

PENTECOST

At Mass today the priest wears red vestments. Many churches put up special banners and symbols of the Holy Spirit to remind everyone of the gifts of the Spirit. The Church celebrates the fulfilment of Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit would guide and help his disciples to understand all that he had taught them.

Pentecost is sometimes called the 'birthday' of the Church. In the Acts of the Apostles Luke recounts how the apostles all gathered together with Mary, the mother of Jesus. They felt dejected. Jesus had promised never to leave them and yet he was gone from them. He had said he would send them another friend to help them, but they didn't know quite what he meant. On the day of Pentecost, the feast of the first fruits, they knew Jesus had kept his promise.

They described the coming of the Spirit as being like a mighty wind and tongues of fire. They were filled with the Spirit of Jesus, a spirit of joy, love, happiness and peace. They wanted to share their happiness with everyone. They stopped being afraid and went out into the streets to begin to tell everyone about Jesus and the good news of his life and death and new risen life. They found that they could communicate with people from many different parts of the world who had come to Jerusalem for the feast. That is how the Church began. So Pentecost is the beginning, the birthday of the Church.

Some parishes make this a day to celebrate the richness and diversity of the parish family. Just as the disciples found joy in the gift of different tongues, so today is a good time to remember the different languages people in the parish and neighbourhood speak. It is a time to celebrate the richness of the different cultures of the worldwide Catholic family.



The Gifts of the Spirit

Wisdom
Understanding
Right Judgement
Courage
Knowledge
Reverence
Wonder and Awe in God's
Presence

The fruit of these gifts is seen in communities where there is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Peace Everywhere

Peace
Pax
Shalom
Paix
Pace

How many languages do you think people speak in your parish?