

Pentecost Reflection
Filled with the Spirit
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Scriptural Text: Acts 2: 1-13

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine."

Reflection:

What does it mean exactly to be *filled with the Holy Spirit*? This text is usually read every Pentecost to celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church. What does it look like to be a Spirit filled church and disciple?

In this particular scripture, the Spirit enabled the disciples to communicate the message of Christ to everyone who was gathered in their own language. The Spirit made Christ accessible to people who may not have heard the message before. It wasn't just a few disciples who were filled with this gift, it was all that were gathered. However, even though the message was made accessible not everyone wanted to hear it; some accused the disciples of being filled with wine - drunk, babbling.

The Spirit wasn't only alive and moving on Pentecost. The Spirit is sweeping through us now - the question is if we are willing to respond? Are we willing to reach out to people, empowered by the Spirit, to make the message of Christ accessible. In some situations that may mean that we need to seek justice, mercy, and peace before we preach the gospel. In other cases our actions may be the best communicator of the gospel message. In still other circumstances words of grace may communicate Christ most clearly. However, like the early disciples, not everyone will respond to the movement of the Spirit through and in us.

Pentecost is not simply a day on the liturgical calendar - it is how we represent Christ in the world each and every day. How we make the message of Christ accessible to the world around us, inviting them to respond. May we go forth, to be people who are known to be filled with the Spirit of justice and truth, reaching out to a world in need.

Reflection Questions:

- How is your Church living into the movement of the Spirit?
- What images do you have of Pentecost?
- How does Pentecost translate into your daily living?
- How are peace, justice, wholeness, and mercy relate to the Spirit?