

Today is Pentecost Sunday and in many ways, Pentecost is the birthday of the church. On that first Pentecost, there was no church. Christ Jesus had ascended to heaven and the apostles were waiting for the promised Holy Spirit who would be their advocate.

And the Spirit came and rested on each of the Apostles and then something amazing happened: the love of God was proclaimed to all people in their own language. People heard how Christ Jesus died for the sins of the world and then rose from the dead. They heard about how God was offering forgiveness to all people and the hope of eternal life to all who believed. They heard about all of this not in the native language of the apostles, but in their own native language.

There is evidence that Jesus and the disciples used Greek, Aramaic and Hebrew. But that is it. The disciples who are now called apostles did not speak any other language and yet they were able to proclaim the gospel in the native language of all.

It was the work of the Spirit that allowed the apostles to share the gospel. It brought the people together as the body of Christ because they heard and believed in what God accomplished in Christ. The Spirit gave the apostles the words and the language to speak so that those who heard could understand what God had done for them.

Nothing has really changed since that first Pentecost. Every day, the Spirit gives us words to speak in a language that others can understand. The work of the Spirit is to help each one of us. The Spirit gives us the strength that we need to overcome the challenges of our life. The Spirit of God lifts us up in God's grace and sends us out the door to share God's love with all who will receive it.

And sometimes when the Spirit is working among us, there are no words to speak. Sometimes the best words for us to say are the ones where we remain silent and just listen. We are the apostles for today who are given the words to say in a language that others can understand.

Whatever that language sounds like doesn't matter.

O theos einai agape  
Dieu e' Amour  
Gud ester day

The message is still the same. God loves you and HE offers you forgiveness and eternal life. It is the Spirit who helps us to share that message through our words and actions.