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## *Learning to See*

**An article from the *Cathedral Times*  
by Canon George Maxwell**

Scriptures tell us what to expect of the Spirit: it will come like the wind; it will make a loud sound. It will be the same spirit which conveyed wisdom in the Hebrew Scriptures, yet different, too. It will be the Resurrected Christ.

This Spirit allows each of us to speak in our own voice, yet all of us to understand. It allows us to see the whole, to take all of the disparate parts and bring see them as a whole.

You'll know it's the Spirit because you will feel compassion. Nothing is wasted. Nothing is left out. No one is forgotten. The least, the lost, and the last are all part of the whole. These are the marks of the Spirit.

When we were baptized, the priest places his hands on our head, marked our forehead with the sign of the cross, and said to each one of us: "You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in baptism and marked as Christ's own forever."

Living into our baptism is a journey, though.

We start this journey by looking out into our families and communities and learning how to be in relationships without fear. We continue this journey by walking out into the world, witnessing to the faith and love that we have experienced.

This is what Pentecost is about—not something that happened way back then, but something that is happening now, and again tomorrow, and each day after.

And it doesn't have to be hard. It doesn't have to be painful. It doesn't always involve a lot of sacrifice. Sometimes it can just be fun. Let me give you an example.

It's 1999, right here at the Cathedral of St. Philip. It's July 4th. Now you know what happens on July 4th. Yes, we celebrate the birthday of the country, but there's something else: the Peachtree Road Race. And that year the race was scheduled for Sunday morning. Try getting to church when the Peachtree Road Race is being run during the time of your service.

So churches along Peachtree struggled with the decision. "Don't run it in the morning. It'll interfere with church. This is not the right thing to do."

The Dean made a different decision. "You know, if we're going to get all of those visitors then we should welcome them." And so we moved the service out to the street. And the Dean proceeded to bless the runners using our image of water, using our concepts of blessing, witnessing to our grace and excellence and hospitality.

We've done it every year since. We have blessings for Muslims. We have blessings for Jews. We even have blessings for Baptists.

We learned how to see, guided by the spirit. And it was fun. It brought others in. It witnessed to our faith. It witnessed to the world.

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