

## Pentecost - 2021

And people from Judea, Cappodoicia, Pontus and Asia, - Romans and Egyptians and Arabs - all heard them speaking about God in their own language - and they were amazed. Amazed? They were gobsmacked - and so would we be!  
And why? What makes this possible?

The gift of the Holy Spirit

- the gift that Jesus promises, when he tells his disciples, on the night he is betrayed, before he goes away - I will not leave you orphaned, or abandoned! I will send you the comforter, the Holy Spirit.

*When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father*

*it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.*

*16:13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears,*

And its the Spirit of Jesus that says to the disciples, the followers of Jesus in every age - there's plenty of room in heaven.

Its the Spirit that says - all can come to Jesus - young or old, child, adult, man, woman, Jew, Gentile, Greek, Roman, sinner or saint. - In Christ there is no slave or free..

And if all are welcome, then each is invited in their own language.

The Spirit speaks to each of us in the way we need to hear it.

We all have different ways of hearing things:

- some read the Telegraph, some the Daily Mail - same news, different language!

And when I say about our language - I mean not just the words - but what they mean, what they carry, the culture and context they're wrapped up in.

So God speaks to one in incense and candles

God speaks to another in visions and tongues

God speaks to one in modern songs

God speaks to another through fellowship

We hear God speaking to us.. in our voice, in ways we understand. Because God knows each one of us, and is desperate to speak to us, so if we listen carefully, we will hear him.

The funny thing is, that most of us assume that because this is the language that God speaks to us in, it must be the language of God.

That God's real language is English or whatever, and that everyone else has it in translation.

- so why don't you all like hymns and canticles as much as me?

- Why don't you like serving tea and coffee like me?
- Or making blankets for Syria?
- Can you not hear God like I can?!

And of course the truth is that the Church needs to speak in lots of different languages, just like at Pentecost - in order to reach all the people.

So we need Messy church to reach young families, we need craft groups and Forest Edge to reach folk, we need Recreate and the 8 o'clock service - God doesn't have one language, but many.

So the church needs the gift of tongues, of many languages, of many different expressions - and we need to understand that others are hearing God and speaking to God too. In their own way, their own language.

I've been re-reading the gospels recently - and last week I read that bit about - don't' take the splinter out of someone else's eye before you've taken the plank out of your own.

I'd forgotten how good that is, and I used to love it as a child.

But look - if we're going to help others to hear God in their language, maybe we need to make sure we can hear God clearly in our mother tongue - in the way we hear from God.

So this week - consider how God speaks to you - through action, or reading, or serving, or other people - I really want you to do this homework - this is not rhetorical. How does God speak to you.. and it might be through the Bible or Word for Today - and that's great, but try and listen deeper as well - how else does he speak to you, what others ways are you open to receiving his message of love?

And then I'm going to see if you'll be willing to share next week - how God speaks, and what he's said... And hopefully it will be like Pentecost all over again - with so many different ways that God speaks.

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**First reading - Acts 2. 1-21 - Les Sacre**

2 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[a] 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 their own language being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,[b] 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!" 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." Peter Addresses the Crowd 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 people 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 heavens 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.’[c]

### **Second Reading - John 15. 26-27; 16. 4b-15 - Romey**

15:26 "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf.

15:27 You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning.

16:4b "I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you.

16:5 But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, 'Where are you going?'

16:6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts.

16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

16:8 And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment:

16:9 about sin, because they do not believe in me;

16:10 about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer;

16:11 about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned.

16:12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

16:13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

16:14 He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

16:15 All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.