

**Homily Outline for the Vigil Mass of Pentecost prior to the
Sports Faith International Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony
Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church
Kenosha, Wisconsin
May 22, 2021**

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Bishop of Springfield in Illinois**

I. Symbolism of the Bishop's Mitre

A. From the Greek word *mitra* which means "turban."

1. In the Book of Leviticus, Moses put a mitre on his brother Aaron's head as a symbol that he was a high priest of Israel.
2. It probably looked more like a turban.
3. The Bishop's mitre comes in this cone shape as a symbol of the tongues of fire that came down on the apostles at Pentecost.
4. The two flaps hanging from the back of the mitre are reminiscent of the sweatband worn by Greek athletes, as St. Paul wrote, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness" (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

B. It is fitting to speak of the symbolism of the mitre as we celebrate Pentecost.

1. In addition to the tongues of fire, the two sides of the mitre symbolize the Old and New Testaments, one Mount Sinai and the other Mount Calvary.
2. Pentecost is celebrated by the Jewish people 50 days after Passover, marking the first harvest, during which time Moses received the Law from God on Mount Sinai.
3. Pentecost is celebrated by Christians 50 days after Easter, marking the gift of the Holy Spirit.

II. We receive the Holy Spirit first at Baptism and then in the fullness of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation.

A. What is primary is what *God* is doing in the Sacraments through His grace;

B. What we do is in response to His grace.

III. Jesus promised that the Spirit will guide us to all truth.

A. It is fitting that the Holy Spirit comes in the form of tongues of fire.

B. Our tongues can speak words that hurt others, or they can speak the truth.

C. Tongues of fire can also destroy, or they can bring about good.

1. Fire applied to dough turns it into bread.

2. The fire of the Holy Spirit turns bread into the Body of Christ, which we receive in this Eucharist.

IV. May God give us this grace. Amen.