

Did you know Jews also celebrate the Feast of Pentecost? They do! Pentecost (which in Greek means “fiftieth”) is one of the three major Jewish Feasts (the other two being the Feast of Passover and the Feast of Tabernacles). In the Bible, the Feast of Pentecost is also called the “Feast of Weeks”. For Jews, Pentecost primarily commemorates the revelation of the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai. This occurred 50 days after the



Passover [the Passover marked the day of God’s judgment when the firstborn throughout Egypt were to be struck dead for Pharaoh’s rebellion against God and his oppression of God’s people. Meanwhile, in fidelity to God, Jewish families prepared a sacred meal of lamb and put blood from the sacrificial lamb on their doorposts understanding that through this act of faith the angel of death would spare, “Passover”, their firstborn and ultimately liberate the Jews from slavery in Egypt]. Fifty days after Passover and their departure from Egypt, at daybreak, God came to His people on Mount Sinai in the form of fire (the burning bush), accompanied by thunder, lightning, and the loud blast of trumpets. In receiving the Law from God through Moses, the Jews entered a new Covenant with God and became “His people.” Just as the Jewish Feast of Passover found its ultimate fulfillment when Jesus, the Lamb of God, instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; so also, through Christ, the Jewish Feast of Pentecost would find its ultimate fulfillment 50 days after the new Passover. On this day, 50 days after the Resurrection, God (the Holy Spirit) once again at daybreak descends accompanied by fire and the sound of strong wind and storm (cf. Acts 2:1-41). This time, God does not write on tablets of stone; rather, He penetrates their hearts

giving them “new hearts” and engraving His law and His presence within their souls! Pope Paul VI beautifully summarizes the Christian meaning and significant of Pentecost:

“... the **Church was born at that moment** ... Her body received its **supernatural animation** which penetrated it entirely, infusing new unity into that assembly that was called the Church, and at once conferring various and distinct functions on this or that member of the ecclesial assembly, as on a special organ for the benefit of the whole organism....”

Pentecost is the fruit of Jesus’ total, loving, sacrificial gift of His life. Pentecost is about the love of God filling the hearts of His disciples—vivifying each member of His body. How can we participate fruitfully in this powerful Feast day? Once again, we listen to Pope Paul VI as he teaches us the “one rule” necessary:

“There is one rule: an ordinary requirement is called for from anyone who wishes to pick up the supernatural waves of the Holy Spirit; **it is inner life**. The appointment for the meeting with the ineffable Guest [the Sweet Guest of the soul] is fixed inside the soul . . . Pentecost has had its novena of **meditation and prayer**. **Inner silence is necessary** to listen to the word of God, to experience His presence, to hear God’s call.... We must give inner life its place in the program of our busy existence: a primary place, a silent place, a pure place. We must find ourselves again in order to be fit to have the life-bringing and sanctifying Spirit in us. If not, how can we listen to His testimony?” [Pope Paul VI, Pentecost, May 21, 1972].

May the good Lord help us to make room in our busy lives for the inner silence necessary to be infused and animated by the power of the Holy Spirit! Happy Feast Day!!

Your Servant in Christ,  
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