

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 what has happened: 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!

Family Strategies

“Before you fly off the handle, count to ten.” This is an age-old remedy for dealing with a stressful moment. It provides a space in which to calm down and to respond appropriately to a difficult situation. It is a strategy that can work for anyone of any age, and a strategy that parents can easily model for children. For us as baptized Christians, these ten seconds can be a sacred space in which the Holy Spirit can work. The habit of counting to ten could even be adapted by repeating the words “Come, Holy Spirit!” ten times!

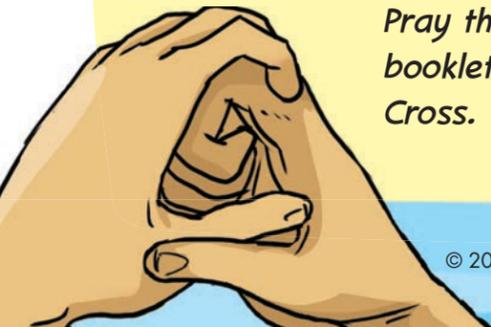
Family Activities

- Congratulate your child on beginning to prepare for Confirmation. Take time after the Mass this weekend to look for symbols of the Holy Spirit (fire, dove) in the stained-glass windows or other art in your parish church.
- Read together the Featured Story on page 1714 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* (Acts of the Apostles 2:1–6). Remind your child that the Holy Spirit will come to him or her personally at Confirmation. You may also want to pray the Holy Spirit prayer (see front cover of this booklet) regularly, either at meals or at bedtime.
- Watch the YouTube video “33 The Holy Spirit Comes” (2:58). Ask: When do we need courage? When do we need healing? Then ask the Holy Spirit for these gifts.

(The prayer on the cover of this activity booklet is from *Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*, by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy [Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), 1989], page 157. Copyright © 1989 by the USCCB. All rights reserved.)

Pray It!

Pray the prayer to the Holy Spirit from the cover of this activity booklet as a family, beginning and ending with the Sign of the Cross.



Holy Spirit, Come to Us!



Prayer

Leader: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.

All: And kindle in them the fire of your love.

Leader: Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

All: And you will renew the face of the earth.



Using the Featured Story on page 1714 in *The Catholic Children's Bible*, fill in the missing words.

"When the day of _____ came,
all the believers were gathered together in one place. Suddenly
there was a _____ from the sky which sounded
like a strong _____ blowing. . . . They saw
what looked like _____
which spread out and touched each person there. They were all
filled with the _____
and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit enabled
them to speak."

Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

- ____ 1. A _____ is something that stands for something else.
a. sign b. symbol c. song

- ____ 2. Two symbols of the Holy Spirit are _____.
a. trees and grass b. cars and trucks c. wind and fire

- ____ 3. The Holy Spirit first came to us in the Sacrament of _____.
a. Baptism b. Matrimony c. Anointing of the Sick

- ____ 4. In the Sacrament of _____, we receive the Holy Spirit in a special way and are strengthened.
a. the Eucharist b. Reconciliation c. Confirmation

- ____ 5. The ordinary minister of Confirmation, the person who usually confers this sacrament, is the _____.
a. bishop b. Pope c. parish priest