

Curate's Chronicles – May 2026 (Our Mother Tongue is Love)



Painting by Edgardo De Guzman, Pentecost, 2014

*"in the last days I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh.
I will work wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below".
(Acts 2.17 – 21)*

Our Mother-tongue Is Love; A Sonnet for Pentecost

Malcolm Guite

Today we feel the wind beneath our wings
Today the hidden fountain flows and plays
Today the church draws breath at last and sings
As every flame becomes a Tongue of praise.
This is the feast of fire, air, and water
Poured out and breathed and kindled into earth.
The earth herself awakens to her maker
And is translated out of death to birth.
The right words come today in their right order
And every word spells freedom and release
Today the gospel crosses every border
All tongues are loosened by the Prince of Peace
Today the lost are found in His translation.
Whose mother tongue is Love in every nation

Dear Friends,

As we move through the beautiful month of May here in our Suffolk countryside, we find ourselves drawing closer to the great festival of Pentecost. It is a season where the earth feels fully awake, and in our church calendar, it is the moment we celebrate the "feast of fire, air, and water" being kindled into the very earth beneath our feet.

In his sonnet for Pentecost, drawn from 'Sounding the Seasons', sonnets for the Church Year Malcolm Guite writes: *"The earth herself awakens to her maker and is translated out of death to birth."*

Guite's poetry reminds us that the Holy Spirit is often revealed through the most dynamic elements of creation: the rushing wind (air), the river of life (water), and the tongues of flame (fire). You might wonder, as the poet did, where the fourth element – earth - fits into this divine story.

The answer is found in us. We are the "earth," the "Adam" shaped from the clay. We become fully alive only when the Holy Spirit, clothed in those other three elements, comes upon us and becomes part of who we are. At Pentecost, we don't just observe a miracle; we embody it.

The miracle of the first Pentecost was that every person heard the Good News in their own language. Today, that "translation" continues. As the sonnet beautifully concludes, we find ourselves found in the translation of a Prince of Peace: "The right words come today in their right order"; "The gospel crosses every border"; "Whose mother tongue is Love in every nation".

In the book of Acts, we are promised that in the last days, a portion of the Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh, bringing wonders to the heavens and signs to the earth. As we see the signs of spring flourishing in our own fields and gardens, let us also look for the "tongues of praise" in our community.

May we all find our tongues loosened by peace and our hearts speaking the universal language of love this season.

With every blessing,

The Revd Dr Karen Smith

Curate