

The Feast of Pentecost

May 24, 2026

Acts 2:1-11 — 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13

Today is the great feast of Pentecost — **the day the Church is empowered and sent into the world in 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 to send,
- No Pentecost decorations to untangle from the attic.
- No Pentecost turkey to roast

It remains, entirely, a Church feast — and that allows us to focus on what it truly celebrates.

In every reading today, the Holy Spirit is doing something life-giving, we see the Spirit is not only dramatic but sustaining and sanctifying.

In Acts, the Spirit gives the Church courage and a voice. Frightened disciples become fearless witnesses, speaking so that people from every nation can understand the Gospel.

St. Paul reminds us that the same Spirit is at work within us, sanctifying ordinary human lives through the many gifts given to the Church.

In the Gospel, Jesus breathes the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and sends them out to continue his own mission of healing, mercy, and forgiveness.

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

- The Spirit hovered over the waters of creation in Genesis.
- The prophets spoke through the Spirit. Mary conceived Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- The Spirit descended upon Christ at the Jordan River.

What is unique about Pentecost is not the gift of the Spirit itself, but the extent and abundance of the gift — the Spirit is poured out upon the whole Church.

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

Those moments certainly exist. But if we focus only on the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, we risk overlooking the ordinary gifts that quietly, yet powerfully, sustain 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.

In the same way, extraordinary spiritual experiences may inspire us from time to time. But **it is grace — the daily work of the Holy Spirit — that sustains holiness, strengthens marriages, heals sinners, forms saints, and keeps the Church alive.**

That is why Scripture compares the Holy Spirit to air, water, and light. Not because they are dramatic, **but because they are necessary for life itself.**

Today the Holy Spirit is given to the Church once again — in us and through us. Through Baptism and Confirmation we are strengthened for mission. Through the Eucharist we are nourished. Through the sacraments, the Spirit continues the saving work of Christ in the world.

And so on this great feast of Pentecost, let us open our lives once again to the Holy Spirit. Let us ask God not only for dramatic moments of inspiration, but for the deeper and lasting gift of grace — the grace to become the light of the world, the salt of the earth, and faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ in our own time.

If you remember the prayer to the Holy Spirit, please join me in praying it together now:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful
and kindle 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 have taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.