

Feast of Pentecost

The Holy Spirit comes

INTRODUCTION

Today is the Feast of Pentecost, which the Jews celebrated fifty days after the Passover. Today we celebrate the birthday of the Church, and hear how Jesus sent his Holy Spirit to the disciples, just as he had promised to do.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and then read:

Jesus said, 'Let your goodness shine out like a light in the darkness, so that through you, the love of our heavenly Father will touch the lives of others.' (cf *Matthew 5:16-17*)

SORRY

Think about the words of this song, and remember that God our Father will always forgive us if we are truly sorry. Sing Sorry Song 4: *When we say that we are sorry.*

GLORIA

ACCLAMATION

May the love of God's spirit burn in our hearts.

READING (cf *Acts 2:1-42*)

The disciples had gathered together in Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Pentecost and to wait for the Holy Spirit that Jesus had promised to send. One day as they were praying together, the room was suddenly filled with the sound of a powerful wind which roared through the house. Then, what looked like small tongues of fire appeared and spread out to touch each one of them. So it was that they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

At once, in their excitement, they rushed outside to tell everyone what had happened to them. As they began to speak, they were amazed to find that they could talk in foreign languages that they had never spoken before. People from lands far and wide gathered in a crowd to listen to these men from Galilee. They were amazed, and came to believe in Jesus.

So it was, from that day onwards, the disciples went around telling everyone about Jesus, and sharing all that he had taught them. They were no longer afraid, for wherever they went, Jesus went with them. Now his Spirit lived inside them, and they would never feel alone again.

DISCUSSION

Ask the children to imagine they are the disciples,

sitting quietly together in a room, and imagine the sounds and feelings the disciples must have felt.

What did they hear? – A sudden furious wind, gusting through the room.

How do they think the disciples felt when they heard and felt this mysterious wind? – They probably felt surprised by its suddenness and frightened when they realised it came from *inside* the house, when everything outside was calm.

How else did the Spirit appear? – As small flickering flames which rested above their heads.

If you saw flames above your head, what would you do? – Probably panic and try to put them out! But these were no ordinary flames, they were signs of God's Spirit coming to fill the lives of the disciples with the light and warmth of God.

How did the Spirit change the disciples?

- he made others understand them, even if they did not speak the same language.
- he filled them with courage and power so that they could stand up before the crowds and preach, and work miracles in Gods' name.

What else did the Spirit give to the disciples? – He brought seven gifts: joy, love, patience, kindness, understanding, reverence (respect), courage. All these gifts helped the disciples to be able to go and spread the message of Jesus. The gifts of the Spirit help us to follow the right path on our journey through life towards heaven, they fill us with Gods' goodness.

When do we receive the Holy Spirit in a special way? – He comes to us first at baptism and then his power is refreshed in us at confirmation. Scented oil called Chrism is used to anoint people at baptism and confirmation as a sign that the Spirit has made them special and fills their lives with his 'fragrance'.

ACTIVITY

Pentecost is the Church's Birthday. Make one large birthday card or individual birthday cards to celebrate this special day or wrap seven empty containers with spare wrapping paper and label each with a gift tag to represent the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit,
and fill our hearts with your love.
Work through us to bring Jesus
to those who do not know him,
so that we may share this love with others.