

Handout for week of 5/14/18 Jn. 20: 19-23 & Acts 2: 1-11

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Link to [Beck](#) (paywall) other [Beck](#)

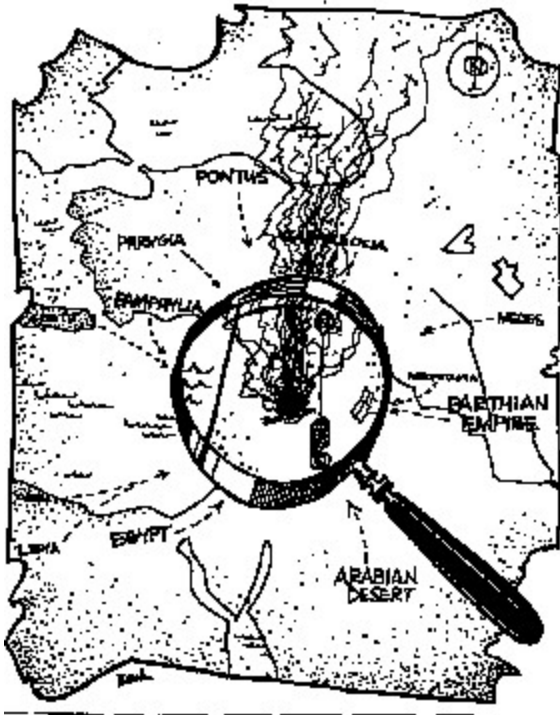
Stone, Naomi. The [Indestructible Holy Spirit](#)

Rolheiser, Fr. Ron. [Praying for Pentecost](#)

[Monastery Sunday Homilies](#)

[YouTube link](#)

[Forgiven Forgivers](#)



Acts 2: 1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. 5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11

(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs--we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues

(Revised Common Lectionary adds this to the reading for the day)!"

12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. 15 These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!

16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. 21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

COMMENTARY:**Pentecost** was originally an Old Testament festival, since the time of Josephus calculated as beginning on the fiftieth day after the beginning of [Passover](#). In the Christian calendar, it falls on the seventh Sunday after [Easter](#). It was called the [Feast of Weeks \(Shavuot\)](#), and in the Old Testament was originally an agricultural festival celebrating and giving thanks for the "first fruits" of the early spring harvest (Lev 23, Exod 23, 34).

By the early New Testament period, it had gradually lost its association with agriculture and became associated with the celebration of God's creation of His people and their religious history. By the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, the festival focused exclusively on God's gracious gift of *Torah* (the "Law") on Mount Sinai. It continues to be celebrated in this manner in modern Judaism.

While there are other references to **Pentecost** in the New Testament (e.g. 1 Cor 16:8), it is most significant in Acts 2 and the familiar scene of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on those in the "upper room." The New Testament writers associate the events of Acts 2 with Pentecost, and relate it to the prophecies of Joel 2 and promises of Jesus (Acts 1:8). In both, the emphasis is on an empowerment through the Holy Spirit to enable the people of God to witness to Jesus the Christ. What seems clear is that Pentecost represents God's gracious, enabling presence actively at work among His people, calling and enabling them to live out in dynamic ways the witness of being His people. Perhaps at this point there is direct contact with the Pentecost of Judaism, for in Judaism the Torah, God's instruction to His people, is the means by which they become His witness to the world.