

Useful Resources

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God Sends the Holy Spirit –
Cartoon about Pentecost.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMQKy1Mx49M>



Pentecost and the Divinity of the Holy Spirit – Dr. Brant Pitre
https://youtu.be/rzTIR_qCHB8



The Jewish Shema, the Holy Spirit, and Pentecost – Dr. Brant Pitre.
<https://youtu.be/gc9cQdiU9Fs>



Reflections on the Feast of Pentecost. Jeff Cavins.
<https://youtu.be/65OKFAFKI-I>

Pentecost

The great solemnity of Pentecost comes 50 days after Easter and 10 days after Ascension Thursday, when the Church traditionally celebrates Jesus' ascension to heaven. Pentecost celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles. For this reason, it is often referred to as the "the birthday of the Church." The word "Pentecost" comes from the Greek word for the number 50. The number 50 in the Bible is closely tied to repentance and atonement. For example, Psalm 50 is a psalm of repentance and, in the Old Testament, every

fiftieth year, on the Day of Atonement, a Jubilee was to be declared throughout Israel with the sound of a trumpet (Leviticus 25:8-11). During the Jubilee year, all debts were settled in favor of the debtor and inheritances were returned to their rightful owners. Also, those who worked as slave laborers in order to repay a debt were granted their freedom to return home to their families and land.

There is a parallel Jewish holiday, Shavu'ot, which falls 50 days after Passover. Sometimes called the Festival of Weeks, Shavu'ot was a harvest festival which celebrated the sealing of the Old Covenant on Mount Sinai when God gave the Torah to Moses. Every year, the Jewish people renew their acceptance of the gift of the Torah on this feast by offering the first fruits of their harvest as a sacrifice to God.

Just as the Glory of the Lord descended upon the top of the mountain "like a devouring fire" (Exodus 24:17), when Moses received the Torah, so too did the Holy Spirit descend as tongues of fire upon the apostles when they received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-11). Pentecost fulfills God's promise to the people of Israel that "I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them; and I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me" (Jeremiah 32:40), and the promise that Christ would baptize His followers with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 1:5; John 14:16-17).

The first Pentecost recalls the symbolism of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan



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River, and the start of His ministry, by explicitly connecting the earlier prophecy of John the Baptist to the baptism of the disciples with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:5; 11:16). The timing of the first Pentecost during the Shavu'ot festival symbolizes both continuity with the giving of the law, but also the central role of the Holy Spirit for the early Church.

Pentecost Sunday is one of the most ancient feasts of the Church. It is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (20:16) and by Saint Paul (1 Corinthians 16:8). Typically, priests will wear red vestments which symbolize the burning fire of God's love and the tongues of fire that descended on the apostles. The Catholic faithful will often wear red as well.

However, in Britain and Ireland, Pentecost is also referred to as "Whitsunday", or White Sunday, and the priests wear white vestments which are symbolic of the dove of the Holy Spirit, and typical of the vestments that catechumens desiring baptism wear on that day. In the Pantheon in Rome, a former Roman temple consecrated as a Catholic church, it is a tradition to scatter rose petals from the ceiling of the church to recall the miracle of the fiery tongues, and so Pentecost is sometimes called *Pascha Rosatum* (Easter roses). In France, it is tradition to blow trumpets during Mass to recall the sound of the driving wind of the Holy Spirit. In Asia, a special worship service is held, called *genuflexion*, during which long poems and prayers are recited. In Russia, Mass goes often carry flowers or green branches during Pentecost services.

In the Eastern Orthodox Churches, Pentecost is the highest-ranking Great Feast of the Lord, second in rank only to Pascha (Easter). The service is celebrated with an all-night vigil on the eve of the feast day, and the divine liturgy on the day of the feast itself. Orthodox churches are often decorated with

greenery and flowers on this feast day, and the celebration is intentionally similar to the Jewish holiday of Shavu'ot,

Saints of the Week

Scan the QR codes with your phone to read and listen about the lives of the Saints.



May 28 – Venerable Pierre Toussaint (1766 –1853). Former slave educated orphans and nursed yellow fever victims.



May 29 – Saint Madeleine Sophie Barat (1779–1865). French nun founded Society of the Sacred Heart and 100+ girl's schools.



May 30 – Saint Joan of Arc (1412 – 1431). Burned at the stake as a heretic by after a politically-motivated trial.



May 31 - Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist.



June 01 – Saint Justin Martyr (c. 100 – 165). First Christian philosopher, he defended the Faith in Rome and was beheaded.



June 02 – Saints Marcellinus and Peter (d. 304). Marcellinus, a priest, and Peter, an exorcist, were beheaded for their faith.



June 03 – Saint Charles Lwanga and Companions (1885–1887). One of 22 Ugandan martyrs, Charles is a patron of youth.