



# Come and See!

Pentecost, Week of May 24, 2026

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## The Word...

*It was from [Babel] that God scattered them all over the earth (Gen 11:1-9).*

*"I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (Jl: 3:1-5).*

*"For we know that all creation groans together and labors together in birth pangs, up to this moment" (Rm 8:22-27, literal Greek).*

*"We were all given to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor 12:3-7, 12-13).*

(Note: We reenter Ordinary Time and return to the "Come and See" format until Advent.)

## Pondering the Word ...

The passage about Babel from Genesis sets up such a great backdrop for the story of Pentecost, the time when the Spirit introduces a whole new way of understanding, regardless of the actual language we speak. (Note that in the reading from Acts today, it says the members of the crowd "heard" the Apostles in their own native language). But why did God decide to "confuse" languages in the first place?

Relying on the writings of Old Testament scholar, Walter Brueggemann, I came across an explanation so timely for us. By looking to settle in one place, the nomads "attempt to secure their future isolated from the rest of the world. ...Human concern for self-preservation places the rest of the creation at risk. ...God promotes diversity at the expense of unity that seeks to preserve itself in isolation from the rest of creation" (A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament, Birch, Brueggemann, Fretman, Peterson. pp 57-58, emphasis added).

One can consider the Feast of Pentecost in this way: Scripture, divinely inspired, is the story of humanity's relationship to and with the Divine, documenting our growth from tribal, violent self-preservation, to a chosen tribe based on a loving God; then, to the idea that this merciful God's "spirit will be poured out on ALL flesh," (Joel). Jesus comes to unite "all creation to labor TOGETHER" (Romans), "to drink of ONE Spirit" (Corinthians).

In this world of dramatic alienation and division, we need this feast of Pentecost more than ever!

## Living the Word...

"Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the sky, and so make a name for ourselves." "Gosh," God says to the heavenly hosts, "Next thing you know, they will be putting their name on the tower!" ☺

By bestowing his Spirit, Jesus commissions us to promote peace and justice in *his* name. What will you do to fulfill this commission? Here's a small start: "If you smile at me, I will understand, 'cause that is something everybody, everywhere does--in the same language." (Crosby, Stills, Kantner, 1969). Greet everyone you meet, especially those who don't look like you or speak your language. Be kind. Teach the local language to those new to your country or learn their language to help them. Advocate for merciful, common-sense immigration policies. Let's stop worrying about making a name for ourselves and instead, make a name for Christ.

## Personal Reflections and Ideas ...

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**Mon, May 25:** *“My home is within you”* (Ps 87). Those of my vintage may remember a beautiful love song by Billy Joel, titled *“You’re my home.”* (It’s on his *Piano Man* album.) Of course, it’s a song about romantic love, but hey—have you read the Song of Songs? Billy’s song is way less graphic than that! The psalmist is referring to Zion in this psalm, but I like to say these words to God. *“Lord, I’ll never be a stranger and I’ll never be alone. Wherever we’re together, that’s my home.”* **Provision: Make God your “home.”** God wants to make a home with you (Jn 14:23), but first, you need to be comfortable with God. Consider things that keep you from being at ease with God. No need to hide them; bring them out in the open and let God’s acceptance calm your nerves.

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**Tue, May 26:** *“Therefore, gird up the loins of your mind, live soberly, and set your hopes completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ”* (1 Pt 1:10-16). We don’t hear the expression, “girding your loins” much. It can be used metaphorically to mean being in a state of readiness, prepared for an arduous journey, hard work, or a “battle;” or, more literally, protecting the (ahem!) vulnerable parts of oneself. In the case of today’s passage, I think it can mean both. **Provision: Protect what is vulnerable. And be ready!** What parts of your mind are vulnerable? Perhaps hope? Faith? Peace? What might you do to “gird up” things that need support and protection? Praying more, reading the news less, being in community, working with your hands just for the sake of being creative? The very act of paying attention to those parts of us that are weak is a good way to be better prepared for the road ahead. Reflect on this passage in prayer or even within your community. How can we help each other gird our loins?

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**Wed, May 27:** *The disciples were on the way, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went ahead of them. They were amazed, and those who followed were afraid”* (Mk 10:32-45). What are the disciples afraid of? Jesus doesn’t assuage their fears. He spells out clearly what is to happen to him. If they were afraid to begin with, this revelation surely doesn’t help. **Provision: What am I afraid of?** *“It is becoming clear that discipleship is not about following Jesus’ teaching but about following Jesus’ example and being willing to endure the consequences of living according to God’s will”* (From *The Jerome Biblical Commentary for the Twenty-First Century*, 2022, p. 1268). This commentary hits me square between the eyes. It’s not about Jesus’ teaching; it is about living as he did. Even with his frequent admonitions to us NOT to be afraid, I’d venture to say if we are not a bit fearful, then perhaps we need to look at how closely we are following him. Think about it.

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**Thu, May 28:** *“Jesus said to [Bartimaeus], “What do you want me to do for you? ...Go your way; your faith has saved you”* (Mk 10:32-45). You might remember this passage is among my all-time favorites. It demonstrates so clearly Jesus’ ministry of empowerment (which we celebrate on Pentecost). He asks Bartimaeus to tell him what he wants. Then Jesus empowers him by attributing the healing to his faith. But reading this today brings up a deeper place of prayer for me. I’ve been reflecting on, at the advice of the great Quaker writer, Parker Palmer, “what I want to give the rest of my life to.” Today, I was led to pray, “Jesus, what do you *want me* to do for *you*?” **Provision: Ask Jesus what he wants you to do for him.** I have the luxury to ask this open-ended question. I don’t have to worry about putting food on the table or keeping a roof over my head. And yet, I think all of us can ask this question, a more nuanced way of reflecting on God’s will. In fact, it’s not a bad question to ask as we start each day!

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**Fri, May 29:** *“Be serious and sober-minded so that you will be able to pray”* (1 Pt 4:7-13). This passage always makes me smile. The most profound and life-changing prayer experience I have ever had came to me...in laughter. God basically said, “Stop taking yourself so seriously. Get over yourself, sister!” It was great! Peter is not telling us to be rigid in prayer, but to keep an open mind, an open heart, and be serious about dedicating time to prayer. **Provision: God comes to us where we are.** Don’t imagine we have prayer figured out. Remember, Paul tells us on Sunday, *“We don’t know how to pray as we ought.”* God knows what we need. Let God come to us right where we are, sober and serious or full of laughter and inebriated with love!

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**Sat, May 30:** *“Keep yourselves in the love of God...On those who waver, have mercy”* (Jude 17: 20b-25). **Provision: “Remain in my love.”** Step 1: Every morning, say an *intentional* prayer for the Spirit to keep you in God’s love. If you remain there, mercy—not judgment—will flow. If you find you are judging, repeat step 1.