

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ, having entered the sanctuary of heaven once and for all, intercedes constantly for us as the mediator who assures us of the permanent outpouring of the Holy Spirit. [CCC 667]

The Ascension of Jesus into heaven is recorded in Mark's and Luke's Gospels, and it is in the Acts of the Apostles that we have the scene, depicted in so many works of art, of Jesus, together with angels ascending out of sight into the sky.

The Acts of the Apostles records that this event took place forty days after Jesus' resurrection. The number forty in the Scriptures signifies completeness and so Jesus has completed his work on earth and now commissions the Apostles to carry out this work and preach the Gospel to the whole world.

To enable them to do this, he sends the Holy Spirit upon them on Pentecost Sunday. They spend the days between the Ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit in prayer with Mary and other women, and other disciples [see Acts 1:14], as an example of what we should be doing in the time leading up to special events in our lives. We can be confident that the Holy Spirit who came to us in our Baptism will support us in being the people that God wants us to be.

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE IN THIS LESSON

Acts 1:7-9; 2:1-4 | *The Coming of the Holy Spirit*

The apostles are Jesus' witnesses because they share in the intimacy of his communion with God. They are Jesus' witnesses because they are to witness not only to what God has promised and to what Jesus has done and said, but to Jesus himself, for it is Jesus' own Spirit, the Spirit of love given him by the Father, that will bring about the restoration of all things through their ministry.

They are to begin in Jerusalem, for they are witnessing to what has been promised to Israel. Their witness is to include Judea and Samaria, for the kingdom of God is to be experienced by an Israel that is healed of division. It is to reach out 'to the end of the earth', for no one is excluded from God's loving design.

'The day of Pentecost' ('the fiftieth day') is the name used by Greek-speaking Jews for the harvest festival, the 'Feast of Weeks', celebrating the conclusion of the grain harvest. The fifty days were counted from the day after the Sabbath following the Passover and the eating of the unleavened bread [Leviticus 23:15-16]. At least from the time of the fall of the temple in 70AD, Pentecost also celebrated the gift of the Torah at Mount Sinai in the third month after the Hebrews left Egypt.

The disciples are still together, gathered in prayer [see Acts 1:14], awaiting the baptism of the Holy Spirit promised them by Jesus [see Acts 1:5]. 'Suddenly from heaven' the gift is given. Moses ascended Mount Sinai in response to God's call [Exodus 19:20], and returned with the Torah (Ten Commandments), sharing with the assembled people what he had received. So it is that Jesus, 'taken up into heaven' [Acts 1:2], now gives to his assembled disciples the Spirit which he has received from the Father.

*Acts of the Apostles. Verse by Verse Commentary.
Michael Fallon MSC. Chevalier Press 2003*

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MAIN TEACHING AND LEARNING POINTS

- Jesus returned to his Father in heaven and sent a helper called the Holy Spirit.
- On Pentecost Sunday, members of God's family celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit.

PENTECOST

Members of God's family celebrate the coming of the helper, the Holy Spirit upon the disciples on Pentecost Sunday. On this day, we remember that the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit which helped them to teach all people about Jesus.

On Pentecost Sunday the priest wears the colour red as a reminder of the Holy Spirit.

GOD'S WORD

Acts 1:7-9; 2:1-4 | *The Coming of the Holy Spirit*

Parent: *A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.*

Jesus said to them, 'The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority, and it is not for you to know when they will be. But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will be filled with power, and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem, in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

When the day of Pentecost came, all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly there was a noise from the sky which sounded like a strong wind blowing, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire which spread out and touched each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak. [GNT]

The Word of the Lord.

Child responds: Thanks be to God.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

Ask your child the following questions to help them reflect on the Scripture.

- **What did Jesus promise the disciples before he left them?**
- **Where was Jesus going after he had spoken to the disciples?**
- **When did Jesus send the Holy Spirit to the disciples?**
- **What did the disciples hear on the day of Pentecost?**
- **What did the disciples see?**
- **What happened when the tongues of fire touched each person?**
- **What do you think this story tells us?**

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Begin with the Sign of the Cross.

Catechist Let us pray:
Come Holy Spirit!
All Come Holy Spirit!

Catechist fill our hearts
All fill our hearts

Catechist touch us with your love.
All touch us with your love.

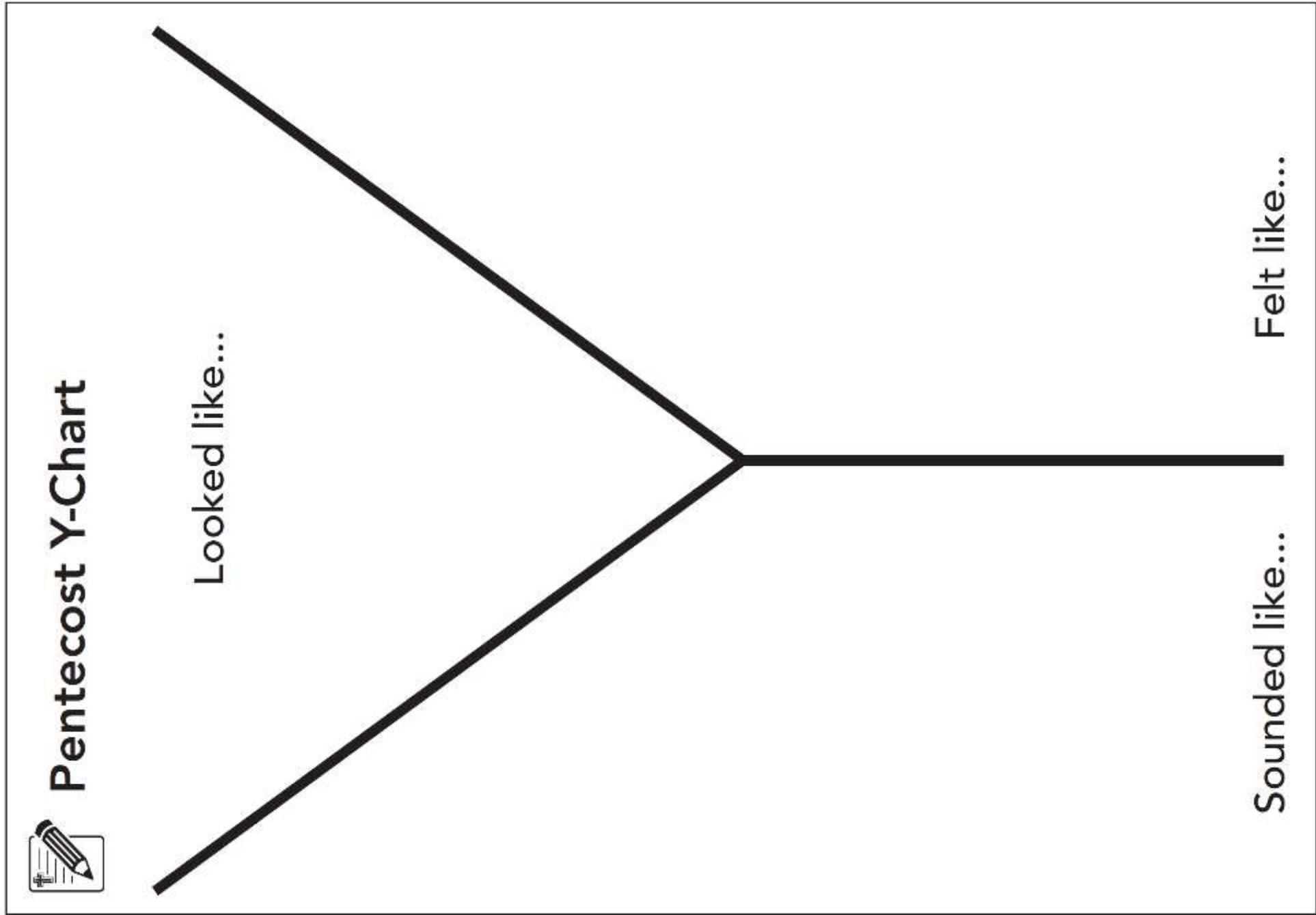
Catechist Send the helper, the Holy Spirit
All Send the helper, the Holy Spirit

Catechist to be with our families and friends
All to be with our families and friends

Catechist and help us to be kind, loving and forgiving like Jesus.
All and help us to be kind, loving and forgiving like Jesus.

Catechist Amen.
All Amen.

Ask your child to close their eyes and imagine that s/he is one of the disciples at Pentecost. Ask your child to imagine what the Holy Spirit sounded, felt and looked like as it came down upon them. Have your child open their eyes and record their thoughts and feelings on the Y-Chart in words and/or pictures.



 **Pentecost Y-Chart**

Looked like...

Sounded like...

Felt like...

The image shows a large 'Y' shape formed by three thick black lines. The top two lines are diagonal, meeting at a central point. From this central point, a third line extends horizontally to the right. The text 'Looked like...' is positioned to the left of the top-left diagonal line. The text 'Sounded like...' is positioned below the horizontal line. The text 'Felt like...' is positioned to the right of the horizontal line. In the top-left corner of the chart area, there is a small icon of a pencil writing on a notepad, followed by the title 'Pentecost Y-Chart'.