

May 2024

Ascension & Pentecost!

May is a lovely time of year, we're well into spring with summer just around the corner to look forward to. Nature is really beginning to show its magnificence, trees full of leaves, colourful flowers coming into bloom, to name just a couple of things we notice and if we're really lucky we feel the sun on our backs!



However, although we might only be noticing nature's activity a bit more now, that doesn't mean it has been inactive throughout the winter months, we were just not quite so aware of what had been happening around us.

The month of May brings the feast days of Ascension (9th May) and Pentecost (19th May). At the Ascension, Jesus was taken up into a cloud as the disciples stood watching until they could not see him anymore. 10 days later at Pentecost, when they were together again for a festival, a great sound came from heaven that was like the rush of a violent wind that filled the house where they were gathered. Tongues of fire appeared and rested on each of them, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking to each other in their own language (Acts 2:1-4). Jesus' time on earth was completed when he ascended to heaven so it's significant that the Holy Spirit at Pentecost 10 days later, came from heaven fulfilling the promise Jesus made when he told the disciples an Advocate would come to be with us forever, the Spirit of Truth (John 14:16-17).

The wind that came from heaven was transformative; God's power through the Holy Spirit to change our hearts, our minds and our lives. Just as in the changing seasons, there are times when we will notice the activity of the Holy Spirit more than at other times. The wind that came at Pentecost couldn't be missed and as they were filled with the Holy Spirit the people were able to speak in tongues and understand each other. Amazing and astonishing!

We don't actually see wind, but we do feel and see the effect that it has, whether it's gentle summer breeze barely noticeable or a hurricane. We know it is there, but usually only take notice when it's blowing quite hard, so maybe we need to take more time to be still so that we notice the Holy Spirit's activity in the quieter times too, in the gentle breeze; after all hurricanes don't come along very often! Think of your breathing, mostly we are not conscious of it but unless we breathe, we can not live. God's Spirit is similar, although we are not always aware of it, we can not live a spiritual life without it. (Henri Nouwen)

This Pentecost may the gift of God's Spirit fill your hearts, homes and your family.

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