

Deacon Mark Gannaway

Acts 2:1-11

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

Jn 20:19-23

May 24, 2026

Pentecost Sunday

What a way to end the Easter Season? Last week The Ascension of the Lord, Pentecost this weekend, The Most Holy Trinity next, and then followed by The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, what we used to call The Feast of Corpus Christi.

During this time, the Church is reminding us of the sacramental life of the Church, that it is all about this physical and spiritual contact with God our Father through his Son Jesus Christ. Seeking true harmony with Him and our Neighbor. Harmony between our human and divine natures. To do the will of God with Jesus as our perfect bridge between us and our Father.

These celebrations remind us that our Faith is much more than just external works but about the interior being, conversion of our hearts which we see in Christ's sufferings on the Cross and when we truly engage ourselves in the Mass. Pentecost was one of the three great Jewish feasts for which many Israelites went on pilgrimage to the Holy City to worship God in the temple. It was held 50 days after the Passover Feast and originated as a harvest thanksgiving, the offering of first fruits, then they added when Moses received the Law from God. Pentecost is not the initial coming of the Holy Spirit, it did not come into existence at that time. We have examples of this in Sacred Scripture: Peter mentioning before the Sanhedrin in Acts 1:16 "My brothers, the scripture had to be fulfilled which the

Holy Spirit spoke beforehand through the mouth of David." (P) In the Old Testament, you see the Holy Spirit especially in Genesis, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and The Psalms. And as believers of the Holy Trinity, we know God the Father, Jesus his only Begotten Son and the Holy Spirit, were together when all of this was created.

The Second Vatican Council wrote—"Without a doubt, the Holy Spirit was at work in the world before Christ was glorified. On the day of Pentecost, however, he came down on the disciples that he might remain with them forever; on that day, the church was openly displayed to the crowds and the spread of the Gospel among the nations."

Pentecost is an incredibly special event in which the Holy Spirit became a dominant reality in the life of the Church. The source of all gifts from the Father.

I love what St. Cyril of Jerusalem wrote about the Holy Spirit - "the Spirit comes gently and makes himself known by his fragrance. He is not felt as a burden, for he is light, very light. Rays of light and knowledge stream before him as he approaches. The Spirit comes with the tenderness of a true friend and protector to save, to heal, to teach, to counsel, to strengthen, to console. The Spirit comes to enlighten the mind first of the one who receives him, and then, through him, the minds of others as well."

The Holy Spirit prepares us with his grace to draw us to Christ. Not a burden, a gift

as St. Cyril wrote. He opens our minds to who we are and why we were created. Giving us the greatest gifts – purpose, hope, joy, truth and most especially Love. Divine love from our merciful Father, to understand fully the love of His Son Jesus Christ, and to enrich our heart to serve our neighbor.

In our Gospel reading, we have this incredible scene of Jesus and his Disciples in the Locked Upper Room. If you want a splendid example of how deep Sacred Scripture importance is to each of us, here it is! Many of us have heard or read these Sacred Scripture verses hundreds of times and it just never gets old, because God's word continues to feed us whenever we read it. We see Jesus establish "I am God!" to all those people in the room. "I am He! "I am divine, nothing can stop me, I just walked through this locked door flesh and all. And then he settles everyone down, "Peace be with you!" The Eastern greeting meaning "May God give you every good thing." And here is the best good thing you can receive. He reassures them who he is, showing his wounds to his hands and side.

Then Jesus reminds them "it was not you who chose me, but I who chose you!" Jesus does not suggest or propose that we bear fruit, he "appoints" us to do so. This is Him reminding them of His mission and their Mission, which is continuing His mission! Bringing the World to God. The commission which the Church, which is us, must never forget.

Then the next step, "Receive the Holy Spirit." This scene reminiscent of Genesis 2:7 when God breathe life into Adam. And just like Adam, this new spiritual life is blown into his disciples but this time by Jesus. We are witnessing this outpouring

of the Holy Spirit post resurrection. We see the transformation of the disciples from fear to empowerment. He moves them to be bold and courageous while at the same time cleansing the soul of any trace of sin.

Apostles means "those sent!" We are the present-day Apostles for Jesus Christ and His Church.

Think about it, God has given each one of us the power of giving men and women a new life in God the Father. What a responsibility, one we cannot decline or reject if we want to experience eternal glory. We are not here to judge or condemn, but to go forth to proclaim his peace, his joy. To preach the Good News which includes telling the true story of Jesus Christ. The whole story. Many of these feel-good churches are struggling now because they do not tell the whole story. But people want to understand the whole story. That is why they are coming back to the faith and the Truth. That there is suffering in this life. That there are difficulties being Christian. We witness it in Sacred Scripture and on the Cross. **But we have a Happy Ending!**

So right now, this is the Upper Room, we are all in one place together as they were, preparing ourselves to receive Jesus Christ. We are in the presence of the Holy Spirit right now. The Holy Spirit resting on all of us at this very moment.

So, I ask all of us, are we ready to receive Jesus' as they were?