

PENTECOST

YEAR C

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God of all the nations,
we praise you for your gift to us
of the Holy Spirit.
Through the power
of that same Spirit,
enable us to tell
the whole world about Jesus,
and to forgive those
who have harmed us,
as we ourselves pray
to be forgiven.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

The mission of the Church is to do the work of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus breathed into his disciples his own life, the Holy Spirit. By the power of that Spirit, the Church is born. They are now to do what his death and resurrection was all about—forgive. Peace is the greeting of the Risen Lord, and peace is his continued presence in the Church.

This Spirit comes upon the disciples with power. In the name of Jesus, in every language, they are empowered to preach about “the great things God has done.”

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

Before the first reading, remind the children of the first reading for Ascension. Reread to them the center part of the reading:

“One day when Jesus was with the disciples, he told them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said,

‘I have told you about this promise. John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will give you

FIRST READING: Acts 2:1-8, 11b

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

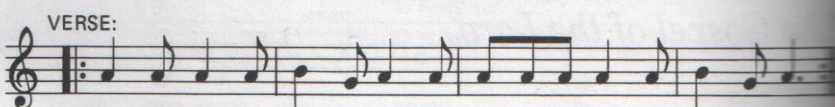
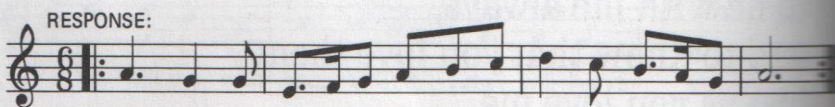
On the day of Pentecost,
the believers were gathered together in one room.
All of a sudden they heard a sound
like a strong wind
that seemed to fill the whole house.
Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire
coming and resting on each one of them.
They were all filled with the Holy Spirit,
and immediately they started to speak
in other languages.

At that time, there were visitors in Jerusalem
who had come from all over the world.
They were amazed
because they heard the believers
speaking in so many languages.
They said,

“How are they able to speak like this?
Aren’t all of these people from around Galilee?
Yet we can all hear them
telling in our own languages
about the great things God has done.”

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Psalm 104



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:



GOSPEL: John 20:19-23

A reading from the Gospel of John.

On Sunday evening (the same day the women had been to the tomb of Jesus), the disciples were gathered in a room upstairs. They had locked the doors because they were afraid of the people who had crucified Jesus.

Jesus came and stood in the room and said,

“Peace be with you!”

Then he showed them his hands and his side.

The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said again,

“Peace be with you!

As God has sent me to you,
now I am sending you to others.”

Then he breathed on the disciples and said to them,

“Receive the Holy Spirit.

If you forgive the sins of anyone,
they are forgiven.

If you do not forgive them,
they are not forgiven.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

power to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and all over the world.’ ”

Now invite the children to listen to today’s first reading.

After the first reading, ask the children how Jesus kept the promise that he had made. Ask them what it must have been like for the disciples when they received the Holy Spirit. It is important to help them understand that the Holy Spirit is not “strong wind” and “tongues of fire.” These are images used to describe an event which really cannot be put into words. We often do this. We say things like: “She is like a cute little kitten.” Or we say, “She is as strong as a rock.” We are using similes to help us express a feeling or a quality rather than a physical presence. The disciples were able to preach with clarity and so, later, when writing this account, described the event as receiving “tongues of fire.” We don’t know what the event was like. They (and we) knew they had received the Holy Spirit by the power they had to do Christ’s work, especially of preaching and healing.

Ask the children (as we have before) what words are said at a Christian baptism.

“I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

Help them to understand that we too have received the Holy Spirit. Ask them what the disciples did when they received the Holy Spirit. The stress here should not be on “speaking other languages” but on “telling . . . about the great things God has done.”

Ask the children how we can do this today, because we, too, have the Holy Spirit. Ask them to give some examples of how they can “tell about the great things God has done.” What great things (*now*)? Whom can we tell?

After the Gospel, ask them what other thing (besides “telling the great things God has done”) Jesus gave us the power to do. Explore ways in which they can “forgive others.” Help them see that if we forgive someone, that person truly feels forgiven. If we refuse this, that person feels unforgiven. We have the power of the Holy Spirit to free people by being forgiving. Help them see that when we live this way, “the face of the earth will be like new.” (The Psalm refrain.)