

Pentecost Sunday Lord C2025

We celebrate today the feast of Pentecost. In the Jewish tradition, this feast was celebrated fifty days after the feast of Passover. If Passover was the commemoration of the liberation from Egypt, Pentecost was the celebration of the giving of the Law to Moses on Mount Sinai. In popular imagination, the giving of the law was seen as the juridical foundation of Israel as a nation under God's guidance.

In presenting in the Acts of Apostles the feast of the Pentecost as happening 50 days after Easter, St Luke wants to tell us that it is not the Law of Moses that is the foundation of Christian community, but the new law that the Spirit of Christ has brought.

It is in that perspective we have to understand Jesus' words in today's Gospel when he says, "The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you".

The Holy Spirit gave courage to the disciples when they were afraid of the Jews who condemned our Lord in the name of the Jewish Law. Strengthened by the Holy Spirit, they went out and bore witness to the Lord. They understood that they had a defender greater than the Jewish Law. They talked about our Lord and crossed the barriers erected by the Jewish Law.

This fact is visible in the description of the miracle of the transformation that happened with the apostles. While the Jewish law prohibited any Jew to have any relationship with a pagan or a foreigner, once invested with the Holy Spirit, the disciples would welcome all the peoples from the known world of their time: the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and Libya, Cyrene and Roma. They addressed these peoples in their own languages and proclaimed to them the message of salvation, according to the words the Spirit gave them.

Thus, we see that one of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to bring people together beyond their differences. I believe that where people dig into conflicts and fight against one another because they are different, the Spirit of our Lord is likely absent among them. The Spirit aims at uniting people, rather than dividing them. This is true for a parish community, for family members and for groups of people.

The Holy Spirit makes the Church one body in spite of the diversity of peoples composing it. So, the Church is universal in its foundation. It is open to the whole world represented by the different nationalities and peoples gathered around the word of our Lord. To pay attention to the universality of the Church is to accept the gifts the Holy Spirit gives to people in order to build and enrich the Church.

The Holy Spirit helps us fight the sin and resist any occasion leading to sin. If we listen to the Holy Spirit and practice what he requires from us, we will receive eternal life. That is why St Paul says that "if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies".

For sure, we will not be spared from physical death. However, we might be dead physically speaking, but because of the Spirit living in us, we will be given life back just as it happened to our Lord.

The feast of Pentecost reminds us that it is the Holy Spirit who gives us the courage to call God “Abba, Father!” By the dwelling of the Spirit within us, we become the adopted children of God and heirs with Jesus. The merits of Christ and his glory become ours. His heritage becomes our inheritance, his Father becomes our father. As we share in his suffering and death, we will share also in his glory. Because we have a same lot with our Lord, when the Father looks at us, he recognizes in us his beloved Son, Jesus.

Pentecost’s celebration reminds also that it is the Spirit who guides us to the knowledge of the whole truth about God and our salvation. It is the Spirit who keeps us faithful to the love of God and our fellows. “Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him”, St Paul says. Consequently, we have to yearn not only to possess the Spirit of Christ, but also to be docile to his motions.

To do so requires of us a constant renewal of our lives so that we do not give in to the solicitations of the flesh. It also requires of us to keep God’s commandments and to put them into practice. The more we keep the commandments, the more the love of our Lord dwells in us and we show at the same time that we love him. There is no love of our Lord without keeping his word and his commandments.

In turn, the Father will love us, because we love his Son. Because we love the Father and the Son by keeping the commandments, they will come to us and make their dwelling within us. With the Father and the Son dwelling in us, we become ourselves the temple of the presence of God and the witness to the Holy Spirit.

May the Holy Spirit inflame the whole Church and guide us always. May he take control of our lives and give us the courage to change our lives. May Pentecost happen in the heart of each one of those who seek God in sincerity.

Acts 2: 1-11; Romans 8: 8-17; John 14: 15-1, 23b-26



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