

Fr. Rudy's Reflections  
Pentecost Sunday  
May 19, 2024

## The Miracle of Pentecost

My Brothers and Sisters in the Risen Lord,

It seems today's world is focused on the separateness of humanity, as we try to embrace diversity of thought, purpose, self-expression, and novelty. Yet we also waver between a unity of purpose, a like-mindedness if you will, and a person's right to express oneself individually. In both instances, conflicts can arise because we continue to be torn between embracing another's uniqueness and finding common ground. If you look at our modern conflicts, you might begin to understand how we can be united and yet so far apart. Why is it that the world is so devoid of balance and operates wildly, and sometimes violently, between ideas of unity and self-expression?

Bishop Robert Barron, in his homily about the one and the many, explores this philosophical question and offers a perspective, that as we create our own Tower of Babel, a monolithic structure looming in the sky of self-absorption and pride, we cannot truly unite, unless we hold onto a common, transcendent purpose to help us grow and keep us together. This common bond is the Kingdom of God that we celebrate today. On this day, we breathe in the love and energy God and his Son gave to us in the presence of the Holy Spirit. Only the Holy Spirit in our lives can maintain an equilibrium between unity and diversity to lift us up and let others be others yet unite in love in God's kingdom. And as we give our love away to others in this common purpose, this sensation will preserve itself, just as a grain of wheat falls to the ground and yields its fruit.

There are many beautiful images presented in our first reading today in the Acts of the Apostles, the fifth book of the New Testament written circa 90 A.D., presumably by Luke the Evangelist, who also penned the Gospel of Luke. These great symbols of the Pentecost—the driving wind, tongues of fire, the color red, as well as the resulting gifts of universal language and hearing to a disparate group of people—show the power and mindset of God, the love between Father and Son, and this great love bestowed to us by the Holy Spirit. Unlike the Tower of Babel, built by man from earth to sky with human pride, God's kingdom was created from heaven to earth, to be held together forever by his love. It can never be destructive or muddled, and will unite our lives, gloriously and eternally, to each other and to him.

*“How can we not give thanks to God for the wonders the Spirit has never ceased to accomplish in these two millenniums of Christian life? Indeed, the event of grace at Pentecost has continued to bear its marvelous fruits, everywhere instilling apostolic zeal, a desire for contemplation, the commitment to live and serve God and our brothers and sisters with complete dedication. Today too, the Spirit sustains great and small acts of forgiveness and prophecy in the Church and gives life to ever new charisms and gifts, which attest to his ceaseless action in human hearts.”—Pope John Paul II, 1998*

Yours in Christ,  
Fr. Rudy