

Pentecost Sunday - Mass during the Day - Lectionary: 63

Reading 1 - [Acts 2:1-11](#)

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God."

Responsorial Psalm - [Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34](#) R. (cf. 30) Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Reading 2 - [1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13](#)

Brothers and sisters: No one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

Gospel - [John 20:19-23](#)

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

*Just as in one man there is one soul and one body, yet many members; even so the Catholic Church is one body, having many members. The soul that quickens this body is the Holy Spirit; and therefore, in the Creed after confessing our belief in the Holy Spirit, we are bid to believe in the Holy Catholic Church.*¹

Today we round off more than seven weeks of celebrating the Paschal Mystery: Passion and Death—Resurrection—Ascension, Exaltation—Coming of the Holy Spirit. Today is also the birthday of the Church, as Pope Saint John Paul II explained, *“on Pentecost the Holy Spirit descends and the Church is born, and a deep and indissoluble bond exists between the Holy Spirit and the Church.”*² At Pentecost, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the recreation and reunification of the human family into the spiritual family of the Church, understood as the Mystical Body of Christ.³

To say that the Mystical Body is Catholic means it is universal in mission and membership across nations,⁴ fully realized as the Church of Christ in the Catholic Church governed by the successor of Peter and bishops in communion with him,⁵ and one complex reality of visible communion and invisible grace.⁶

Therefore, the Catholic Church is the original Pentecostal Church... if we mean that the Church is constituted and made alive by the Holy Spirit (the “soul” of the Mystical Body), publicly revealed and inaugurated on Pentecost, and continually sanctified by the same Spirit from Pentecost onward. It is the Church of Pentecost because the Church’s life as Christ’s Body is continually sanctified, vivified, and unified by the Holy Spirit, whose definitive “sending” and public manifestation occurred on the day of Pentecost.⁷

If we think that we have not experienced the Holy Spirit we are wrong, as we heard proclaimed in the 1st Reading: *“Brothers and sisters: No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.”* Our second reading reminds us that the Holy Spirit plays an active role in everything that we are and do. The Holy Spirit is present in our lives in so many ways that we often don’t notice. So this reading encourages us to not take the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives for granted. No one is going to Mass today who hasn’t be first stirred by the Holy Spirit within and / or around them. No one at Mass today will be worthy to receive the Eucharist without the sanctifying and reconciling actions of the Holy Spirit, nor could we even have the Eucharistic presence of our Lord. We would have no Sacraments, no Priesthood. The Church as the worshipping mystical body cannot pray in so many languages without the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We must learn to recognise the movements of the Holy Spirit in, through, and around us. This is a danger that is very prevalent in the Church today as we seek to seem overly reasonable to the culture. We have

¹ Aquinas, Thomas. "The Apostles' Creed." 1273. <https://isidore.co/aquinas/Creed.htm>.

² Pope John Paul II. *General Audience*. Saint Peter's Square, Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998.

³ Vatican Council II. *Lumen Gentium* #4. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1964.

⁴ Vatican Council II. *Lumen Gentium* #7. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1964.

https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html

⁵ Vatican Council II. *Lumen Gentium* #8. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1964. “When the work which the Father gave the Son to do on earth was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that He might continually sanctify the Church, and thus, all those who believe would have access through Christ in one Spirit to the Father. He is the Spirit of Life, a fountain of water springing up to life eternal. To men, dead in sin, the Father gives life through Him, until, in Christ, He brings to life their mortal bodies. The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful, as in a temple. In them He prays on their behalf and bears witness to the fact that they are adopted sons. The Church, which the Spirit guides in way of all truth and which He unified in communion and in works of ministry, He both equips and directs with hierarchical and charismatic gifts and adorns with His fruits. By the power of the Gospel He makes the Church keep the freshness of youth. Uninterruptedly He renews it and leads it to perfect union with its Spouse. The Spirit and the Bride both say to Jesus, the Lord, “Come!” Thus, the Church has been seen as “a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.””

⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992. § 770. <https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/INDEX.HTM>.

⁷ Pope Pius XII. *Mystici Corporis Christi*. 1943. #62 https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi.html “But if we compare a mystical body with a moral body, it is to be noted that the difference between them is not slight; rather it is very considerable and very important. In the moral body the principle of union is nothing else than the common end, and the common cooperation of all under the authority of society for the attainment of that end; whereas in the Mystical Body of which We are speaking, this collaboration is supplemented by another internal principle, which exists effectively in the whole and in each of its parts, and whose excellence is such that of itself it is vastly superior to whatever bonds of union may be found in a physical or moral body. As We said above, this is something not of the natural but of the supernatural order; rather it is something in itself infinite, uncreated: the Spirit of God, who, as the Angelic Doctor says, “numerically one and the same, fills and unifies the whole Church.”

jettisoned the supernatural in order to fit in with a world that only sees the natural. This is to take the very heart out of a life with the Most Holy Trinity. It is to make our all loving and powerful Triune God very small.

While the teachings of the Church are reasonable, a life in the Holy Spirit is not something we control or contain. In fact, it can be downright weird, crazy, and is often, unexpected. We are called to live supernatural lives. Not lives of functional agnosticism where we think the Holy Spirit will only call us to what is comfortable, easy, or what we see as rational. He often calls us to do things that are deeply uncomfortable and that seem crazy to a world of reductionism and scientism—or even to a Church that for decades has put the supernatural in the backroom.

We are reminded today that being led by the Holy Spirit is at the heart of the Christian life and that the Holy Spirit is manifested in a unique way in each of us. We must each seek to use the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given us to make a difference in the life of the Church. We are being reminded on this feast day that the Most Holy Trinity wants to unleash supernatural power in our lives through the Holy Spirit. The Sacraments are the ordinary means of grace, that unleash the power. This is clear in the Bible and in the history of the Church. But too often we place the Holy Spirit in a box of our own making and spend much of life essentially living as an agnostic without realizing it. If we let the Spirit lead us, our lives will blossom and flourish. But if we neglect or refuse His leading, our lives will languish. Strangely, many believers today seem to misunderstand the Spirit's leading and how it relates to personal transformation. A clearer grasp of what the Bible teaches about this vital truth will help us all as we seek to grow in grace.

St. Paul expressed both a command and a promise when he said, *“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”*⁸ He directly making reference to the Holy Spirit, who dwells in those who have been born again. The word *flesh* is Paul's term to describe fallen human nature and its self-centered attitudes, desires, and behaviors. The word *walk* is commonly used in Scripture to refer to one's daily conduct. Thus, to walk by the Spirit means to live one's daily life by the Holy Spirit's guidance and empowerment. To walk in the flesh is to live a life characterized by various sins and selfish behaviors. By which are you walking?

*At Pentecost the Holy Spirit fills each of the disciples and the entire community with the abundance and diversity of his gifts. Jesus reveals the importance of the gift of power (dynamis), which will sustain their apostolic work. The Holy Spirit came upon Mary at the Annunciation as “the power of the Most High” (cf. Lk 1:35), bringing about the miracle of the Incarnation in her womb. The very power of the Holy Spirit will work new marvels of grace in the task of evangelizing the nations.*⁹

⁸ Galatians 5:16

⁹ John Paul II, [Audiences of Pope John Paul II \(English\)](#) (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2014).