

Pentecost: Let the Holy Spirit guide us

On Pentecost Sunday, we remember how the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and disciples. Here are some family-friendly ways to learn about and listen to the call of the Holy Spirit.

The Story of Pentecost

Read this section out loud before you discuss the Gifts of the Spirit:

On the night before Jesus died, he promised the disciples that he would send the Holy Spirit to enlighten them, guide them, strengthen them, and give them everything they would need to carry the Good News to people all over the world. They didn't understand what this meant. But on Pentecost Sunday, the Holy Spirit came like the wind and descended on the apostles gathered in the Upper Room. They were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, they understood everything, and they immediately went out into the streets to tell people the Good News of Jesus Christ!

The Gifts of the Spirit

When the Holy Spirit descended on Pentecost, the apostles received the gifts of the Spirit. At baptism, we received the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts are strengthened during the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Talk about one of the gifts of the Spirit During a meal this month.

- Wisdom, to see the world as God sees it (not from our own perspective).
- Understanding, to recognize that what lies below the surface is sometimes more important than what is obvious.

- Judgment (counsel), to know the difference between right and wrong.
- Courage (fortitude), to stand up for what is right.
- Knowledge, to always seek the truth.
- Reverence (piety), to recognize what is holy and sacred and the divine presence of God.
- Wonder and awe (fear of the Lord), to appreciate the mysteries of life.

Keeping the Spirit Alive

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, is always with us, but sometimes we don't pay attention to the Spirit's presence. Here are some simple ways that you can keep the Holy Spirit alive in your home, your neighborhood and your parish.

Reflect on the Holy Spirit at mealtimes:

- Why do you think it is important to have "wonder and awe" in our world today? What makes you feel wonder?
- How do we use the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives today? (Example: We use courage when we stand up for a friend who is being teased.)
- Share a time in your life when you felt as if the Holy Spirit was asking you to reach out to another person. How did you respond? What was the outcome?
- What does it mean to be wise? Is it the same as smart? Who do we know who is truly wise?
- What is one way each of us will "share the Spirit" this week?

Listening to the Holy Spirit

Sunday reflections: One of the most important lessons a parent can teach a child is how to listen to the Holy Spirit. Begin

by asking your children after Mass what they heard in the readings, in the music, in the homily, or in their prayers after Communion that seemed to speak to them personally. Then help them to recognize that this is how the Holy Spirit works in their lives. Whenever they feel as if they are being called by God or inspired to do something good, it is usually an inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Write It Down: Encourage everyone in the family to keep a Spirit Journal through the month of May, jotting notes and reflections about the day-to-day ways we are trying to listen to the Spirit of God.