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Pentecost: the Coming of the Holy Spirit



"In my heart is a plant called righteousness, and it requires watering once a week." So said Oliver Wendell Holmes, over 150 years ago in reference to his Christian faith and weekly attendance at church.

It was a worthy, if duty driven view of Christian commitment. There are many older church goers today who would feel the same. In their view, Church is there to make you a decent person, and it is not there for enjoyment or passionate commitment.

In this country it was the rise of the Pentecostal Church in the last century which changed all that. With Pentecostalism came a sense of exuberance and a conviction of God's power to change us. It was a rediscovery of the story of the coming of God's Spirit to the early disciples in Acts chapter 1.

Today, all the main stream churches, in varying degrees, speak about the gift of the Holy Spirit. It means that Christianity is no longer just a struggle to do the right thing, behave morally, and be a decent citizen. There's a real promise that God will send his Spirit to breathe new life into our institutions and personalities so that we come across as people of passion, as well as having moral convictions.

Being a Christian with the help of the Holy Spirit is a lot better than trying to do it all in your own strength. This week end the churches celebrate Pentecost: the Coming of the Holy Spirit. It's a great festival!