

Pentecost

Intro. These days we are anxious about many things. So much has changed. We have never had a Pentecost like this. Masks, spacing between us, fewer people able to be here.

I. Imagine the anxiety of the apostles and disciples 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 bit on edge. They didn't know how their lives would turn out. After three years with the Lord, now their future was

unclear. That was about to change. When suddenly a hurricane-like wind blew through that upper room and the appearance of “tongues as of fire” on each of them, the disciples were not upset about it. Instead they were completely calm. Something came over them: **the Holy Spirit**. Then the disciples burst out of their lockdown and into the streets and astounded themselves and everyone else by their confidence in and through the Holy Spirit. When they began speaking all the different languages, they broke down barriers of race and culture. It is our responsibility whether to continue on this journey or wander away. We have to decide whether we want this faith enough to practice without being told to. Like runners in a relay race, we have received this faith from our families and our church. It is the Holy Spirit who will give us the strength as the first

disciples received it and went forth to tell others about the Lord.

Concl. Today there is the very real possibility that we 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 or weeks from today. Watch for it. 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 to look out for each other again. I believe this is clearly the work of the Holy Spirit in us. Some of our differences have disappeared; some we are obviously still working on. I pray the diversity of peoples celebrated in the different languages on Pentecost can strengthen us to

go forth and make disciples for the Lord by your words and lives.

Fr. Michael Pendergraft
Pentecost, May 31, 2020