

***Fifth Sunday of Easter***  
***May 18, 2025***  
***Year of the Holy Spirit***

*“I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.” (John 16:12-13)*

As the first Christians began to proclaim the Good News (Gospel) of Jesus, we believe and profess they were led by the Holy Spirit. As we have previously discussed, these initial missionaries were able to teach by recalling what they had either seen, as was the case with the Apostles, or what they had heard proclaimed, those who would come upon the scene later. During his missionary journeys, Saint Paul would establish church communities guided by elders with one serving as the head presbyter (priest). It was this chosen person who would continue to teach the Christian Faith, offer the Sacraments and serve the needs of the faithful. Let us take this weekend to reflect on a very striking point: the early church, despite its consisting of various peoples and being led by various ministers, remained consistent in its beliefs. It would define questions asked and yet explained. It would offer prayerful and wise answers as to the existence of and nature of God. All these actions of the early church, we believe are guided by the working of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. We believe these to be the four pillars of our Catholic Faith. Our Catholic Faith, as taught by the early Councils, is: One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic.

Our Faith teaches the Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father and God the Son by a purposeful act of God's Will and God's Love. God desires, actually He has always desired, mankind to know, love and serve Him as a community. God is a community of Love (Father, Son and Spirit) and wants His children to imitate Him. Therefore, He makes man and woman. He tells them to go out, to be fruitful and multiply. Even after mankind separates himself from God, due to disobedience (sin), God remains faithful to man. God cannot be unfaithful to His Word spoken from the beginning, nor untrue to His very Self, His Love. Through Abraham, our father in faith, God makes a covenant which promises descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky. We recall during the time of the Exodus, God, through His chosen instrument Moses, establishes communal Liturgical Worship (The Tent of Meeting). We can read of the various furnishings God commanded be placed within the Tent. Various items consecrated for the sole purpose of being used to give praise to Him. Furthermore, God chooses and has anointed Aaron to lead this worship as His Priest. Much later in our shared Christian history, King David desired to build a Temple where this worship would daily be conducted. It was left to his son, King Solomon, to complete this task. Although we can read of its being rebuilt after the exiles return from Babylon. And, its needing to be re-consecrated after it was profaned during the Greek occupation through the placing of pagan statues within its walls. The Temple would stand until its final destruction by the armies of Rome around 70AD. Jesus would instruct His Apostles and disciples to go into the whole world

and establish places, churches, where the praise of God would resound every day in one, perfect, true sacrifice, Himself, Body and Blood.

In the story of The Acts of the Apostles, Saint Luke records these things being done. These various societies are held together by something more than geography, political leaders or national/ethnic communities. They are “one” because God is “One.” This is the first pillar of our Catholic Faith: the Church is One. She is one because her children, at all times and places are united together by the bond of Faith. We have faith in the words spoken by the Word. We express this unerring trust in our united liturgical worship, reception of these same Sacraments, adherence to the same universal law and governance under Jesus Christ through His visible witness, our Roman Pontiff, Pope Leo XIV.

When these earliest of missionaries embarked from Jerusalem intending to spread the Good News of Jesus, they established one church. This one church would be called Christian and later, as Saint Peter moved to the city of Rome, would hold the title Roman Catholic Church. Why did they proclaim this one faith and not numerous faiths? Because God is One. Our Catholic Faith, everything from the way we pray and worship to the what we believe and hold as infallibly true, express this Oneness. God is One and we, gathered together in His Name, are one as well.