



**Solemnity of Pentecost**  
[Whit Sunday]  
† Sunday 4th June 2017

Cycle of Prayer: New Members of the Church  
Keynote: One in Spirit – born to give witness

**Acts of the Apostles 2: 1-11**

*'When Pentecost day came round, the apostles had all met in one room, when suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.'* Pentecost marks a new era of salvation history, inaugurated by the Holy Spirit. The disciples are so empowered by the Spirit that they are transformed, they set out to proclaim the word of salvation beginning at Jerusalem. But now reaching out to all peoples with a message of truth – that transcends the boundaries of nations, culture and language. This day in Jerusalem is the starting point of the mission. Even now today, we may be amazed to hear God's word spoken in so many different languages, and by so many peoples.

**Responsorial Psalm 103 (104)** – a psalm in praise of God's boundless care of creation

**First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians 12: 3-7, 12-13**

Paul tells us how to discern the manifestations of the Spirit. One of the chief signs, Paul says, is, *'No one can say, "Jesus is Lord" unless he is under the influence of the Holy Spirit.'* Then the apostle reminds us that, *'There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit. There are all sorts of service to be done, but always to the same Lord, working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God who is working in all of them.'* Using the example of the human body which although it has many parts is but one body, Paul says, *'so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.'* Maybe this too is one of the signs of the presence of the Spirit, for the baptised may almost be intoxicated – energised with the Spirit. Each of us is to discern the presence of the Spirit in our own lives, for Paul says, *'The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose.'*

**Gospel according to John 20: 19-23**

*'In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were... Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, "Peace be with you," and showed them his hands and side.'* This sudden presence of Jesus in this upper room does tell us that the risen Christ was in some way different. Yet, in spite of this the disciples recognise Jesus as he stands among them. *'The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord... and he said to them again, "Peace be with you."'* Jesus gives the disciples their mission, *'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you...'* he breathed on them and said, *'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven.'* The gift of the Holy Spirit is the climax of this 'mystagogia' – this period of reflection. Our Christian conversion starts [or restarts] here. This is the time for spiritual growth and for entering more fully into the life and unity of the community as it proclaims the gospel.

© Peter J Harrison 2017

Note: This is the end of Eastertide. The cycle of Sunday Readings Year A resumes with Week 9 in Ordinary Time; Weekday cycle 1.