

Chapter 7

The Bible and the Catholic Church

In this chapter we explore the relationship between the Bible and the Catholic Church. The Holy Spirit is the source of life for the Church. This one source has two aspects: Scripture, and the living tradition of a trustworthy interpretation of Scripture. This living tradition has been handed down in an unbroken line from the apostles. The *Acts of the Apostles* reports that the community of fearful but faithful disciples, gathered together after the ascension of the risen Lord (*Luke 24:50-53*), were filled by the Holy Spirit on the Jewish feast of Pentecost (*Acts 2*).

The beginning of the Church

Luke wrote the Gospel that bears his name and the *Acts of the Apostles*. For Luke, Pentecost marks the beginning of the Church. We know from careful study that the description of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was written in the book of *Acts* around fifty years after it is reported to have occurred. For the first followers of Christ, the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) shaped how they understood their experience of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead.

One story, four Gospels

Filled with the Holy Spirit and informed by the living memory of what Jesus did and said, the disciples wanted to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. As the disciples told of the words and actions of Jesus, they shaped the way they told the story to suit those who were listening. This is why we have four Gospels though each of them tells the same story.