



Family Connections

Feast of Pentecost (Year B)



Acts 2: 1 – 11

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in their own language. Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and converts, Cretans and Arabs – in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.”



Reflection:

Long before it became a Christian Feast, Pentecost was celebrated by the Jews. On Pentecost, Jews were expected to come to Jerusalem to offer the first fruits of their harvest in the Temple. They came from every region of the world. Notice how God took this opportunity to send the Holy Spirit to fill the lives of His followers. By giving His followers the ability to speak in many languages, God made sure that His message, that Jesus has been raised from the dead, went viral.



Table Discussion:

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are: Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, Right Judgment, Courage, Reverence and Awe & Wonder. “Which one of these do you value most? Why?”



The Language of the Spirit

The language of the Spirit is prayer,
Words that are given to us in speaking to God.

The language of the Spirit is music and song,
The joy we feel deep within our hearts.

The language of the Spirit is poetry,
The beautiful rhythm of words and thoughts.

The language of the Spirit is Art,
The creative power that lies deep within.

The language of the Spirit is in creative writing,
Stories that reveal the truth about ourselves.

The language of the Spirit is theatre,
The interplay between laughter, drama and the struggle to do what is right.

The language of the Spirit is love,
The care and concern we show one another.

The language of the Spirit is forgiveness,
Healing the wounds and injuries that divide us.

The language of the Spirit is creative in all its many expressions,
Bringing life to the world around us.

How many of these languages do you speak?

Write, create, draw or compose a poem, a song, a story, a play, or a prayer.

Allow God to speak through you!

Then write a short prayer of thanks to God. It is simply amazing how He continues to speak in so many beautiful languages today.



St. Hildegard (a bedtime story):

As a young child, Hildegard loved to watch the beauty of God's creation around her. She took delight in the songs of the birds, the spiders' intricate webs, the nests, dens and little homes that animals made. As far as Hildegard was concerned, God had not stopped creating; God continued to create through all the many creatures around her.

But, as she grew up, Hildegard noticed something different in what humans created. Whereas each bird sings the same song, and the spider spins the same web, humans can create different songs and different things. They are not stuck doing it just one way.

Hildegard took great joy in knowing that God had given humans a different sort of power to create, a language different from all the other animals. She used this language of the Spirit in her times of prayer, her writings and in the songs she wrote, beautiful works that spoke of the visions she had of heaven, the angels and the company of the Saints.

Hildegard used this special language of the Spirit, the language of prayer, writing and music, to teach others about God and the beauty of the spiritual world. But It wasn't just in what she said, wrote or sung, but in the way she said, wrote or sung it. It was easy for everyone to see that God was at work through her.

And so, the next time you are inspired to pray, write, sing or create anything at all, think about the Spirit who gives you the ability and the inspiration to create something new.

Did you know that the word "inspiration" means "to be filled with the Spirit"?



Family Activities: (A Holy Spirit Party)

Pentecost is also known as the birthday of the Church. The Spirit brought new life to the Apostles, from now on they no longer hid behind closed doors. You may want to have a birthday cake with candles and balloons; candles, symbolizing the Spirit that came down as tongues of flames on the Apostles' heads, balloons to symbolize the breath of wind that marked His coming.

During this party you may want to wear bright colours (red, orange, yellow), symbolic of the tongues of flames and the new life the Spirit brought. You may also want to make a kite, a flag or a spinning wheel that captures the wind, each in its own way. Blowing bubbles outside may be another way to help younger children understand the effect that wind has on things.

You may also want to explore the possibility of having a bonfire, another way of talking about the spirit's energy, heat and life. The stories you tell, the songs you sing and the prayers you share, around the bonfire, are also signs of the Spirit's creative energy alive in this world.



Family Prayer Service: Welcoming the Holy Spirit into our Hearts.

“In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

Opening Prayer:

Lord God, send your Holy Spirit upon our family gathered in your name. Fill our hearts with the love we need to take care of one another, especially when it is hard to do so, and to be generous towards those who may need a helping hand. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles: (Acts 2: 44 – 47)

All who believed in Jesus were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Prayers of the Faithful:

For those who need your love Lord.	Hear our prayer.
For those who need your forgiveness Lord.	Hear our prayer.
For those who need hope Lord.	Hear our prayer.
For those who need food and shelter Lord.	Hear our prayer.
For those who need a friend Lord.	Hear our prayer.
For those who need healing Lord.	Hear our prayer.

Closing Prayer

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray together:

O God, who did instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit,

Grant us, in the same Spirit, to be truly wise and to rejoice in His consolation.

Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.