of this fruit in your life?

To discuss

What do you understand by the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit?

Pentecost celebrates the mystery of the Holy Spirit dwelling within you. How does that feel?

How do others know, from the way you live, that the Holy Spirit is within you and amongst us as a group?



Have you experienced new gifts from being part of this group? What are they?

Have you changed through being part of this group?

How might you continue to live that change in the coming weeks?

Closing prayer

Leader: This day the Father of light
has enlightened the minds of the disciples
by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

All **May he bless us**
and give us the gifts of the Spirit for ever.

Leader God inspired speech in different tongues
to proclaim one faith.

All **May he strengthen our faith**
and fulfil our hope to see him face to face.

(Adapted from the Solemn Blessing for Pentecost)