

PENTECOST SUNDAY

The great feast of Pentecost is the feast of the Holy Spirit and the feast of the birth of the Church.

Not really being an expert on either, I sometimes dream of what the Church would have looked like if it had not become allied with the Roman Empire and its structures. My guess, and, of course, it is only a guess is that we would have a number of things:

- A simpler Church that may or may not have churches. I wonder if it would be a church that gathers in homes and meeting places but doesn't align itself with monumental structures;
- A decentralised Church where the local community chooses its leaders and the local community decides on what is required for membership based on the Gospel.
- A pastorally centred Church focussed on the needs of the poor and that creates a sense of responsibility among its members for all people;
- An itinerant Church that doesn't locate itself in any particular area like a diocese or a state but is constantly on the move preaching the Gospel and responding to the needs of people.
- A poorer Church that depends more on goodwill and generosity than on investment accounts and the like and where its ministers earn their keep in a multitude of roles.
- A more transparent Church where decisions are made and enforced by the community itself.
- An honest Church that isn't allied with state structures and held in chains by the status quo.
- A humble Church where the sheep and the shepherds interchange their positions often and no one is counted as more important than the other.
- A joyful Church where the members realise their great dignity and are unrestrained in telling of the good things that the Lord has done for us.
- An inclusive Church where the criterion for membership is baptism but a baptism that requires those baptised to care for all humanity.
- A Church where the laws are based on love and everything that benefits the true good of other people.
- A sacramental Church which is much greater than 7 Sacraments because it recognises the sacrament of the present moment and realises that God is to be found in the most trivial, the most hurtful, the most unclean of places because they are inhabited by people.