

# Pentecost Sunday

2024 Year B.



*Go out to the whole world in  
loving boldness as my Foot washers,  
says the Lord.*

*A Biblical Reflection from Fr Kevin Walsh, Sydney Australia.*

Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11 Galatians 5:16-25 John 15:26-27, 16:12-15

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Pentecost: we hear in the first reading from the Acts of the Apostles that the Spirit of God, is poured out as 'gift' on the Apostles, who had gathered together out of fear, were transformed into a group filled with the breath of God, and boundless energy and Joy. They then became fearless, daring, and thrilling proclaimers of the nearness of God's Kingdom. Today in God's Word we hear echoes from the Old Testament Prophet Ezekiel 36:24-28, who hundreds of years before, looked forward to an outpouring of God's Spirit in a 'gob smacking' way! Let us see what the Prophet had to say: *'I will gather my people from among the nations and bring you home to your own land. I will pour clean water over you and cleanse you of all defilement. I will take away your hearts of stone, and give you hearts for love instead. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will keep my laws and sincerely observe my commandments. You will be my people, and I will be your God.'*

Christian tradition has called this Feast, the Birth of the Church! However, its religious origins go back to Old Testament times, when our ancestors in faith celebrated the initiating of the Covenant between Y-HW-H, (Adonai) and His people, through Moses on Mt. Sinai. This Covenant is summed up in the last line from the Prophet Ezekiel: *'you will be my people, and I will be your God.'* That event marked a 'special' stage and advancement in the 'corporate mind' of our ancestors in faith, as they realized that they were truly God's People and they in fact belonged to God. It was around this time each year, which coincided with the Feast of Harvest; what an appropriate time for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the maturing Apostles? At Pentecost, the Apostles and Mary, were transformed from a community gathered out of **'waiting & questioning'** into a community of loving out-reach, and gentle boldness in their missionary ventures. The language of Pentecost defies all spoken language.... it is the word of loving action, and identification with, and a belonging to the Living Lord, who urged the Apostles and urges us to 'Go out' to all nations as living witnesses of our God, who 'is with us'... at all times, even to the end of the world.

So, now let's have a closer look at the Spirit's Gifts.

This Solemnity is a strong reminder to all of us of the Gifts of the Spirit that we have been given, and the responsibility that we all have in nourishing and using the Spirit's Gifts.



Wisdom

Understanding



Right Judgment



Courage



Gifts

of the

Holy Spirit

Reverence



Awe and Wonder



Knowledge



We live in a multi-cultural society, and the differences in language and custom can easily reinforce the barriers which are counterproductive in the process of local and national identity. If we are truly spirit-filled people the language barrier is dissolved through listening, acceptance of diversity, and a desire to look for the goodness in each other. If we are intent in pursuing nit picking and negativity in newcomers to our country, and in those who have their roots deep within this land, we run the high risk of cramping the creativity of the Holy Spirit. If we are in positions of leadership in the media, we should enable our Television shows and advertisements to be representative of the multi culturalism in our country. How representative are our Parliamentarians of our people? Australians have the grand opportunity to first desire to meet our new brothers and sisters, and it is only from the desire to meet, listen and share, do we then have the formula for Reconciliation. It is absolute and total arrogance to dismiss our First Australian Indigenous people as pre-European civilizations!

We who come from Overseas; we must get off our High Horse, and sit around the campfire of storytelling and love with the people who have been wedded to this Land for over 50,000 years. Here we are as Europeans.....just here two hundred and fifty years! It is absolutely wonderful to see so many of our first nation's people taking up leadership positions in all levels of society. Truly, our country is blessed through their Voices and creative plans for harmony among us.



Unity in diversity  
with the common language of *'Spirit filled love'*  
speaks to all races and cultures.