

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 your child in the Sacrament of Confirmation, their life will never be the same either. What a wonderful, powerful message to share!

Go (10 minutes)

Opening Prayer

- Invite your child to turn to page 1 of the chapter 1 activity booklet.
- Begin prayer by making the Sign of the Cross, then say, “Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.” Allow about 10 seconds of silence.
- Invite your child to read the leader’s lines while you read the lines for “all.” Explain to your child that the word *kindle* means “to light or set on fire.”

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
- two yellow strips of construction paper for headband
- one flame cut from red construction paper
- a stapler or tape
- pictures of symbols of the Holy Spirit mounted or drawn on cards

Music Suggestions

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

Engage Activity

- Invite your child to share what they know about the Holy Spirit, and record their answers on a piece of paper. Give 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 your child 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 your child to find Acts 2:1–6 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (page 1712).
- Direct them to turn to page 1714 and place an "I found it!" sticker next to the Featured Story.
- Tell them that the text between the leaves on page 1714 is a shortened version of the Scripture story on page 1712.
- Ask your child to look at the artwork on pages 1714–1715. Invite them to describe what they see in the artwork.
- Read the title on the page, and ask your child 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 your child. Then ask 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 your child that the Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity.
- Ask your child 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 your child turn to page 2 of the activity booklet and complete the activity with their Bible open. *Answers: Pentecost, noise, wind, tongues of fire, Holy Spirit*

Understand It!

- Read Understand It! on page 1715 or have your child read it.
- Invite your child to summarize what they just heard, asking 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 your child 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 your child that the Holy Spirit guides the Church through the teaching of the Pope and bishops, and through the faith of all the people.
- Tell your child that Christians celebrate the feast of Pentecost as a celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the Church.

Live It!

- Read Live It! on page 1715 together.
- Ask your child to pray the prayer with you. You may want to read each line and ask your child to repeat it.
- Explain that in the Sacrament of Confirmation the Holy Spirit signs and seals us, and strengthens us with his gifts.

Tell It!

- Ask your child to look at the images in Tell It! on page 1715.
- Invite your child to use the images to retell the Bible reading the best they can.
- Have your child use some of the smaller stickers to mark parts of the Featured Story (pages 1714–1715) that capture their interest. Remind them to save enough stickers to use on the remaining three chapters.

Core Learning Activity

Holy Spirit Headband

- Fit yellow strips of paper around the head of your child, and staple or tape them together. After fitting the headband, remove it from your child's head.
- Take the red flame and help your child staple or tape the flame to the front of the headband.
- 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.
- Place the headband on your 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 your child to respond, "Amen."
- Play a song about the Holy Spirit, if you have time, to conclude the activity.

✕ 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 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 16 of this home 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. 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 your child to turn to page 3 of the chapter 1 activity booklet and complete the activity. *Answers: 1. b, 2. c, 3. a, 4. c, 5. a*

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Invite your child to think back over all the different things they did in this chapter, and have them share some of the key things they learned.
- Ensure that the following points are made, write them on a piece of paper, 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.

- Have your child place the chapter 1 sticker in the correct circle on the Confirmation treasure map. Then remind them that the symbols of fire, wind, and the dove are symbols of the Holy Spirit, and have them place these stickers in the correct circles.



Closing Prayer

- Begin the prayer by making 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 your child to respond, “Amen.”
- Close with a final Sign of the Cross.

Additional Family Suggestions

For additional ideas, activities, and prayers that can be used by your family for this chapter, please refer to the Family Page on page 4 of this chapter’s activity booklet.