

# Filled With the Spirit

## *The Church Is Born at Pentecost*

### **After his resurrection, Jesus spent forty days with his apostles.**

He appeared many times, comforting them and showing that he was truly alive. He taught them about the kingdom of God and gave them instructions. (Acts 1:1-3) Jesus was giving the apostles some final preparation for the mission he entrusted to them: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:19-20)

### **Jesus told the apostles to wait for a special gift.**

At the end of these forty days, Jesus instructed his apostles to wait in Jerusalem, for "in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." Then, as they watched, Jesus was lifted up into the air and returned to heaven. (Acts 1:4-11) Ten days later, on the Jewish festival of Pentecost, the apostles were gathered in prayer with other disciples. As they prayed, they heard a sound like the blowing of a strong wind, and they saw what looked like small flames that descended and came to rest on each of them. (Acts 2:1-4)

### **As Jesus promised, they were suddenly filled with the Holy Spirit.**

No longer afraid of being arrested or killed, the apostles began to courageously preach about Jesus to the people of Jerusalem. The streets were filled with thousands of Jewish pilgrims who had journeyed to Jerusalem for Pentecost. Amazingly, as the apostles preached, the Holy Spirit allowed for them to be understood by all of these pilgrims, no matter what language they spoke! (Acts 2:4-13)

### **With great power, Peter proclaims that Christ is risen.**

The apostle reminds the crowds that they and their leaders put Jesus of Nazareth to death, despite his good works and miracles: "You, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross." But this was not the end of the story: "God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it!" He concludes, "God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah." (Acts 2:23-36)

### **Jesus works through Peter to bring many to faith.**

When the crowds ask Peter what they should do, he responds, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." As a result of this preaching, about three thousand people accept Peter's message and are baptized! (Acts 2:38-41)

### **This is the birth of the Church.**

On Pentecost, the special family of faith begun by Jesus grows from a small group to thousands of people. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the apostles begin fulfilling the mission given them by Jesus to make disciples of all nations. As these new converts return to their own countries, the Christian faith will begin to spread across the known world. As we read the rest of the Acts of the Apostles, we see these seeds bearing fruit, as more and more people come to know Jesus and are welcomed joyfully into his family of faith, the Church.

