

**Homily on the Occasion of
the Convocation of
the 2026 Archdiocesan Synod
on Pentecost Sunday, 8th June, 2025
St Francis Xavier's Cathedral
“As the Father Sent Me, So I Am Sending You”**



“Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.” Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, this is the cry of the Church on Pentecost, a cry of longing, of faith, and of hope. On this holy day, we are drawn again into the mystery of the Church’s birth—the moment when fear was transformed into courage, when confusion gave way to clarity, and when the scattered were gathered by the fire of divine love. Today, that same Spirit breathes in us, calling us not merely to remember but to participate anew.

This Pentecost is a moment of deep significance for our Archdiocese of Adelaide. As we proclaim the mighty works of God in many tongues and rejoice in the Spirit poured out upon us, we also formally **launch the journey toward our 2026 Archdiocesan Synod**. It is a moment of grace and of commissioning. Pentecost is not only about what happened then—it is about what the Spirit wants to do now, among us and through us.

Today we stand at a threshold moment: 2,000 years after the Spirit descended on the Apostles in wind and fire, and now, in this Archdiocese of Adelaide, in this Jubilee Year, we are convoked once again. We gather not in fear behind locked doors, but in faith, opening our hearts to the breath of God. We, too, are sent as witnesses to every person, language, culture, and corner of this land.

1. Behind Locked Doors – The Spirit that Breaks In And Yet Peace

In today’s Gospel, we find the disciples behind locked doors. They are afraid, disoriented, and unsure. Maybe, in our own way, we too have known those rooms—places of fear, of uncertainty, or spiritual fatigue. Yet into that room, the risen Christ comes. He does not scold or condemn. He does not say, “Well, great disciples you turned out to

be!” No He offers peace: *“Peace be with you.”* (Incidentally the first words of Pope Leo to the world). Then he breathes on them and says, *“Receive the Holy Spirit.”*

This breath is not merely a comfort; it is a commissioning. It is the same breath that once stirred the dust to life in Eden; it is the same Spirit that hovered over the waters at creation, the same Spirit that overshadowed Mary. And now, this Spirit is given to the Church. The Spirit is given that they—and we—might be sent. This is the Spirit of mission, of movement, of boldness this is the transformation wrought by the Holy Spirit.

2. All Together in One Place

In our First Reading today, we hear of the disciples gathered *“had all met in one room.”* It is not just geography—it is unity. This unity was the condition for Pentecost. It remains so. As we begin this synodal journey—this “walking together” as God’s pilgrim people—we, too, must gather not only in one place but in one Spirit. We need each other. We need the different voices, gifts, charisms, and dreams that make up the Body of Christ.

The Spirit comes not to flatten differences but to sanctify them. The miracle of Pentecost is not that everyone spoke the same, but that everyone understood. In a divided world, where shouting often replaces listening, the synodal path is a counter-cultural witness. It says: *we listen, we discern, we walk together.*

The Acts account ends with the astonished question: *“How does it happen that each of us hears them in his own native language?”* This is the Spirit’s work: to make the Gospel intelligible to every heart, culture, generation, and context. Our task as an Archdiocese is to ask: how can we, in this time and place, speak and live the Gospel so that it is truly

heard—by the young, by the wounded, by the searching, by those on the margins?

3. A Synod for a New Pentecost

As we open the 2026 Synod journey, we must dare to hope for a *new Pentecost* in our midst. The Synod is not a meeting. It is not a strategic plan. It is a prayerful journey of discernment where we ask, “*Holy Spirit, what are you saying to the Church in Adelaide today?*”

This is why we listen. This is why we gather people from every parish, school, community, and ministry. This is why we want voices from the heartland and the margins: from the young and the old, from migrants and First Nations peoples, from clergy and lay, from those within and those at the edges of the Church.

As St Paul writes in the letter to the Romans, “All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God... the Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit.” The Synod is about learning once more how to be led—not by our fears or our preferences—but by the Spirit of God who renews.

5. Send Us Out

So, what does Pentecost ask of us—today?

1. It asks us to open the locked doors of our hearts and let the Spirit in.
2. It asks us to listen, deeply and patiently, to one another and to the cries of the world.
3. It asks us to risk going forth—to be sent, as the Father sent Jesus.
4. It asks us to pray: *Lord, send out your Spirit... and renew the face of the earth.* Not only the earth out there—but the Church here, the heart here, the home here.

Dear sisters and brothers, this is our Pentecost moment. This is our Synodal beginning. As we gather around the altar today as the Body of Christ, we bring not only bread and wine—we bring our fears, our hopes, our questions, our longing to be Church together.

And from this altar, from which we receive the Body of Christ, we will go out—anointed, empowered, and renewed by the Spirit, bearing witness that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

And let us pray with confidence and boldness:

**“Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth
—beginning here in Adelaide, in our homes, in our hearts,
and in this Synod.”**

