

Pentecost - the Descent of the Holy Spirit



Read Acts 2:1-11

¹When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

⁵And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. ⁶And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language. ⁷Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?" ⁸And how *is it that* we hear, each in our own language in which we were born? ⁹Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, ¹¹Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

Description of the Icon: Notice that there is calm, unity, peace in this icon. Whenever the Holy Spirit comes, order abounds! The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Unity! The twelve Apostles were given tongues of fire which allowed them to preach in many languages. In a color icon, you can see the fire represented in each halo. The Apostles were heard preaching the one Gospel, but in many languages. In other words, if someone had come into the room, that person would have heard the Gospel in his or her own language - not a garbled mess of twelve confusing tongues competing for "air time" - but the one sound of the One Truth. Notice that we can tell it's indoors by the fabric draped over the building. The Apostles are gesturing toward one another in a friendly way. Jesus Christ has already ascended into heaven on the fortieth day after His Resurrection, but a place is still reserved for Him at the center top of the gathering. The Gospel book is the symbol for Christ who is very present, but invisible. Who is that funny guy underneath? He symbolizes the inhabited world (*oikoumene* in Greek) pronounced "eekoumenie", and the cloth he is holding has 12 scrolls (in the color version of this icon) that symbolize the teaching by each one of the twelve Apostles which would take place in all parts of the inhabited world.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit: Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the treasury of blessings and Giver of life: come and abide in us. Cleanse us from all impurity and save our souls. gracious Lord.



When all the disciples were in a room together in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit came down upon them, just like Jesus said would happen. Pentecost is the birthday of our Church.