

TONGUES OF FIRE:



PENTECOST AND NEW CREATION

Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw that the light was good, and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. (Genesis 1:3-5). Just as the first creation began with light, the new creation begins with fire. Pentecost is not merely the birthday of the Church; it is the rebirth of humanity in the Spirit. Sin had fractured creation, but the Spirit now reorders hearts from within. In this new creation, fear gives way to faith, brokenness opens to healing, and death is challenged by life.

Fire, throughout the Bible, is never merely destructive. It is revealing, purifying, and empowering. The burning bush was not reduced



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to ashes; instead, it revealed the living God. The significance of God coming near us with fire in the Bible is that it has burning power without destructive power. When fire is used to cleanse an individual, the person does not feel ashamed, and when a person receives God’s fire, they are fully enlightened by God’s flame without experiencing an overpowering experience. Therefore, at Pentecost, God’s fire came upon every person,

signifying something extremely important—God does not take away who a person really is; instead, He uses His Holy Spirit to renew from within.

While mankind uses various labels and methods to define their identity, God defines each of us through what we have been created for—being a dwelling place for God. Pentecost is in many ways the commencement of a New Creation in God. As God created the first creation when His Spirit was floating over chaos and out of it, He created order and beauty; likewise, when the Holy Spirit entered our sinful, broken, confused condition on the Day of Pentecost, He turned chaos into His order and beauty.

God is joining what sin has separated and empowering what silence and fear have hindered. This power activated a miracle of many languages understood as one voice. At Pentecost, the fire descended again—not on stone tablets or temple altars, but on human hearts.

The tongues of fire signified more than enthusiasm or emotion. They symbolized that God’s Spirit now speaks through humanity. The same breath that hovered over the waters at creation now hovered over the Church, ushering in a New Creation.

There are moments in salvation history when heaven touches earth so vividly that nothing

remains the same. Pentecost is one such moment. Scripture tells us that tongues as of fire rested upon the disciples—not to consume them, but to ignite them. That fire did not burn outwardly; it burned within, transforming fear into courage, silence into proclamation, and ordinary people into witnesses of divine life.

At Babel, language became a barrier; at Pentecost, language became a bridge. Fire rested on each disciple individually, yet all were united in one Spirit. This is the paradox of Pentecost: diversity without division, unity without uniformity. The fire did not erase differences—it sanctified them. Every tongue, every culture, every story became capable of carrying God’s message. Pentecost proclaims that no voice is insignificant when touched by the Spirit.

Pentecost is not confined to the past. The tongues of fire have not been extinguished by time. They still fall—quietly, persistently—on open hearts. The Spirit continues to create anew: in weary souls, in divided communities, in a world longing for meaning. To live Pentecost today is to allow that fire to: Purify our intentions, enlighten our choices, and empower our love. It is believed that God is not finished with creation—and certainly not finished with us. ■

Saint Francis of Assisi

PRAYER FOR PEACE



Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;
 where there is injury, pardon;
 where there is doubt, faith;
 where there is despair, hope;
 where there is darkness, light;
 where there is sadness, joy.
 O divine Master, grant that
 I may not so much seek
 to be consoled as to console,
 to be understood as to understand,
 to be loved as to love.
 For it is in giving that we receive,
 it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.