

## PENTECOST

As we saw in Chapter 2 of the Acts of the Apostles, Pentecost occurred when the followers of Jesus were filled with fear.

We are joyfully back but maybe there is a certain amount of fear as we gather.

The apostles were clustered together in a room – we are mostly six feet apart.

They were suddenly surprised by the dynamic presence of the Holy Spirit in their midst.

We should not be surprised but actually have great expectations as we pray for the Holy Spirit's presence.

The apostles were so filled with the gifts of the spirit that they came out from the upper room with new confidence, with new energy and a newly discovered strength.

They experienced a new life in the Holy Spirit.

Maybe not in the same dramatic fashion but we too should be expecting or discovering new confidence, a new burst of spiritual energy.

In our secular world, Pentecost goes largely unobserved.

There are no Pentecost cards ever on the shelves.

There is no real merchandising that ever remotely compares to Easter, Christmas or even Thanksgiving.

Yet – Pentecost is a great celebration.

Often it is referred to as the Birthday of the Church.

Why has Pentecost been such a major event in the life of the Church?

We, Christian stewards, all received the gifts of the spirit – Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel...etc.

By using those gifts we are called to show forth in our lives the fruits of the spirit – charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, modesty, chastity.

This calling has its roots in the major great events of the first Pentecost.

Up until that time the followers of Jesus were still a very disorganized band of believers.

They were still in shock over the events of the crucifixion.

They were still confused over the meaning of the reports that Jesus had risen.

Pentecost abruptly, forever, changed that for them.

Suddenly missionary disciples were born – called and sent forth.

Like us here today they were called together, in community.

They became aware that their great mission was to reach out, not just to their Jewish brothers and sisters but beyond to the known world then.

Like us they were called to bring Jesus and His saving message to the world.  
For them, and for us, the Holy Spirit brought courage to replace fear.  
He brought understanding to replace confusion.  
He brought faith to replace doubt.

The Spirit calls us within our community, maybe not with the same drama as the first Pentecost, to courageously share Jesus with others, to do it without fear or confusion.

Our task is to embrace the strength and energy of the life of the Holy Spirit who is always within us and is always striving to move through us.

Let us celebrate Pentecost this year as stewards inspired to be the people of hope for our families, for others and for our world that desperately is in need of God's visible presence.

Amen.