

## **The Power Is Turned On**

I. Pentecost was originally a harvest feast. Later it became a celebration recalling Moses receiving the commandments on Mount Sinai. [G. Gutiérrez, *Sharing the Word Through the Liturgical Year*, Orbis, 1997] This was a big festival, like when the Super Bowl comes to town. Visitors from all over the world came to Jerusalem. People selling clothes and food filled the streets as did the sounds of music. Into this charged atmosphere, the presence of the Holy Spirit was made known to the disciples. The roaring sound hit their ears and swirling wind whipped their faces. But they had no fear. They knew God was present. Incredible energy electrified them. All their senses were on high alert. People gathered outside the house because they knew something was happening. As the disciples

started telling them all about the glory of the Lord, each heard them in their own, native languages. No one needed ear buds for simultaneous translations like we see at the UN or other multi-cultural gatherings. Amazingly, each person “understood” what the disciples were saying. Somebody asked, “Aren’t these men Galileans?” It is like asking how somebody from Clay County can speak French. Aside from being accidentally shocked by electricity or being too close to a lightning strike, we have experiences that send chills up and down our body; the hair rises on our necks; we get goosebumps. We know when we feel the something extraordinary like the presence of God. It stirs up our heart and mind. The disciples on their own could not understand the promise of the Spirit until it happened.

**Concl.** The Spirit of God energized them with enthusiasm for the Lord. Today, the Holy Spirit is manifested in different ways among God's people. It may not be in the form of a hurricane-like wind or fireworks. It is beautiful but also a little scary. For some of us it is in a wonderful feeling of peace in the middle of chaos. For others it could be a quiet voice that suddenly gives direction to a decision in life that is a clear answer to prayer. Others experience the Spirit by lifting their voices in prayer language the rest of us can't understand. According to Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, the power of the Holy Spirit is given as a gift to build up the kingdom of God, not egos. How can we get this power? The Holy Spirit is available for us in our prayer, in the sacraments and most of all, in Communion. We have to *prepare* to receive it, recognize it and tap into it. It is the

energy and passion to witness for the Lord in a spirit-filled life. Positive, yet not naïve. Enthusiastic, but not out of control. **Breaking through cultures and traditions. Speaking a language all can understand: the mercy and love of God.**

Fr. Michael Pendergraft

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