

My Beloved Ones,

This coming Sunday, we are blessed to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit comes to rest upon the Disciples, and consequently upon the entire Church. Our Lord Himself told His Disciples, *“I will not leave you desolate... the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”* (John 14:18; 26)

From those days, Disciples, and the many women who followed Jesus throughout His Ministry, were gathered together on Mount Zion in a state of constant prayer. The time was about nine in the morning during the Jewish feast of Pentecost (that is, 50 days after the end of Passover) when the pilgrims were going to the Temple to pray, or to make offerings. The Book of Acts tells us that *“Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting”* (Acts 2:2)

If all those present were surprised before, they were soon greeted by something more mysterious: tongues descended from Heaven, onto the Disciples. Of course, the Book of Acts tells us that these were not in fact tongues of fire, but only had the appearance of fire—for they shone brightly but did not burn. According to Sergei Bulgakov, *“Directly behind these, or even together with these external appearances, the event followed the internal, completing in the souls of the believers: ‘all were filled with the Holy Spirit.’”* As a result of this divine gift, the Disciples went out, and began to speak of God’s Word to the pilgrims, all in different tongues. As poor laborers, they had not studied these languages, but this miraculous ability was necessary to help the Disciples fulfill Christ’s Commission to preach to all the nations.

The Disciples carefully explained that Christ, the Redeemer of our sins, is the Son of God, of whom the Prophets had spoken, and that through Christ’s life, death, Resurrection, and His Ascension to sit at the right hand of the Father, Man has been reconciled with God. So astonished were many of these foreigners to hear their own languages, that they listened carefully, and came away believing in Jesus Christ, The Teacher of now Apostles.

Our Pentecost (because it comes 50 days after Pascha) is special for us, not only because it allows us to commemorate this beautiful historical event, but because we ourselves have been blessed to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. If we permit Him to dwell within us by observing God’s Commandments and the Lord’s Teachings, then Holy Spirit will continue to inspire each of to be great Disciples as well. Let us pray then that we be made worthy of the Wisdom, power, and strength from Above to carry out our Lord’s command to witness Him, now, and always.

+ALEXIOS
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