

PENTECOST

V W H P U P A E I B S B D A F
M P C E J P K T A J I R P S P
J E R N T U P M S M Z O S J L
Q T U T L I Y E B S S T A P E
G E H E W R R N R T E R Y Q P
G R C C J D B I L R E N E L S
B S F O V U X E P A O D T H O
Z M E S Z T S X Z S N O K I G
N N F T K L E Y A I Y U M L W
S W X Y R A M M W I F L Z K V
S Y A D Y T F I F D R Z O E U
T O N G U E S O F F I R E H M
D L T B N P Q A X H H N O V K
F C T A W V I T M I U C Z A O
R X D R O T D J F A K O R U M

APOSTLES

CHURCH

FIFTY DAYS

GOSPEL

HOLY SPIRIT

LUKE

MARY

PENTECOST

PETER

TONGUES OF FIRE

UPPER ROOM

WIND

WITNESS

PENTECOST

“Pentecost” is from Greek meaning “fiftieth.” The name Pentecost was originally given to the Jewish Feast of Weeks which fell on the fiftieth day after Passover. On this day, the first fruits of the grain harvest were offered to the Lord (Leviticus 23:15-21 and Deuteronomy 16:9-11). The second chapter of Acts begins

In Acts 2:1-41 the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles. This occurred ten days after Jesus’ Ascension. Jesus had asked his Apostles to pray.

When the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles, they preached the Good News of Jesus Christ. Miraculously, people of many different languages and nations could understand the Apostles in their own languages. This miracle reflected God’s desire for the Gospel to be preached to all, and for all the peoples of the earth to be united in faith.

Another wonder surrounding Pentecost was that tongues of fire appeared and rested on the Apostles. God left no doubt that Pentecost was an important event in the history of the Church and that the Holy Spirit was truly present.

The miraculous tongues of fire, along with the Apostles’ ability to speak in different languages, may seem to be the most impressive signs of Pentecost. However, the most important and most lasting effect of Pentecost went deeper than that.

Peter, the leader of the Apostles, stood in front of the crowds and preached. He preached with boldness and conviction. Consider that up until this point the Apostles had not preached at all. Just 10 days before, the Apostles still thought that Jesus’ mission was to restore an earthly kingdom to Israel (cf. Acts 1:6). Now, however, Peter recognizes the mission of Jesus and boldly preaches instead of remaining hidden in a room.

The boldness that the Holy Spirit gave the Apostles on Pentecost gave them the courage and wisdom to preach to many nations and peoples. This, in turn, resulted in the spread of Christianity and the conversion of thousands of people. On the day of Pentecost, about 3,000

Pentecost is the birthday of the Church because from that point on the apostles carried the message of Christ to the whole world. The authority that Christ gave his Apostles through the Holy Spirit extends through the bishops today. The Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church. In fact, St. Augustine said that the Holy Spirit was the soul of the Church. Just as the soul gives life to the body, so also the Spirit gives life to the Church.

Pentecost ushered in a new age of the Church through which Christ works in different means for our salvation.

In other words, although since his Ascension Jesus is no longer physically present on earth, Jesus has not left us alone. Indeed, he is still present to us in other ways. Jesus has left us the sacraments through which the Holy Spirit conveys the grace of God in a physical and tangible way. Pentecost marks the beginning of this new, sacramental era in which we live today. It does so because the ministers of the sacraments (usually priests and deacons) have the power to perform the sacraments because the Holy Spirit acts through them. The Holy Spirit conforms the minister to Christ.