

**Acts 2:1-11//1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13//John 20:19-23**  
***Pentecost Sunday***

- This past weekend I welcomed the faithful who were able to be in church for Mass. I also extended my greetings to our viewers watching via livestream or at a later time. Ten weeks ago, I never thought I'd be greeting people that way. Ten weeks ago no one thought we'd have to count people as they entered, or sit six feet apart. We're used to being in control of things, hm? We go where we want to go, do what we want to do, and **how** we choose to do it. In a day and age where we're used to "being in control," this hasn't been easy. I know some consider this going overboard while others agree with it. Some grudgingly comply... others embrace it as necessary. No one's the same - we're all different.
- We're all different, just as the crowds gathered in Jerusalem on that Pentecost morning. It's estimated the population of Jerusalem at that time was about 100,000. Some think it was much more, but whatever the case, on a Jewish holy day, people came from 15 different countries/ regions, so it's believed that number would easily have doubled - can you imagine. There were 3 feast days for which Jews were required to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and Pentecost was one of them. It was a celebration of the Ten Commandments given to Moses. Pentecost meant "50" and was celebrated exactly 50 days from their feast of Passover. Point is, there were a lot of people in Jerusalem, speaking a lot of different languages. So when we read the Holy Spirit rushed in like a wind, enabling the disciples to speak the different languages, we can take that seriously - it explains how the Christian Church spread *so quickly*. We're told 3,000 souls were added to the Church – what a day that must've been.

What an unexpected *change* that must have been for those who had celebrated Pentecost the same way year after year. People had ‘control of the schedule’ and ‘knew exactly what was going to happen’, but they were in for a surprise as the Holy Spirit blew into town. I wonder if God is using “all of this” as a time for the Spirit to blow some wind into our sails to light a fire under the church? I think the Church is in need of that. Is it a time to reassess things? One’s relationship with their spouse, or your family life (in the past months, I wonder how many households have had more meals together as a family than ever before? I’ll share some interesting data about that in the weeks to come.) How about our devotion to Christ and His Church? (I’ve seen people come to Mass very early this weekend; I think some camped here overnight! 😊) Friends, that’s how it *should* be. Eager to be in the House of God. Maybe times like this remind us of our priorities.

- Pentecost is *also* a reminder that the Church is called to be a missionary church, to our own families and beyond. That’s why I chose to send out these large postcards. Maybe you received one. (I know)... “Ugh, Father, why spend money on this at a time collections are down?” Because in good times or bad, we are called to be missionaries. The Gospel is not only for us, but for the whole world – a world that is hurting. That’s why we sent them out *now*. (I didn’t plan it, but the number that went out was 3,000.) The same number that were added to the Church on that first Pentecost. I have high hopes! 😊
- May this not just be a time of returning to Mass, but a time of renewal for ourselves, our families, and our nation. May the day come when we look back on COVID as a time the Holy Spirit blew into town. ✚