



BACKGROUND

The day of Pentecost marks the fulfillment of all that Jesus accomplished in his passion, death and resurrection. With the coming of the Holy Spirit, the 'Holy Trinity is fully revealed'. God's love is poured into our hearts and all those who believe in him can share in his Kingdom (CCC, 731-733).

In the book of Joel, the prophet writes, 'The days will come when I will give my Spirit to everyone' (Joel 2:28). Filled with the Holy Spirit, these are the words Peter begins with as he preaches to the crowd as he tells them about all Jesus has accomplished in God's great plan. Their eyes are opened and about 3000 are baptised that day.

But it didn't stop there! It was Pope Paul IV who said 'The Sacrament of Confirmation makes the grace of Pentecost perennial in the Church' (DCN, 1971). This reminds us that the same Spirit who came upon the disciples so long ago continues to be active in the Church and in each of us. Just as the disciples were changed at Pentecost, so too are we through Confirmation. In the Catechism it says:

"It is evident from its celebration that the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost (CCC. 1302).

Through Confirmation, we too are deeply rooted in our identity as children of God; we are more firmly united to Christ - our souls imprinted with an indelible spiritual mark - the "character," which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of his Spirit; and we are empowered with the gifts of the Holy Spirit to live like Jesus did - to share the faith by word and action as his faithful witnesses (CCC. 1303).

INTRODUCTION

In these activities, we reflect on the story of Pentecost and of the effects of the Holy Spirit, both on the disciples at Pentecost and on us as we make our Confirmation.

Begin by reading the scripture with the children. Then discuss some of the effects of the Holy Spirit.

After each activity, take some time to debrief with the children. There are some questions below each activity to get the conversation started.





THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - ACTS 2:1-17, 38-39, 41-42

On the day of Pentecost all the Lord's followers were together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person there. The Holy Spirit took control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.

Many religious Jews from every country in the world were living in Jerusalem. And when they heard this noise, a crowd gathered. But they were surprised, because they were hearing everything in their own languages. They were excited and amazed, and said: Don't all these who are speaking come from Galilee? Then why do we hear them speaking our very own languages? Some of us are from Parthia, Media, and Elam. Others are from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya near Cyrene, Rome, Crete, and Arabia. Some of us were born Jews, and others of us have chosen to be Jews. Yet we all hear them using our own languages to tell the wonderful things God has done.

Everyone was excited and confused. Some of them even kept asking each other, "What does all this mean?" Others made fun of the Lord's followers and said, "They are drunk."

Peter stood with the eleven apostles and spoke in a loud and clear voice to the crowd: Friends and everyone else living in Jerusalem, listen carefully to what I have to say! You are wrong to think that these people are drunk. After all, it is only nine o'clock in the morning. But this is what God told the prophet Joel to say, "When the last days come, I will give my Spirit to everyone".

[Peter continued preaching to the crowd about all the things that Jesus had done. When they heard all that Peter had said they asked each other, 'what should we do?']

Peter said to them, "Turn to God and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is for you and your children. It is for everyone our Lord God will choose, no matter where they live."



On that day about 3,000 believed his message and were baptized. They spent their time learning from the apostles, and they were like family to each other. They also broke bread and prayed together.



BALLOON AIR FUN

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 balloon per child

INSTRUCTIONS

As you tell the Pentecost story, encourage the children to blow short breaths of air into their balloon, making it grow bigger. Invite the children to let the balloons go and watch as they fly around the room until the balloons run out of air and fall on the floor.

DEBRIEF

- Through baptism and confirmation we are given the gifts of the Holy Spirit
 - name these (wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and wonder).
- What happens if we don't use our gifts?
 - We will be lifeless. We won't be living the best life we can be living.
- Confirmation helps us to understand the Holy Spirit received at Baptism and active in our lives.
- How can we be active Spirit people in our community?



PASS THE PARCEL

YOU WILL NEED:

- 7 cards, each with one Gift of the Holy Spirit written on it.
- Gifts of the Spirit cards each wrapped in newspaper, making the parcel.
- Music to play during the game.

INSTRUCTIONS

Children pass the parcel until the music stops. When the music stops the child holding the parcel unwraps one layer of paper. If there is nothing there, the music starts again and the children continue passing the parcel. If something is unwrapped, the child holds up the card and reads it out to the group.

DEBRIEF

- Each time one of the gifts is unwrapped, the leader leads a discussion about what the gift is and how we can use it.





BALLOON MESSAGE

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 long piece of string or fishing line
- 1 plastic balloon
- Note paper with messages from or about God/Jesus/Holy Spirit
- Sticky tape
- Straw
- Pens

INSTRUCTIONS

Blow up the balloon (but don't tie it) hold the end of the balloon securely

1. Thread the string or fishing line through the straw, sliding straw to one end.
2. Tape the balloon to the straw as shown. Attach a note to the balloon with sticky tape.
3. You need two people to hold each end of the string or fishing line.
4. Pull the string tight and someone counts to three.
5. Let go of the end of the balloon and watch the rocket fly! The person at the other end of the string reads the message to the group.

DEBRIEF

- What did it feel like to receive a message about God from someone else?
- How do kind and faith-filled messages help us grow in our relationship with God?
- How is this activity like the Holy Spirit at Pentecost?
- What can we do to keep sharing God's message with others?

