

- This weekend we remember the day of Pentecost—often called the “birthday of the Church” because the Holy Spirit’s descent upon, and energizing of, the apostles to understand the teaching of Jesus and to go out to preach the Gospel of Christ to the world.
- Yes, the descent of the Holy Spirit was an actual event.
- Luke—who wrote the Acts of the Apostles—no doubt heard the story from the Apostles themselves—these same apostles who were persecuted to their deaths for preaching the Gospel of Christ.
- The apostles went from hiding for their lives before Pentecost to openly and boldly preaching Christ directly afterward...for the rest of their lives...their only care being that Jesus was preached throughout the world.
- And it is a fact of history that within a few decades, Christianity is spreading like wildfire throughout the Roman Empire and the known world at the time.
- For the naysayers...that’s rather unlikely for a bunch of uneducated fishermen and workmen...spreading the teaching of an uneducated carpenter from a podunk town in Israel, don’t you think?
- But, of course...we know Jesus was much more than that.

- To do a “180”—going from cowardly fear to going out and preaching fearlessly in a moment—does not make any sense... unless some life-changing event occurred—in their case, the Holy Spirit descending upon them to give them that faith and courage.
- ...because they didn’t go out to applause and love and wealth and fame. They went out and were assaulted, thrown into prison, beaten, whipped, cursed...and finally martyred.

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- I wouldn't do that for a lie...would you? But they went to their death freely, knowing they were serving Him who is truly God.
- Paul wrote: *"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."* (Romans 8:18 RSV)...and, we can add by gleaning from the rest of the New Testament, that the difficulties of this age are not worth comparing to the joy that is promised to Christ's disciples.

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- Now we recognize you graduates today as you prepare to step out of the shelter and protection of your childhood and youth towards the adult world.
 - There are so many things that each of the adults here would want to tell you—warnings of dangers, exhortations to industriousness and thriftiness, honesty and living in such a way so as to be able to hold your head high in the knowledge of having done the right.
 - And the core and kernel of doing the right always begins with the teaching of Christ and His Church.
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 - We live in what is largely a post-Christian world, but that in no way negates the truth of God and the reality of God.
 - So, as you go forth in the world, there will be many who will try to persuade to ways against God...toward selfishness and self-absorption...denying God.
 - "Oh, you simplistic naïve fool," some may say. "Oh, you're just unthinking...following the herd", others may say. "You cannot see, measure or quantify God; therefore He cannot exist. Science must be our god!" others will tell you.
 - And yet...how those people rarely, if ever, even give cursory exploration for the reasons of our realization of the truth of God.

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- I could exhort you to many things...warn you of many things...as you step out into the world...

- ...but all of the things I would tell you in one way or another come from the teaching of Christ—given to us in the scriptures and through the clarity of the teaching of His Church—our Catholic Church and our Catholic faith.
- So many people come to me for advice about solving some bad situation or unhappiness...and all of their sorrows stem from the fact that they or someone around them has departed from God's teaching in one way or another.
- What Christ has taught IS what is right and good...and thus it IS what leads to true and lasting happiness. Happiness cannot be had away from the principles and direction that He has given to us.
- God wants only our good...and so what He teaches is what is for our good...regardless of what society's whims are at the moment.
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- We have been sealed with that same Spirit which came down upon the apostles 2000 years ago...the same Holy Spirit who moved across the waters at Creation, who parted the Red Sea, who etched the 10 commandments upon stone tablets...who touched our Blessed Mother's womb to conceive Jesus...this very same Spirit touches us at baptism and confirmation and marks us with that seal of God.
- This is the same Holy Spirit who inspired martyrs to give their lives for the faith, who spurred people on to begin the first hospitals and universities, to feed millions, and to go on mission journeys to new and unknown lands.
- With the seal of the Holy Spirit comes the assignment of a mission—to love God and neighbor above all...and so to seek the unity of humanity through charity and love through Christ...reflecting the love of God for Mankind.
- Whatever else we do in life, if we have failed to love God in following His way, and/or failed to love our neighbor, we have failed in life...for we are not given the gift of life for selfishness and self-absorption, but rather to live in God's love, and to spread

that love to those around us...to be the light to the world that Jesus calls us to be.

- Yes, we have to live in the world...but what is worldly success, money, fame, and power...all very temporary things which we cannot but lose at our death...without that relationship to Almighty God, which lasts forever?
- Better to be a lowly workman with God than a king without Him. Better St. Joseph than King Herod.
- Don't be so foolish as to choose the finite apparent good over what is the true and infinite good.
- For happiness, you must continue to move forward from childish propensity toward the material and physical, to the maturity and permanence of the spiritual.
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- So, my exhortation to you today is simply this: follow the way of God with all your heart. That is what is good. That, and only that, will bring you true happiness.
- Some of you will ignore what I have told you, because the lure of the things of the world which are not of God is very strong.
- But in the inevitable difficulties, trials and sorrows that come your way in life...and when you begin to despair and all seems lost... know that God is here to receive you back home.
- And may He be with you and bless you all the days of your lives.

Pentecost Sunday (At the Vigil Mass)

Reading 1

[Gn 11:1-9](#) or [Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b](#) or [Ez 37:1-14](#) or [Jl 3:1-5](#)

The whole world spoke the same language, using the same words.
While the people were migrating in the east,
they came upon a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there.
They said to one another,
"Come, let us mold bricks and harden them with fire."
They used bricks for stone, and bitumen for mortar.
Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city
and a tower with its top in the sky,
and so make a name for ourselves;
otherwise we shall be scattered all over the earth."

The LORD came down to see the city and the tower
that the people had built.
Then the LORD said: "If now, while they are one people,
all speaking the same language,
they have started to do this,
nothing will later stop them from doing whatever they presume to do.
Let us then go down there and confuse their language,
so that one will not understand what another says."
Thus the LORD scattered them from there all over the earth,
and they stopped building the city.
That is why it was called Babel,
because there the LORD confused the speech of all the world.
It was from that place that he scattered them all over the earth.

or

Ex 19:3-8a, 16-20b

Moses went up the mountain to God.
Then the LORD called to him and said,
"Thus shall you say to the house of Jacob;

tell the Israelites:

You have seen for yourselves how I treated the Egyptians
and how I bore you up on eagle wings
and brought you here to myself.
Therefore, if you hearken to my voice and keep my covenant,
you shall be my special possession,
dearer to me than all other people,
though all the earth is mine.

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You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.
That is what you must tell the Israelites."
So Moses went and summoned the elders of the people.
When he set before them
all that the LORD had ordered him to tell them,
the people all answered together,
"Everything the LORD has said, we will do."
On the morning of the third day
there were peals of thunder and lightning,
and a heavy cloud over the mountain,
and a very loud trumpet blast,
so that all the people in the camp trembled.
But Moses led the people out of the camp to meet God,
and they stationed themselves at the foot of the mountain.
Mount Sinai was all wrapped in smoke,
for the LORD came down upon it in fire.
The smoke rose from it as though from a furnace,
and the whole mountain trembled violently.
The trumpet blast grew louder and louder, while Moses was speaking,
and God answering him with thunder.

When the LORD came down to the top of Mount Sinai,
he summoned Moses to the top of the mountain.

or

Ez 37:1-14

The hand of the LORD came upon me,
and he led me out in the spirit of the LORD
and set me in the center of the plain,
which was now filled with bones.
He made me walk among the bones in every direction
so that I saw how many they were on the surface of the plain.
How dry they were!
He asked me:

Son of man, can these bones come to life?
I answered, "Lord GOD, you alone know that."
Then he said to me:
Prophesy over these bones, and say to them:
Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!
Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones:
See! I will bring spirit into you, that you may come to life.
I will put sinews upon you, make flesh grow over you,
cover you with skin, and put spirit in you

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so that you may come to life and know that I am the LORD.
I, Ezekiel, prophesied as I had been told,
and even as I was prophesying I heard a noise;
it was a rattling as the bones came together, bone joining bone.
I saw the sinews and the flesh come upon them,
and the skin cover them, but there was no spirit in them.
Then the LORD said to me:
Prophesy to the spirit, prophesy, son of man,
and say to the spirit: Thus says the Lord GOD:
From the four winds come, O spirit,
and breathe into these slain that they may come to life.
I prophesied as he told me, and the spirit came into them;
they came alive and stood upright, a vast army.
Then he said to me:
Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel.
They have been saying,
"Our bones are dried up,
our hope is lost, and we are cut off."
Therefore, prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD:
O my people, I will open your graves
and have you rise from them,
and bring you back to the land of Israel.
Then you shall know that I am the LORD,
when I open your graves and have you rise from them,
O my people!
I will put my spirit in you that you may live,
and I will settle you upon your land;
thus you shall know that I am the LORD.
I have promised, and I will do it, says the LORD.

or

Jl 3:1-5

Thus says the LORD:
I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.
Your sons and daughters shall prophesy,

your old men shall dream dreams,
your young men shall see visions;
even upon the servants and the handmaids,
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.
And I will work wonders in the heavens and on the earth,
blood, fire, and columns of smoke;
the sun will be turned to darkness,
and the moon to blood,

at the coming of the day of the LORD,
the great and terrible day.
Then everyone shall be rescued
who calls on the name of the LORD;
for on Mount Zion there shall be a remnant,
as the LORD has said,
and in Jerusalem survivors
whom the LORD shall call.

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 104:1-2, 24, 35, 27-28, 29, 30](#)

R. (cf. 30) **Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Bless the LORD, O my soul!
O LORD, my God, you are great indeed!
You are clothed with majesty and glory,
robed in light as with a cloak.

R. **Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

How manifold are your works, O LORD!
In wisdom you have wrought them all
the earth is full of your creatures;
bless the LORD, O my soul! Alleluia.

R. **Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Creatures all look to you
to give them food in due time.
When you give it to them, they gather it;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.

R. **Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

If you take away their breath, they perish
and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.

R. **Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.**

or:

R. **Alleluia.**

Reading II

[Rom 8:22-27](#)

Brothers and sisters:

We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now;
and not only that, but we ourselves,
who have the firstfruits of the Spirit,
we also groan within ourselves
as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

For in hope we were saved.

Now hope that sees is not hope.

For who hopes for what one sees?

But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait with endurance.

In the same way, the Spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness;
for we do not know how to pray as we ought,
but the Spirit himself intercedes with inexpressible groanings.

And the one who searches hearts
knows what is the intention of the Spirit,
because he intercedes for the holy ones
according to God's will.

Gospel

[Jn 7:37-39](#)

On the last and greatest day of the feast,
Jesus stood up and exclaimed,
"Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink.

As Scripture says:

Rivers of living water will flow from within him who believes in me."

He said this in reference to the Spirit
that those who came to believe in him were to receive.

There was, of course, no Spirit yet,
because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Pentecost Sunday (Mass during the Day)

Reading 1

[Acts 2:1-11](#)

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled,
they were all in one place together.
And suddenly there came from the sky
a noise like a strong driving wind,
and it filled the entire house in which they were.
Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire,
which parted and came to rest on each one of them.
And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit
and began to speak in different tongues,
as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem.
At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd,
but they were confused
because each one heard them speaking in his own language.
They were astounded, and in amazement they asked,
"Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans?
Then how does each of us hear them in his native language?
We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites,
inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia,
Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia,
Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene,
as well as travelers from Rome,
both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs,
yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues
of the mighty acts of God."

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34](#)

R. (cf. 30) Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Bless the LORD, O my soul!

O LORD, my God, you are great indeed!

How manifold are your works, O Lord!

the earth is full of your creatures;

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

or:

R. Alleluia.

May the glory of the LORD endure forever;
may the LORD be glad in his works!
Pleasing to him be my theme;
I will be glad in the LORD.

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

or:

R. Alleluia.

If you take away their breath, they perish
and return to their dust.

When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

or:

R. Alleluia.

Reading II

[1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13](#) or [Gal 5:16-25](#)

1 Cor 12:3b-7, 12-13

Brothers and sisters:

No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;

there are different forms of service but the same Lord;

there are different workings but the same God

who produces all of them in everyone.

To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit
is given for some benefit.

As a body is one though it has many parts,
and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body,
so also Christ.

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body,

whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons,

and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

or

Gal 5:16-25

Brothers and sisters, live by the Spirit

and you will certainly not gratify the desire of the flesh.

For the flesh has desires against the Spirit,

and the Spirit against the flesh;

these are opposed to each other,

so that you may not do what you want.

But if you are guided by the Spirit, you are not under the law.
Now the works of the flesh are obvious:
immorality, impurity, lust, idolatry,
sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy,
outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness,
dissensions, factions, occasions of envy,
drinking bouts, orgies, and the like.
I warn you, as I warned you before,
that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.
In contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness, generosity,
faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.
Against such there is no law.
Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified their flesh
with its passions and desires.
If we live in the Spirit, let us also follow the Spirit.

Gospel

[Jn 20:19-23](#) or [Jn 15:26-27; 16:12-15](#)

Jn 20:19-23

On the evening of that first day of the week,
when the doors were locked, where the disciples were,
for fear of the Jews,
Jesus came and stood in their midst
and said to them, "Peace be with you."
When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side.
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."
And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them,
"Receive the Holy Spirit.
Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them,
and whose sins you retain are retained."

or

Jn 15:26-27; 16:12-15

Jesus said to his disciples:
"When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father,
the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father,
he will testify to me.

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And you also testify,
because you have been with me from the beginning.

"I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now.
But when he comes, the Spirit of truth,
he will guide you to all truth.
He will not speak on his own,
but he will speak what he hears,
and will declare to you the things that are coming.
He will glorify me,
because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you.
Everything that the Father has is mine;
for this reason I told you that he will take from what is mine
and declare it to you."