

May 24, 2026 Homily

Pentecost Sunday

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/052426.cfm>

We live in a culture that exalts the ego. Ordinary expressions that we use are evidence of this culture. I want to do this, I want to get this, I want to give this, I think this is right and because I believe it, then it is right. It is all about me, me, me. This egocentric culture has permeated our Christian spirituality as well. Some Catholics practice a consumer religion: They come to church "To get my Jesus," or "to simply pay my respect to the Jesus that doesn't bother me at all." The veneration and worship go on, but there is no fire. During Holy Mass, some people receive what they consider "My Jesus," and then they leave the Church before the final blessing. This way of seeing religion makes faith one more item that we pick and choose according to our convenience.

Actually, the main reason for us, to come to Mass must be this: We come here as a community of faith, together, united in prayer and worship, and in the expectation that we might encounter the living God, so that we might be filled with his Holy Spirit, which means that we might be ablaze, aflame with God's love, and then go out and help to change the world in which we live. We come to church to be strengthened and transformed by the Spirit of God, and then, go back to our normal life, willing to transform the world. Christian spirituality is all about transformation, redemption, conversion, and renewal.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus stresses the obedience that comes about through love. Jesus links obedience to love. The God of Jesus is a Father who loves us all. Some people prefer a god of punishment and fear and prescriptions: They consider themselves good people for reasons that can be good, but not enough: They are religious, dedicated, moral, pious and they believe. But this way of seeing faith does not usually or necessarily change them. It does not transform Christians. It does not make us other Christs. If we have this kind of faith, it inflates our ego, and it doesn't liberate us from ourselves. Rather, it consoles us, it justifies our sins, it defends us. As long as we believe the dogmas, perform the rituals, attend the Masses, receive the Sacraments, say the prayers, then, we think "I am a good Catholic," And we may expect a reward later for behaving, believing, and tithing.

My brothers and sisters, we can believe all these dogmas, say all these prayers, come to all these Masses, and still be a miserable person, not caring about anyone but ourselves, and the center of our life is not God, it is really just, me, me, and me.

Pentecost is another piece of the Paschal Mystery: The Holy Spirit calls us to adult religion, to a real Holy Spirit-fired church, a spirituality that is all about radical transformation and liberation. The true Catholic Church is not easy, not small, not complacent, and not comfortable. It is a radical, deep transformation of our deepest self into the person of Christ. And St. Paul describes this spirituality when he says, "No longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." When we receive the Holy Spirit, God becomes worthy of our time, our passion, our gifts and treasure and our very lives.

And that is TRUE church, TRUE religion, TRUE religious conversion. A mature spirituality sees religion and church for what they truly are about, God and others. Loving God and others. Pentecost is a call to rediscover the Spirit of the Risen Lord: He is the intimate, continuing presence of Christ, teaching us and enabling us to be faithful to the Christ, who has been loving and faithful to us. We need to be mature, to understand that the Spirit of the Lord is always pulling and pushing us out of ourselves, into the heart of our brothers and sisters, and into the very heart of God. When we welcome the Holy Spirit into ourselves and into our communities, He begins an inner conversion within each one of us, as to transform us into agents of change, renewal, and newness of life.

A whole world is expecting people willing to transform it into the kind of society that God wants us to implement. Pentecost happens in us when we get involved in that divine plan, when we become agents and vehicles of God's healing and merciful love, when we renew the face of the earth through our daily actions.

The Universal Prayer Pentecost Sunday  
Sunday 24th May 2026

Celebrant:

As we come to this Pentecost Sunday, the conclusion of the Easter Season, we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit on the Church and our world.

1. For Pope Leo, graced as Bishop of Rome, that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, he will lead the Church to unity, and show the world the beauty of peace.

We pray to the Lord.

2. For all Christians sharing the gifts of the Spirit, that we will constantly be on the move towards that unity for which Jesus prayed at the Last Supper.

We pray to the Lord.

3. For our world as we conclude Laudato si Week of prayer for our environment, that as the Spirit hovered over the formless void, and our planet and life forms were created, so may we work together to preserve it for future generations.

We pray to the Lord.

4. For all who are volunteers in our parishes and cultural communities, schools and colleges, services and organizations, receive our thanksgiving, as the Spirit draws them together for a good purpose in the service of others.

We pray to the Lord.

5. For every place where there is war and hunger, corruption and deceit, that the Spirit will move hearts towards peace and charity, truth and justice, so that the whole world is renewed and reflects the beauty of God.

We pray to the Lord.

6. For an increase in the number of vocations to the Priesthood in the Diocese of Raleigh and to the Religious Life in the Daughters of St. Mary of Guadalupe.

We pray to the Lord.

7. For our dead, that the Holy Spirit will bring them the grace of everlasting life in Christ.

We pray to the Lord.

Celebrant:

Father of Grace, may your Holy Spirit renew the Church, so that together we may contemplate the face of Christ, and with missionary hearts, witness to his truth.

Through Christ our Lord.