

## **Missionary Commentary**

Pentecost Sunday  
May 19, 2024

## **Sunday Readings**

Acts 2:1-11  
Psalm 104: 1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34  
1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13  
John 20:19-23  
[USCCB Link to the Readings](#)

## **The Spirit Unbound**

Early on in my mission assignment in the Borderlands of El Paso, Texas, and Juarez, Chihuahua, an unusually large number of migrating people arrived. They were from Honduras, Guatemala, Brazil, and a smattering from Venezuela and Haiti, as well. Some arrived from China, others from the Ukraine, and still others spoke only their own local languages, indigenous tongues that I had never heard of.

At the shelters that the local community set up—entire wings of motels, school gymnasiums, parish halls—the guests helped their hosts to cook and serve meals, sort through donated clothing, keep the shelters tidy, and encouraged their children to play and make friends with each other, being sure to include the shy and the distressed children.

In our readings today, cultural and linguistic boundaries disappear at the arrival of the Holy Spirit, as the followers of Christ receive the strength and ability to build bridges among all nations, and thus to continue the work of Jesus Christ, for which the Church is established.

The missionary nature of the Church gives a powerful thrust and focus to all of our activities as disciple missionaries of Jesus Christ, whether they be religious education classes or food pantries, men's clubs or ladies' guilds, parishes or schools, parish councils or altar server teams, choirs or ushers: to the extent we are acting as Church, our goal is to share the Good News of salvation with all. For this, our Church exists, preaching in actions and words of solidarity and compassion, sustainability and accompaniment, cooperating with all people of good will with similar values, released from the chains of fear and the high walls of prejudice.

## **Notes on the Sunday Readings**

### **First Reading**

Acts 2:1-11—The inspired author of this account, Luke, emphasizes that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost took place in the presence of Jews from all over the world, with a kind of “parade of nations” filing before us, showing that the promise of Jesus to

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restore the twelve tribes of Israel is fulfilled for the Chosen People throughout the Diaspora (a kind of “second Pentecost” will take place for Gentiles later in the book—see chapter 10).

### **Responsorial Psalm**

Psalm 104: 1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34 – We sing of the greatness of God, of God’s powerful Spirit, who creates us, fills the earth with creatures, and renews the “face of the earth.”

### **Second Reading**

1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13—Charisms are gifts of the Holy Spirit given for the benefit of the whole community, a variegated body drinking of the one Spirit. The image helps Paul to address the problem of divisions within the Christian community in the city of Corinth, made up of individuals from a diversity of economic and social backgrounds.

### **Gospel**

John 20:19-23—We already know that, in the Gospel of John, “sin” refers specifically to the lack of faith in Jesus, so that when the disciples receive the divine breath of the Holy Spirit, they are commissioned to forgive or retain sins, understood as sharing in the work of Jesus: confronting people with the revealing word to provoke faith or rejection (“sin”).

*Notes and commentary by Fr. Bob Mosher,  
a member of the [Missionary Society of Saint Columban](#).*

**Please pray for the missions.**

**May God bless you in all the ways you Go Forth...**



 **COME, HOLY SPIRIT! CELEBRATE WITH US!!**

This week marks the liturgical anniversary of our Go Forth... program, which started last May during the week before Pentecost. Since then, we’ve talked to missionaries who’ve served throughout the United States and on five continents.

Please consider supporting our work through the Pentecost Appeal:  
<https://uscatholicmission.org/2024-pentecost-appeal>

*As the Father  
has sent me,  
so I send you.*

JOHN 20:21

PENTECOST 2024



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