



BACKGROUND

In the Gospel of Mark (1:9-11), we read about the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River. As Jesus comes up from the water, the heavens open, the Holy Spirit descends like a dove, and the voice of God the Father says, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." This moment is important because it shows us how Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit and publicly affirmed as the Son of God. It marked the beginning of His mission on earth to teach, heal, and bring God's love to the world. This connects beautifully to the Sacrament of Confirmation. In Confirmation, we too are sealed with the Holy Spirit in a special way. The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that Confirmation "roots us more deeply in the divine filiation" that means we are grounded in the assurance that we are truly God's beloved children and it "gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith" (CCC 1303). Just as Jesus was empowered by the Spirit at His baptism, we are strengthened by the Spirit in Confirmation to live out our faith with courage, love, and joy. So when we hear the story of Jesus' baptism, we remember that God also says to each of us: "You are my beloved child. I am with you."

INTRODUCTION

In this activity, we reflect on the story of Jesus Baptism. Begin this activity by reading the scripture with the children. Then discuss some of these signs of the Holy Spirit's presence and action in scripture together. There are some questions below to get the conversation started. Then introduce the dove activity.

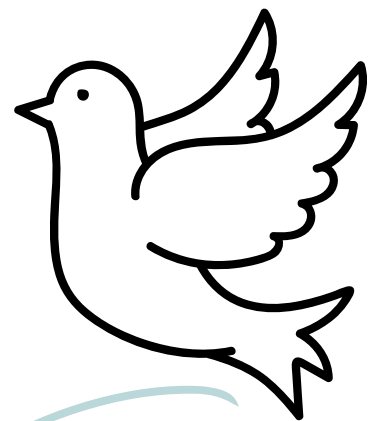
Question for discussion

- *How did the Holy Spirit come in this scripture?*
- *Why do you think the Holy Spirit revealed itself in this way, at this time?*
- *What other images of the Holy Spirit do we read about in the Bible?*

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS - MARK 1:9-11

About that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. As soon as Jesus came out of the water, he saw the sky open and the Holy Spirit coming down to him like a dove.

A voice from heaven said, "You are my own dear Son, and I am pleased with you."





THE BAPTISM OF JESUS - PAPER PLATE DOVE

DOVES - SYMBOL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As one of the images or symbols of the Holy Spirit is a dove, invite the participants to create their own dove craft.

YOU WILL NEED:

- White paper plates
 - Pens, Felt pens, colours
 - Scissors
 - Masking tape
- Optional
- Yellow, orange or red paper in shape of water drop (template on page 4)
 - Ribbon or string.

INSTRUCTIONS

Prepare before the session:

- Draw template of the dove on the back of each plate
- or create a few example plates to get the participants to model from.
- Print out drop template onto the coloured paper (pre cut for ease).



At the session:

1. Children cut out the template, starting from the wings, then the body.
2. Assemble the dove. Add a wing to each side, round side down, and tape to the back of the body.
3. Draw feet on the body, a beak and two eyes.

Option of adding Gifts of the Spirit

4. Each child receives 7 coloured drops and they write the gifts of the Holy Spirit on each one.
5. Using string or ribbon, tape the 'gifts' to the back of the wings of the dove.
6. Add an extra piece of string so the dove can be hung up at home.

