

Chapter 1

Featured Story

The Holy Spirit Comes to the Disciples (Acts 2:1–6)

Lesson Goals

- to recall that the Holy Spirit came upon the Church at Pentecost
- to identify that the presence of the Holy Spirit is expressed through different symbols
- to recognize that the Holy Spirit strengthens us in a special way in Confirmation

Lesson at a Glance

- Go** (10 minutes)
 - Opening Prayer
 - Engage Activity
- Seek** (30 minutes)
 - Featured Story
 - Core Learning Activity
- Find** (20 minutes)
 - God's Treasure of Confirmation
 - Lesson Wrap-Up
 - Closing Prayer

Materials Needed

- *The Catholic Children's Bible* and chapter 1 activity booklet
- red crepe paper streamers, one for each child
- lively music and locate the prayer on the page
- pictures of symbols of the Holy Spirit mounted or drawn on cards
- materials for any of the additional activities you choose

Music Suggestions

- "Holy Spirit, Come," by Spring Harvest (Elevation Kids)
- "Breathe (Live)," by Hillsong Kids (Hillsong Church)

Holy Spirit, Come to Us!



Background Focus

We tend to think of the Holy Spirit as elusive. We can know something of God the Father through our own experience of "father"; we can know something of God the Son through our reading of Scripture. The Third Person of the Blessed Trinity is a little bit harder to pin down. How do we come to know the Holy Spirit? Often it is through a nudge, an intuition, a word or phrase from Scripture that we can't forget. Then we realize: the Holy Spirit has visited us.

Certainly the Holy Spirit's presence was felt in a big way at Pentecost. As Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples and gave them both comfort and courage as they were beginning something new—a Church that would live and spread the Good News of God's love. The Holy Spirit that hovered over the chaos of creation was now hovering over them. They were God's new creation. Their lives would never be the same. As the Holy Spirit comes to our children in the Sacrament of Confirmation, their lives will never be the same either. What a wonderful, powerful message to share!

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite the children to turn to page 1 of their chapter 1 activity booklets.
- Begin prayer by leading the class in the Sign of the Cross, then say, "Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God." Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Choose a child to read the leader's lines, and invite the rest of the children to read the lines for "all." Explain to them that the word *kindle* means "to light or set on fire."

Engage Activity

- Invite the children to share what they know about the Holy Spirit, and record their answers on the board. Give them some examples if they need help. (*Answers might include: The Holy Spirit is included in the Sign of the Cross, the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit helped us prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Holy Spirit is our helper and inspires us to do good.*)
- Tell the children that today they will learn that after Jesus died, was buried, and rose from the dead, the Holy Spirit was sent to help the Church. Explain that Christians celebrate the sending of the Holy Spirit each year on a very special and holy day.

✝ Seek (30 minutes)

Featured Story

- Invite the children to find Acts 2:1–6 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1712).
- Tell them that the text between the leaves on page 1714 is a shortened version of the Scripture story on page 1712.
- Ask the children to look at the artwork on pages 1714–1715. Invite them to describe what they see in the artwork.
- Invite a volunteer to read the title on the page, and ask the children to share what the word *disciples* means. (*A disciple is a follower of a teacher. A disciple of Jesus is a follower of Jesus. We are all disciples of Jesus.*)
- Read the Bible story to the children. Then ask the children several questions to check for comprehension, such as:
 - What do we call this special day when the Holy Spirit came? (*Pentecost*)
 - What did the disciples hear? (*They heard a strong wind blowing*)
 - What did the disciples see? (*They saw what looked like tongues of fire, which spread and touched each person.*)
 - What happened to the disciples? (*They were filled with the Holy Spirit. They began to speak in other languages.*)

- Remind the children that the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity.
- Ask the children to pause and make the Sign of the Cross prayerfully and to recall how we mention each Person of the Trinity in this prayer.
- Have the children turn to page 2 of their activity booklets and complete the activity with their Bibles open. *Answers: Pentecost, noise, wind, tongues of fire, Holy Spirit*

Understand It!

- Read Understand It! on page 1715 to the children, or invite a volunteer or volunteers to read.
- Invite the children to summarize what they just heard, asking them key questions about the reading to check for comprehension.
- Explain some of the following points:
 - Jews came from all around the region for the Jewish feast of Pentecost. This is a harvest festival and a time to recall the Ten Commandments being given at Mount Sinai. This feast is still celebrated by Jews today.
 - Mary and the disciples had gathered together and were praying. Jesus had promised to send the Holy Spirit, so Mary and the disciples were praying and waiting.
 - Suddenly there was a great noise, and the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples. The wind and fire were signs of his presence.
 - The Holy Spirit gave the disciples courage to tell others about Jesus.
- Explain to the children that the Holy Spirit has been with the Church to lead and guide God's people ever since that day of Pentecost, and the Holy Spirit will stay with the Church always. Continue by telling them that the Holy Spirit guides the Church through the teaching of the Pope and bishops, and through the faith of all the people.
- Tell the children that Christians celebrate the feast of Pentecost as a celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Church.

Live It!

- Invite a volunteer to read Live It! on page 1715 or read it aloud to the group.
- Ask the children to pray the prayer with you. You may want to read each line and ask the children to repeat it.
- Ask volunteers to memorize the prayer as suggested. Keep a record of their names. Tell them that you will ask them to recite the prayer aloud at the next session.
- Explain to the children that, in the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Holy Spirit signs and seals us, and strengthens us with his gifts.

Tell It!

- Ask the children to look at the images in Tell It! on page 1715.
- Invite the children to find a partner and use the images to retell the Bible reading the best that they can.
- Encourage several volunteers to stand and summarize the Bible reading for the class, using the images in Tell It!

Core Learning Activity**Wind and Fire Dance**

- Choose a lively song or other piece of music ahead of time and have it ready for this activity.
- Prepare the children for the activity by reminding them that the Holy Spirit came to the disciples as wind and fire.
- Distribute the crepe paper streamers, one to each child. (For each streamer, take three, 3-foot long red crepe paper strips and staple them together at one end.) Explain that the streamers are red because red is the color of fire and so it is the color of the Holy Spirit. Remind them that red is also the color of love, just like red hearts on Valentine's Day.
- Gather the children in a large circle, with space around each one. Explain that, when the music starts, they are to wave their streamers up, down, and around. Tell them that they will be using the power of the wind to wave their streamers.
- Explain that you will occasionally stop the music. Have the children "freeze" in place until you start the music again.

- Start the music and lead the children in a dance around the circle or the room, stopping and starting the music as you wish. Finish the dance by gathering the children in a circle.

Process the Activity

- Explore the symbol of wind for the Holy Spirit by asking the following questions:
 - Can you think of a time when the wind is very powerful? (*a tornado, hurricane, or wind-storm*) But wind has power for good things also. How do we use wind for energy and electricity? (*We use windmills to capture the power of the wind to use for energy.*)
 - Wind is also refreshing and cleansing. When is wind refreshing or cleansing? (*a cool breeze on a hot day; wind can blow dust and dirt away and leave things clean*)
- Explain that the Holy Spirit is like wind because he is very powerful, but also very refreshing and cleansing.
- Explore the symbol of fire for the Holy Spirit by asking the following questions:
 - Can you think of a time when fire is very powerful? (*a forest fire, a house fire*)
 - How do we use fire for energy and other good things? (*We use fire for heat, for cooking, for campfires, to light candles in church and at home.*)
- Explain that the Holy Spirit is like fire because he is very powerful, but he also gives us energy and light. Remind the children that fire is also a sign of love, and the Holy Spirit gives us the energy and power of love to do good things. Tell them that the Holy Spirit enlightens our minds and hearts to understand the love of God the Father for us, and also what Jesus wants us to think and do.

Additional Activity Options

If the core activity would not work for your group for any reason, you may choose to use any of the Additional Activities on pages 23–24 in its place.

✕ Find (20 minutes)

God's Treasure of Confirmation

- Use the symbol cards that you have made in advance to show the different symbols of the Holy Spirit as you discuss them. Symbols might include wind, fire, water, cloud and light, dove, finger of God. Some pictures can be found on the Internet.
 - We cannot see the Holy Spirit, but we use symbols to remind us that the Holy Spirit is with us. A **symbol** is something that stands for something else. There are many symbols of the Holy Spirit. We already know that wind and fire are symbols of the Holy Spirit. (*Hold up the symbol cards of wind and fire.*)
 - Another symbol of the Holy Spirit is water. (*Hold up symbol card.*) Water reminds us of our Baptism. This is when the Holy Spirit first came to us, which we will learn about more in another lesson. When we bless ourselves with holy water and make the Sign of the Cross, we are also reminded of our Baptism.
 - Another symbol of the Holy Spirit is a dove (*hold up symbol card*) because, when Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit was present in the form of a dove.
 - Another symbol of the Holy Spirit is cloud and light. (*Hold up symbol card.*) When Moses led the Chosen People out of Egypt, God led them with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. When Mary said yes to God and became the Mother of God, she was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, like a cloud may cast a shadow over something below.
 - Another symbol of the Holy Spirit is a finger. (*Hold up symbol card.*) The Holy Spirit is often called "the finger of God." We say that the finger of God, the Holy Spirit, writes God's law of love in our hearts.

Note: Further explanations of each of these symbols can be found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, (694–701). Note that the symbolic actions of laying on of hands and anointing will be taught in chapter 3, as they are important elements in the *Order of Confirmation*.

- Explain that, in the Sacrament of Confirmation, we receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in a special way.
 - The Sacrament of Confirmation is when the Holy Spirit will come to each one of you personally. So we will celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day that you receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - We rejoice in this and celebrate the fact that the Holy Spirit will strengthen you in Confirmation and will be with you always.
 - At Baptism, you received your name. At Confirmation, you will be called again by your name to receive the Holy Spirit. [*Optional: You may also be called by a new name, the name of a special saint that you will choose as a friend in heaven to help you live as a strong follower of Jesus.*]

Note: The Church gives candidates for Confirmation the option of using their baptismal names at Confirmation, to emphasize the connection of Confirmation to Baptism, or of choosing the name of a saint or holy person. For further information, please see page 17 of this teaching guide.

- For the Sacrament of Confirmation, the bishop comes to our parish. The bishop is "the ordinary minister" of Confirmation. This means that, ordinarily or usually, the bishop is the one who **confers**, or gives us, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- The Sacrament of Confirmation starts with the presentation of all of those who have been preparing for Confirmation. Each of you will be called by name and asked to come forward. [*Or, describe the customary procedure in your parish.*]
- Then the bishop gives a little talk, or homily, about the sacrament. In his talk, the bishop will remind us of what the Holy Spirit did on Pentecost and what the Holy Spirit will do in our lives today.
- Invite the children to turn to page 3 of their activity booklets and complete the activity.
Answers: 1. b, 2. c, 3. a, 4. c, 5. a

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite the children to think back over all the different things they did in this chapter, and invite volunteers to share some of the key things they learned.
- Take some time to get input from the class, and write their answers on the board.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on the board, and circle them:
 - The Holy Spirit came upon the Church at Pentecost.
 - The presence of the Holy Spirit is expressed through different symbols.
 - The Holy Spirit strengthens us in a special way in Confirmation.
- Ask the children to color in the chapter 1 circle on their Confirmation treasure maps to mark that they have completed the first chapter. Then remind them that the symbols of fire, wind, and the dove are symbols of the Holy Spirit. Invite the children to color in these symbols.



Closing Prayer

- Begin the prayer by leading the children in the Sign of the Cross and saying, "Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God," followed by a few seconds of silence.
- Play a piece of music, if you have time, that speaks about the Holy Spirit.
- Pray this prayer aloud: "Holy Spirit, come to us. Come upon us, not in wind and fire, but in the love and joy you place in our hearts. Bring us closer to Jesus and to all of God's children." Encourage the children to respond, "Amen."
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.



Additional Activities

Holy Spirit Headbands (15 minutes)

- Distribute the paper strips. Fit them around the head of each child, and staple or tape them together. After fitting the headbands, ask the children to take them off and put them on their desks.
- Distribute a red flame to each child. Ask the children to staple the flame to the front of their headbands.
- Explain that, just as they were called by name in the Sacrament of Baptism, so they will be called by name in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Instruct the children that, when you call their names, they will come up and hand you the Holy Spirit headband.
- Place the headband on each child's head, using these or similar words, "[Name], I place this flame upon your head as a sign that the Holy Spirit will come to you in the Sacrament of Confirmation. May you follow the Holy Spirit, now and always." Prompt the child to respond, "Amen."
- Play a song about the Holy Spirit to conclude the activity.

The Wind Blows Wherever It Wishes (15 minutes)

Note: Balloons are used in this activity. If any of the children have an allergy to latex, you should choose a different activity.

- Ask the children to open *The Catholic Children's Bible* to John 3:8. Help the children as needed. Read the passage aloud.
- Explain that the Holy Spirit leads us all through life, but we don't always know exactly where the Holy Spirit is leading. Tell them that sometimes God works in mysterious ways, and we just have to follow in trust.
- Explain that we will illustrate this verse now, using our own breath.
- Invite five children to form a line across the front of the room and facing the back of the room. Give each child an uninflated balloon of a different color.
- Explain that the object of this game is to get the balloon to the other side of the room by blowing it up and then letting it go. Tell the children that when their balloon falls to the floor, they should pick it up at the spot where it landed, blow it up again, and then release it again. Instruct them to repeat these actions until their balloon touches the wall in the back of the room.
- Mark the beginning of the race, and invite the rest of the class to cheer for those who are racing. Continue until the last child's balloon has touched the wall. Choose five more children, if time allows, and have the race again.
- Make the connection to the Holy Spirit with the following comments:

Materials Needed

- yellow construction paper, cut into strips lengthwise, one or two for each child
- flames cut from red construction paper
- a stapler, a scissors, and tape

Materials Needed

- balloons in a variety of colors, one for each child

Materials Needed

- a computer with Internet access
- a computer projector
- drawing paper and crayons or markers

- It was difficult to predict or control where the balloons would land, wasn't it?
- In a similar way, we cannot predict or control the Holy Spirit!
- If we are open to the Holy Spirit, we might be led in all different kinds of directions. But with faith and trust in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will reach the finish line, which is heaven, and life forever with God.

The Holy Spirit in Animation (15 minutes)

- Show the video "33 The Holy Spirit Comes," available on YouTube (2:58).
- Invite volunteers to share some of the scenes they remember from the video. You may want to ask the children to draw a memorable scene.
- Tell the children that the Holy Spirit gave the Apostles the courage to teach about Jesus and the power to heal, as Jesus had done. The healing of the beggar in the video can be found in the Acts of the Apostles 3:1–10.
- Assure the children that the gifts from the Holy Spirit that they will receive may not be as obvious as the gift of healing, but they will be just as real.