

# Nine things to do with your kids on Pentecost

Pentecost falls fifty days (seven weeks) after Easter, marking the descent of the Holy Spirit onto the assembled friends and followers of Jesus, and beginning a whole new chapter in salvation history. At Christmas, the Son of God became incarnate in Jesus through the cooperative work of Mary and the Holy Spirit; now, at Pentecost, the Son of God takes on a new body: the Church. Once again, the Holy Spirit is the agent; but this time, instead of working through a single individual (Mary), it is through all the faithful that Christ becomes “incarnate” in the world. That’s why Pentecost is one of the most important days in the Church calendar. See the videos below to help explain Pentecost to your kids.

Here are nine ways you might mark Pentecost with your kids, with links to more ideas elsewhere.

## Pray a novena for the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit

This week, try praying a [Novena for the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#) with your kids. (Print and fold the download for a booklet!) The seven *gifts* of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord ([Catechism 1831](#)).

## Teach your kids a prayer to the Holy Spirit

Here is a simple prayer to the Holy Spirit to try out with your kids this week:

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and

enkindle in them the fire of your love.

V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.

R. And you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant us in the same Spirit to be truly wise and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **Fly a kite, make a windsock, play with balloons**

Little kids will enjoy making a tradition of flying kites or making Spirit-themed windsocks on Pentecost. Better yet, make your own kite, and incorporate Pentecost imagery.

Another super-easy craft is to get bags of red and white balloons; blow them up and play a balloon-catch game or string them together to make a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

## **Wear red (or white)**

In some places, it is traditional to wear red on Pentecost. Red represents the flames that descended on the disciples of Jesus at the first Pentecost, and it is the liturgical color of the day.

On the other hand, the traditionalist Catholic website Fish Eaters tells us that an old name for Pentecost is Whitsunday, "because, at one time, those who entered the Church at Easter would once again wear their white robes today." So you could also wear white . . . or a combination of the two.

## **Light thirteen candles, and decorate with doves and columbine**

Light thirteen candles at dinner sometime this week to represent the descent of the Holy Spirit on the twelve apostles and Mary.

Decorate your prayer table in red and/or white; Fish Eaters suggests a white tablecloth sprinkled with red rose petals, with a vase of columbine flowers in the center. (The name *columbine* comes from the Latin word for “dove,” which is what the petals resemble,) You can also decorate your table and/or windows with doves.

## **Talk about the Holy Spirit**

Do your kids know the answers to these questions about the Holy Spirit? You’ll find succinct answers to all of these questions in the [\*Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church\*](#):

- What do we mean when we say “I believe in the Holy Spirit”? (#136)
- How was the Holy Spirit at work in the time before Christ? (#140-141)
- How did the Holy Spirit work in Mary? (#142)
- Why are the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ inseparable? (#137)
- What does the Holy Spirit do in the Church? (#145)

## **Dinner question: What gifts would you ask the Holy Spirit for?**

“To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given

for some benefit,” Paul says in this Sunday’s readings. Over dinner, ask your older kids and teens:

- What gifts would you ask the Holy Spirit for? The seven *gifts* of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord ([Catechism 1831](#)).
- What fruits of the Holy Spirit are most “abundant” in our family? The fruits of the Holy Spirit are charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity ([Catechism 1832](#)).

## **Speak in many languages**

A fun activity for older kids is to look up the same phrase in as many languages as possible. They can use Google Translate, another app, or an actual dictionary to translate selected words or phrases from Peter’s speech in [Acts chapter 2](#). Let them play with this activity for a while, but later discuss the symbolic significance of the Holy Spirit overcoming barriers of language. What does that say about what God wants for us as a human race? About the Church? Compare this account to the etiology of the birth of many languages in the story of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9).

## **Make a great noise!**

Do you have littles in the house? Then zero in on the “great noise” that the Holy Spirit made. Get noisemakers, ring bells, pop balloons, and make giant fans out of cardboard (you can paint flames on it).

Your goal: Get the neighbors to come out in the street to see what all the fuss is about, just like at the original Pentecost!

Yeah, it's noisy. Yeah, the kids will be wound up. Yeah, there *might* be tears. But one thing's for sure: They'll always remember sending the Easter season out with a bang.

## **Catholic Videos about Pentecost**