Odd Exchange: From Ascension Day to Pentecost

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The Old Professor Discovers the Sweet Egg of Discontent

Dave Schelhaas

A small boat moves across his line of sight, one fisherman in the stern, one in the bow, each holding a fishing rod. They are working the weed line—as he has done a hundred times—trolling so slowly they seem hardly to be moving at all, so quiet, powered by an electric motor, they seem almost unreal, ethereal as a cloud.

“What contentment they must feel on this perfect summer day,” the old professor said to himself, but then he recalled what it felt like to be fishing—the restless anticipation, the subtle discontent that sat in the heart until, wham, a walleye hit your bait, then the blood-rush of excitement as you reeled it in and finally, perhaps, contentment, but more likely only an almost frenzied...