

The Feast of Pentecost

May 24, 2026

Acts 2:1-11 — 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13 — John 20:19-23

Today is the great feast of Pentecost — the day the Church was **empowered and sent** into the world with the strength of the Holy Spirit.

One of the wonderful things about Pentecost is that Hallmark hasn't discovered it yet. There are no Pentecost cards. No Pentecost decorations. No Pentecost turkey to roast.

And that is a blessing — because it allows us to focus on what this feast is really about.

You'll notice In every reading today, something changes.

In the **Acts of the Apostles**, frightened disciples become courageous witnesses. Men who had been hiding behind locked doors — suddenly step into the streets proclaiming Christ openly and fearlessly.

In St. Paul's letter, we hear that the same Spirit fills the Church with many different gifts — all given for the building up of the Body of Christ.

In the Gospel, Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and sends them out to continue his mission of mercy, healing, forgiveness, and salvation. **The Church comes alive at Pentecost.**

The Holy Spirit, of course, is not new at Pentecost.

The Spirit hovers over the waters of creation in the book of Genesis.

The prophets spoke through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Mary conceived Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit descended upon Christ at the Jordan River.

What is unique at Pentecost is the extent and the abundance of the gift. It was poured out upon the whole Church — upon ordinary believers like us.

And that matters, because many people think of the Holy Spirit only in dramatic ways: wind, fire, miracles, speaking in tongues, extraordinary experiences.

And yes, sometimes the Spirit does work dramatically.

But, if we focus **only** on the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, we can miss the ordinary ways the Holy Spirit quietly sustains Christian life every day.

We can become **fascinated by fireworks** while **ignoring sunlight**.

Fireworks amaze us for a few moments. Sunlight quietly gives life every single day. That is how the Holy Spirit usually works.

Not through spectacle, but through steady grace.

We all remember the story of the Tower of Babel from the book of Genesis. It recounts how early humanity, all speaking a single language settled in the land of Shinar. Driven by pride, they attempted to build a massive city and a tower reaching into the heavens to "make a name" for themselves.

The people believed they could reach heaven by their own power, and the result was confusion and division — **human pride divided humanity**.

Pentecost is the remedy for Babel. People from every nation hear the Gospel and understand. The Holy Spirit reverses that human attraction to ego and pride revealed by Babel. **The Holy Spirit sanctifies — enabling us to live the Gospel.**

And maybe that message is more important now than ever.

We live in an age of astonishing human achievement. Technology now does things that not long ago were unimaginable. **We have more power than ever in our hands.** But Pentecost reminds us that human intelligence alone cannot save us.

The temptation of Babel still exists — the temptation to believe we can build a future without God. And whenever humanity forgets God, confusion eventually follows.

The Holy Spirit restores what pride divides. The Holy Spirit continually renews those who seek God and goodness.

And when the human heart is moved by the Spirit — transformation occurs. The Spirit softens hard hearts. Strengthens weak hearts. Heals wounded hearts. And sets fearful hearts on fire.

And when that happens **Miracles** happen. That is how the Holy Spirit usually works in us. Not through force or spectacle — but through grace, patience, and love.

The apostles were not saints because they were fearless. They became saints because **they allowed the Holy Spirit to transform their fear.**

And the same Spirit has been given to us. Through the church — in Baptism. Confirmation., and the Eucharist. Through these we become one in the Spirit of God. **Through the Holy Spirit we too can become saints.**

The Holy Spirit is present whenever people remain faithful, forgive, begin again, persevere through suffering, or quietly continue loving when it would be easier to give up. **That may not look dramatic to the world, but that is the real miracle of Pentecost — the transformation of the human heart.**

So on this great feast of Pentecost, let us ask **not only** for moments of inspiration, let us ask for the **deeper gift of God's grace:**

The grace to persevere. The grace to forgive.
The grace to remain faithful. The grace to become holy.

Let us pray that we may be open to the fullness of God's gift of his Spirit in our lives, so we may be holy and bring God's sanctifying grace to the world.
If you remember this prayer to the Holy Spirit - please join in.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.

V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R. And you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray:

O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in your consolations. We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.