



DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

700 King Street West, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8P 1C7

Children's Liturgy of the Word

PENTECOST

Pentecost, a Jewish feast day celebrated fifty days after Passover, brought many people to Jerusalem, setting the stage for the Holy Spirit to manifest in the disciples' lives. Despite the absence of Jesus, a group of around one hundred and twenty believers gathered in the upper room to pray. Jesus appeared among them, offering peace and allowing them to confirm his presence by examining his wounds. The conferring of the Holy Spirit by Jesus had a powerful effect, empowering the disciples to go out and continue Jesus' work in the world. Filled with courage and enthusiasm, they were to carry out tasks such as forgiveness, judgment, and bearing witness. The Spirit would teach them new things, lead them deeper into the mystery of Jesus, and help them understand future challenges.

For most of us, coming to faith is a journey as we discover God within the realities of our life experiences. This happens mainly through prayer and reflection. Just as the disciples gathered to pray when they were anxious, we need to gather with our faith community to share the highs and lows of our journey. Regular time to pray alone or in the community and reflect will pay dividends for us.

Objective

- † Introduce children to the Holy Spirit.
- † Help children to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Background

Acts 2:1-11 In Luke's account of Pentecost, we hear more about the response of the people who witnessed the event than the event itself. If the account of the advent of the Spirit is spare, it is also laden with symbolism. Luke indicates that 120 people were gathered. The image of the wind and the fire reminds us of Exodus 19:18 when God came in fire, and Ezekiel 37:9, where the spirit came from the four winds. In recording the detail that "tongues as of fire" rested on the gathered disciples, Luke emphasizes that the Spirit came to each individual in the community. In the Old Testament, being filled with the Spirit of God indicated that an individual was called to prophesy. In this experience, a community received the Spirit and began to speak the prophetic word so that all could understand it.

Psalms 104 Today, we praise God for the diversity of creation and recognize every creature's dependence on God. We praise God's glory and ask the Lord to be glad with all of creation, especially with our praise. We repeatedly cry out, "Lord, send out your Spirit!"

Galatians 5:16-25 In Paul's time, two specific words described people and animals. One of them was "flesh," and referred to human weakness. The other was "body," the physical form redeemed and resurrected. When we look at the qualities of the Spirit, except for self-control, all of them are social virtues practiced in relation to others. Paul is teaching how to live as a community under the influence of the Spirit.

John 15:26-27; 16:12-15 This selection contains two key ideas. The first is that Jesus will send the Advocate, the Spirit of truth, to testify through the disciples. John indicated that the Advocate's role was to help the disciples remember all that Jesus taught and to dwell in the disciples. The second critical teaching is that the Spirit of truth guides the Christian community into knowing how to live the truth that Jesus revealed.

Leader's Reflection Questions

- † How is the Holy Spirit life-changing for you?
- † How do you use the Spiritual gifts you have been given in service of others?
- † What fruits of the Spirit are manifest most in those closest to you?

The Liturgy

Procession from the main Church

After the opening prayer, when all are seated, the leaders come forward and stand facing the altar.

Priest:

When most of the children have formed a procession, the leader with the book proceeds to the place of the celebration. The second leader usually walks behind the children. Upon arrival at the location of the celebration, the leader places the book on the prepared table.

Welcome.

The leaders assist the children in sitting and preparing. **Begin with the Sign of the Cross.** Help the children think and connect their actions as they touch their foreheads, shoulders, and stomachs. The leader may say the following prayer in these or similar words.

O God,

We live in a world of many nations and languages. We open our minds and hearts to the Holy Spirit to listen and pray for one another.

Amen.

Invite the children to listen to the readings. Proclaiming all the readings is unnecessary; however, the Gospel is required.

First Reading

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.
When Pentecost came,
the disciples were together in one place.
Suddenly, from heaven, came a sound
like the rush of a strong wind,
filling the entire house where they were sitting.
Tongues, as of fire, appeared among them
and rested on each of them.
All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit
and began to speak in other languages,
as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now, there were people from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem.
The crowd was confused because all had heard them speaking their languages.
Amazed and astonished, they asked,
How is it that we hear each of us
in our language?
Parthians, Medes, Asia,
Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene,
and visitors from Rome, in our languages,
we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power."

The word of the Lord.

At the end of the reading, the Minister of the Word proclaims, "The word of the Lord."

Children: Thanks be to God.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

Responsorial Psalm

R. Lord, send out your Spirit
and renew the face of the earth.

Bless the Lord, my soul.
O Lord my God, you are very great.
O Lord, how manifold are your works!
the earth is full of your creatures. **R.**

When you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
When you send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth. **R.**

May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works.
May my meditation please him,
for I rejoice in the Lord. **R.**

Second Reading

A reading from the first letter of Galatians.

Little children:

live by the Spirit,
and do not gratify the flesh.

But if you are led by the Spirit,
you are not subject to your own wants.

The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity,
faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Those who belong to Jesus
have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

If we live by the Spirit,
let us also be guided by the Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

At the end of the reading, the Minister of the Word proclaims, "The word of the Lord."

Children: Thanks be to God.

A period of silence is observed after the reading.

Gospel

The children stand for the Gospel, which the leader proclaims. They sign themselves on the forehead, lips, and chest.

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel, according to Mark

Children respond: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to the disciples:

"When the Holy Spirit comes,
the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father
will testify on my behalf.

You also are to testify
because you have been with me.
I still have many things to say to you,
but you cannot understand them now.

When the Spirit of truth comes,
he will guide you into all the truth;
for he will not speak on his own,
and he will declare to you the things to come.

He will glorify me
because he will take what is mine and declare it to you.
All that the Father has is mine.
For this reason, I said that he will take what is mine
and declare it to you.

At the end of the Gospel, the Minister of the Word proclaims, "The Gospel of the Lord."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Children: Glory to you, O Lord.

Reflection

The leader may offer this reflection in these or similar words. Remember the amount of time available to return to the main assembly. The leader may wish to reduce the number of questions.

An excellent place to begin is the question:

What did you hear? Allow each child to respond to the Word of God in their own words. Then, begin a general discussion, building on these responses, using some prepared questions, like the following, to stimulate ideas.

Today is a special feast for the church. It is called 'Pentecost' because it is celebrated fifty days after Easter. Think of how this story reminds you of a birthday party. Pentecost is the church's birthday.

What do you think is happening? Allow each child to respond.

Our church has been covered in white for many weeks as we celebrate Easter. Today, we see another colour - **red!** This represents the Holy Spirit, who is often symbolized by fire. Today is the day that God sent the Holy Spirit into the church - when we remember Jesus' disciples receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit renews the earth; we acknowledge this in our prayers and songs.

Who is on the face of the earth? Allow each child to respond.

We are! The Holy Spirit can make us new and give us the new life of Christ. We know that we need more love.

Do you know that God loves you? Allow each child to respond.

God sends love to us through the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit always keeps giving. The Holy Spirit makes us new and gives us a new life in Christ.

Have you ever heard of the Holy Spirit? Allow each child to respond.

The Holy Spirit helps us change. We know we need to change to love more. Even knowing about the Holy Spirit comes from the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit keeps giving. The Holy Spirit makes us new. The Holy Spirit renews everything, including mountains, rivers, and icebergs.

Do you know that the Holy Spirit gives us special gifts? What may they be? Allow each child to respond.

The Holy Spirit brings peace. After Jesus rose from the dead, he breathed on the disciples to give them the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes us into one church. We know that every person is unique. We have different gifts to share with the world and talents that can help others. Each of us also has things we need help with.

Perhaps an example is when we disagree with someone and need help speaking with them—perhaps our brothers, sisters, cousins, or friends. That is a good time to ask the Holy Spirit for a gift to help you. Whenever we need help, we can pray to the Spirit and ask the Spirit to come to us, as the Holy Spirit did at Pentecost.

Following the reflection, the prayer leader invites everyone to stand to profess their faith.

Recite the Creed or use the sample below to ask the children to respond.

The Creed

Depending on the time, a simple profession of faith may be made (see below).

Leader: Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, who gave his life for us?

All: I believe.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who lives in our hearts and gives us everlasting life?

All: I believe.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leaders may begin the intercessions by announcing the needs they know. It may be necessary for the leader to repeat and paraphrase the petition and conclude it with the cue for the response: we pray. All respond to each petition by saying: **Lord, hear our prayer**. Sample intercessions are below.

Leader: God, you gave us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Watch over us, your children, and those for whom we pray: **R./**

Lector: That the fire of the Holy Spirit will fill the Church and all who spread the message of Jesus, we pray: **R./**

Lector: That we will use the gifts of the Spirit to love and live peaceful and joyful lives with patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control, **R./**

Lector: For peace in our families, our schools, communities, and the world, we pray: **R./**

Lector: For the sick, we pray: **R./**

The leader may invite other intercessions from the children.

Leader: God of hope and healing, we know that you care for us, and we bring our prayers to you confidently through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ask the children to return to the main assembly. Ask them to return quietly and think about what they have heard and are now doing. Be mindful of children having difficulty finding their families.