
FROM THE PRIEST-IN-CHARGE

People call it 'Whitsun' because once upon a time it was a day for wearing white and going on church processions. The church, however, calls it 'Pentecost' and it's a crucial date in the Church calendar – in some ways the birthday of Christianity as we know it. After the crucifixion the apostles took to meeting in an 'upper room' in Jerusalem, with the doors locked 'for fear of the Jewish authorities'. It was here that the Risen Christ appeared to them several times. Eventually He told them that He was 'going back to the Father', but that they should stay in the city until they were equipped to take His message to the world. They did as they were told with as St. Luke tells us, Mary the mother of Jesus.

Then it happened. Pentecost was a spiritual experience which transformed their lives. Emboldened, they emerged from the upper room and started preaching on the city streets. They continued to do so even when ordered to stop. So what had happened? The answer was two words: Holy Spirit. If that sounds very elusive and vague, think of it in its basic meaning in the Greek of the New Testament: **Breath** – the very source of life itself, the most precious gift of God. At Pentecost the handful of believers were brought to New Life because the Holy Spirit of God breathed upon them. The Church was born; two thousand people were baptised; wimps became witnesses!

Fr. David