

YEARS 3 & 4 – PENTECOST: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

Through his grace, the Holy Spirit is the first to awaken faith in us and to communicate to us the new life, which is to 'know the Father and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ.'

[CCC 684]

Pentecost Sunday commemorates the day that the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles to give them the courage and the skill to carry out their mission from Jesus which is to preach the good news to the whole world. We celebrate this day as the birthday of the Church.

We are asked to help in this work and we do it by living as God wants us to. It is by our good actions that we can spread the message of Jesus and so carry out our part of the mission.

Just as the Holy Spirit assisted the Apostles in this mission so will the same Spirit, who comes to us in Baptism, give us the help to carry out our role in this work.

After his death and Resurrection, the work of Jesus on earth was completed and he returned to the Father (Ascension) as is depicted in the account we are given in the Acts of the Apostles. It is now the work of the Apostles to take the message of Jesus to the rest of the world. The Church as the people of God, has continued to pass on this message of 'Good News' for the last two thousand years and continues to do so today.

ABOUT THE SCRIPTURE IN THIS LESSON

Acts 1:7-9, 2:1-8 | *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 disciples are gathered in prayer [see Acts 1:14], awaiting the Baptism of the Holy Spirit promised to them by Jesus [see Acts 1:5]. 'Suddenly from heaven' the gift is given.

Inspired by the Spirit, they were able to speak 'in other languages'. The words of the Spirit transcend the boundaries of human languages and bring together into a communion of love all the peoples of the earth.

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

The Coming of the Holy Spirit



MAIN TEACHING AND LEARNING POINTS

- Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help his followers live as he taught.
- On Pentecost Sunday members of God's family, the Church, celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit.

PENTECOST

On Pentecost Sunday members of God's family, the Church, celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. We remember that the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit which gave them the power to teach others to live as Jesus taught. The Holy Spirit continues to guide God's family today in carrying out the work of Jesus.

During the Pentecost Sunday Mass the bishop or priest wears red vestments as a reminder of the Holy Spirit which appeared like tongues of fire at Pentecost.

GOD'S WORD

Acts 1:7-9, 2:1-8 | *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 the Father's own authority, and it will not be 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 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.

There were Jews living in Jerusalem, religious men who had come from every country in the world. When they heard this noise, a large crowd gathered. They

were all excited, because each one of them heard the believers talking in his own language.

In amazement and wonder they exclaimed, 'These people who are talking like this are Galileans! How is it, then, that all of us hear them speaking in our own native languages?' [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?**
- **Where was Jesus taken 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 [flames] of fire touched each person?**
- **What gift did the Holy Spirit give the disciples?**
- **What was the reaction of the crowd?**
- **What do you think this story tells us?**

PRAYER – PETITION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Parent	Let us pray: Come, Holy Spirit!
All	Come, Holy Spirit!
Child	Holy Spirit, help me to pray each day.
All	Come, Holy Spirit!
Child	Holy Spirit, help me to love and obey my parents.
All	Come, Holy Spirit!
Child	Holy Spirit, help me to care for others.
All	Come, Holy Spirit!
Child	Holy Spirit, help me to speak the truth.
All	Come, Holy Spirit! Amen.



Jesus and the Coming of the Holy Spirit Echo Mime

Acts 1:7-9, 2:1-4

This is a story about Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit
Open an imaginary book

Jesus said to them

Stand and move right hand and then left hand away from body nodding head

The times and occasions are set by my Father's own authority
Point right hand upwards as if to Heaven

and it is not for you to know when they will be
Stand with arms outstretched and shake head

But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you
Point to the crowd from left to right

you will be filled with power
lift arms up from knees and stretch up high

and you will be witnesses for me in Jerusalem
point to the crowd and then to the right

in all of Judea and Samaria,
gesture right and left

and to the ends of the earth
Point right hand high towards the horizon

After saying this, he was taken up to heaven as they watched him
Hold hands apart in front of body look forward and raise arms up above head

and a cloud hid him from their sight
head down and hands in front of face