

We celebrate the birth of Jesus and all the world pauses to celebrate Christmas with us. We celebrate His resurrection, and most of the world recognizes Easter as a very special day on the calendar. But at Pentecost, hardly anyone recognizes it. Yet, this day is important, because Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, and God has given us the wonderful opportunity of being a part of it.

It is in the 2nd chapter of the Book of Acts that we read about the beginning of the Church. *“When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit ...”*

Pentecost is a big thing. And we ought to celebrate in a big way our birthday as Church. It is our birthday, because *we* are the Church. We are the Mystical Body of Christ. On that first Pentecost, the Holy Spirit changed and empowered cowardly and frightened followers of Jesus into courageous and bold proclaimers of the Good News that Jesus is Lord—He is risen and has promised eternal life to all who follow Him. The same Holy Spirit is available to empower us as well.

At the first Pentecost the early Christians discovered a joy as the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a joy that could not be contained. It’s almost like the story of the three prospectors who found a rich vein of gold in California during the gold rush days. They realized what a great discovery they had, and decided, "We’ve a really good thing going here as long as no one else finds out about it." So they each took a vow to keep it secret.

Then they headed for town to file their claims and get the equipment necessary to mine the gold. True to their vows, they didn’t say a word to anybody. They filed their claim, bought the equipment, and headed back to their mine. But when they did, a crowd of people followed them.

And the reason was because *the expression on their faces had given them away*. Their faces were aglow in anticipation of the wealth that soon would be theirs. People knew that they must have found something very special. So a crowd followed them out of town.

For us Christians, we all have the wealth of the Holy Spirit dwelling within, and our faces should be aglow with the Divine Life that we possess. The expressions on our faces ought to give us away. Others should easily be able to see our joy, knowing we have something special, and then want to follow us.

With a birth of a child the lives of the parents and surrounding family are changed forever. The new life of that little person necessarily alters the dynamics of a family, and in most cases, gladly for the better. The birth of the Church has changed our world forever. The new life of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the hearts of Christians is meant to change the dynamics of the family of man, and for the better.

Happy Birthday, Church! Let’s celebrate our joy!