

FEAST OF PENTECOST  
FATHER FRANCIS  
*REGINA COELI*  
St. Peter's Square  
Sunday, June 8, 2014

*Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!*

The feast of Pentecost commemorates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles gathered in the Upper Room. As Easter is an event that happened during the pre-existing Jewish holiday, and that brings a surprising accomplishment. The book of Acts describes the signs and fruits of the extraordinary effusion: the strong wind and the flames of fire; the fear disappears and gives way to courage; tongues are loosened and everyone understands the announcement. Where to get the Spirit of God, everything is reborn and transformed. The Pentecost event marks the birth of the Church and its public manifestation; and hit us two sections: a Church that is *surprising* and *ruffles*.

A key element of Pentecost is the *surprise*. Our God is a God of surprises, we know. No one expected anything from the disciples after Jesus' death was an insignificant group, the defeated orphans of their Master. Instead there is an unexpected event that arouses wonder; people get upset because each heard the disciples speak in their own language, telling the mighty works of God (cf. *Acts 2,6-7.11*). The Church was born at Pentecost is a community that inspires awe because, with the strength that comes from God, announces a new message - the Resurrection of Christ - with a new language - the universal love. A new ad: Christ is alive, he is risen; a new language: the language of love. The disciples are clothed with power from on high and speak with courage - a few minutes before they were all cowards, but now speak with frankness and courage, with the freedom of the Holy Spirit.

So it is always called to be the Church: able to surprise everyone by announcing that Jesus Christ has conquered death, that God's arms are always open, that his patience is always there waiting for us to heal, to forgive us. Precisely for this mission risen Jesus gave His Spirit to the Church.

Caution: If the Church is alive, always surprising. It's surprise of the living Church. A Church that does not have the ability to surprise the Church is a weak, sick, dying and needs to be hospitalized in the intensive care unit as soon as possible!

Someone in Jerusalem, would have preferred that the disciples of Jesus, blocked by fear, remain locked in the house so as not to create *confusion*. Even today many Christians want this. Instead, the risen Lord leads them into the world: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (*Jn 20:21*). The Church of Pentecost is a Church that is not resigned to be harmless, too "distilled". No, not resigned to this! I do not want to be a decorative element. It is a Church that does not hesitate to come out, meet the people, to proclaim the message that has been entrusted, even if that message bothers or worries consciences, even if that message door, perhaps, problems, and even, at times, there leads to martyrdom. It was born one and universal, with a distinct, but open, a Church that embraces the world but does not capture; leaves him free, but embraces it as the columns of this square, two arms open to receive, but not close again to hold. We Christians are free, and the Church wants us free!

We turn to the Virgin Mary, which was in the morning of Pentecost in the Cenacle, and Mother was with her children. In her, the power of the Holy Spirit has made really "big things" (*Lk 1:49*). She herself had said. She, the Mother of the Redeemer and Mother of the Church, through her intercession obtain for a renewed outpouring of God's Spirit on the Church and the world.