

Lutheran Episcopal Advocacy Ministry of New Jersey
Weekly Witness | May 30, 2017

Following a baptism, the following prayer is offered from the Book of Common Prayer (page 308):

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage and will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. Amen.

We hear that the Holy Spirit has been given to us and to our community. And the Spirit gives us a multitude of gifts: inquiry, discernment, courage, and perseverance; a spirit of love for God and for the world; and joy and wonder in all that God has made. God gives these gifts through the Holy Spirit who is already at work in the community of faith through our faith and actions. What a gift to treasure and a message to share!

To explore with joy and wonder all that God has made in the night sky might require a telescope. Almost all telescopes use reflectors to study the heavens. Reflecting telescopes improve image quality because curved mirrors magnify images and focus light, aiding in our ability to see objects that are otherwise beyond our notice. On Pentecost we are reminded that we not only view images, but with the Holy Spirit we are the mirror itself for the world.

Filled with God's grace, the Holy Spirit sends us into the world to mirror God's love for the world. As baptized children of God, we see the world not through an internal orientation of self, but for the other. When we turn our thoughts outward we see the need to advocate for foreign assistance in places throughout the world.

With 30 million people in Africa and the Middle East facing starvation, 50 million in need of immediate food assistance, and more than 65 million displaced, the administration's proposal to cut a third of the foreign assistance budget comes at a time when the need for it could not be greater. Foreign assistance funds provide life-saving health, economic, education, and food assistance to the most marginalized people in developing countries, and help prevent conflict and spread of deadly pandemics. If enacted, the proposed cuts will have devastating consequences on the most vulnerable populations around the world.

Call or email Senators Cory Booker and Bob Menendez and share with them that our baptismal blessings call us to advocate for a world where all God's people are fed. Click on their names to reach [Sen. Robert Menendez](#) and [Sen. Cory Booker](#).