

## **RCIA/Pentecost**

**Intro.** Imagine what the apostles and disciples were feeling on that first day of the week. Their teacher and friend, Jesus, had been arrested, tortured and crucified by an angry mob. Then some of the women who went to the tomb told them an incredible story of a man dressed in white, sitting in the empty tomb who said the Lord was risen. Now they were locked in a room, terrified that any minute someone would be pounding on the door, screaming for their blood. They were just a little on edge.

**I.** These days we are anxious about many things. So much has changed. We have never had an RCIA like this. Masks, spacing between us, fewer people able to be here. When you started this part of your faith journey and signed your name in the Book of the Elect, the RCIA team, sponsors, family and friends

promised to walk with you and share faith with you in order to draw you into a closer relationship with the Lord. The community of the parish also made a commitment to help you by word and example to know the Lord better. In the past weeks that seemed to last forever, you have persevered mightily. You have not only learned *things* about God but you have also been challenged to *know* him, to *feel* his presence in your life through prayer, scripture and sharing your experiences with each other. Don't stop learning about your relationship with God. It can guide you through some of the tough times ahead. Today there is the very real possibility that you could receive a jolt of power in the Holy Spirit like the first disciples did on that Pentecost day. It has happened before. It could happen a few days from now or a few weeks from today. Watch for it.

The disciples didn't seem upset about a hurricane-like wind blowing through that room or the appearance of "tongues as of fire" on each of them. Instead they were completely calm. Something came over them: the Holy Spirit. They burst out of lockdown and into the streets and astounded themselves and everyone else by their confidence in and through the Holy Spirit. They broke race and cultural boundaries by speaking all languages. God's Word is for all people.

**Concl.** In a moment we will profess our faith together; go the font for those of you to be baptized; all will be confirmed in this faith we professed; and finally receive the Lord in Communion. You take on the responsibility for your faith more and more. We who gather here and those on the live stream as well as those not here, have prayed for you. We will

continue to be here to support and guide you. Like runners in a relay race, we pray we have given you what you need for the next part of your journey. Now it is the Holy Spirit who will give you strength as the first disciples received it and went forth to tell others about the Lord. This pandemic has caused a lot of pain but it has also caused us to join together in appreciating the many people who put their lives in danger to take care of us. We have remembered how to look out for each other again. Some of our differences have disappeared. Others we are still working on. I believe this is clearly the work of the Holy Spirit. Go forth and make disciples for the Lord by your words and lives.

Fr. Michael Pendergraft  
RCIA, May 31, 2020