



## Living the Faith – Step 3

### The Power of the Spirit

#### Aim

To grow in understanding of the Pentecost story, and the ongoing action of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Jesus disciples today.

#### Resources needed

Leaders

- *Come and See notes*
- *PPT laptop and projector or TV*
- *Prayer focus items*
- *White board / large sheet of paper*
- *Sheets with gifts of Holy Spirit*
- *Cut out symbols of the Holy Spirit*

For Young People

- *Journals*

#### Prayer Focus

Expressions of our beliefs

**Red Cloth** – *Pentecost Season*

**Image of the Risen Lord** - *Angel of the North, or alternative*

**Items representing Gifts** – *eg: Bible, wisdom; iPad, Knowledge; rosary beads, piety; flowers, fear of the Lord (awe) &/or*

**Candle** – *yellow, orange or multi coloured, symbolising the flame of the Holy Spirit*

**Water** – *cleansing and lifegiving action of the Holy Spirit in Baptism*

#### Liturgical Link

At Pentecost, we celebrate the birth of the Church. The feast brings to a close the Easter season. Traditionally it is the time to the Sacrament of Confirmation is received.

#### Overview

- Obedience and trust
- The Command and the mission
- The power of forgiveness
- Gone but not forgotten
- Growing in Holiness
- Prayerful Reflection

#### Preparation by Catechists

- *Familiarity with content and resources*
- *Be ready to share re personal gifts and unexpected events*
- *Pray for the young people and leaders*

#### Scripture Passages

- Acts 2: 1-11 Pentecost
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 Diversity of Gifts

#### Tenets of Faith (Faith Formation)

- The importance of prayer and waiting
- The Power of the Holy Spirit
- Giving Witness
- Gifts to be cherished and used in service to the Lord

## Gathering

### Welcome and Overview

- Thank the young people for coming back
- Give a brief reminder of key points from the last gathering.
- Provide the overview and aim for this fourth step.

## Introductory activity

### Waiting

Just as the disciples were waiting for the gift of the Holy Spirit so to we have many experiences of waiting in our lives.

Together let us name some of these situations.

### Activity

- With group members seated in a circle, invite each person in turn to mention a place or situation where they have experience waiting.
- Ask them to listen carefully as repetition is not allowed. Offer an example to get the ball rolling if need be.
- Now encourage people to think of some of the feelings that might be experienced when waiting in these different circumstances.
- Ask young people to share responses and while doing so ask others to raise their hands if the feelings apply to them. (some may have very different feelings in the same circumstances.)
- Invite group to identify which of these feelings might have experienced by the disciples after the Ascension, while waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Explain to the young people that in the final conversation recorded in scripture of Jesus and the disciples, in Acts, Jesus makes clear that through the power of the Holy Spirit the disciples will understand and fulfil their mission.

As instructed, they returned to Jerusalem to pray and to wait. Many different emotions would have been experienced, including fear. Through prayer and reflection, the disciples will have remembered the many times Jesus had quelled the fears of people during his ministry. They needed be patient and hang in there for the Spirit come.

## Opening Prayer

**Prayer focus** - *refer to items and their significance here and as appropriate later*

Explain to the young people that waiting patiently for God's Spirit or action in our lives may not come naturally. It is something we need to work at, as did the disciples, following the Ascension.

Just sitting in God's presence, inviting him into our hearts is good way to begin. The use of a simple mantra can help us to remain focused. The Mantra could be:

*Come* (as breathe in) *Holy Spirit* as breath out either do in silence for 1 minute, or while listening to the music <https://youtu.be/02TBj-TnKMU>

Let us now bring to mind any worries we, or our family members may have and ask the Holy Spirit to help us overcome these.

We bring all these prayers together and offer them to God as we sing:

*Come Holy Spirit fill the hearts of your faithful and light up in us the power of your love. Send forth your spirit, then we shall be created, and you will renew the face of the earth.*

(words and background music) Or use [https://youtu.be/y2j5Ve0\\_rTg](https://youtu.be/y2j5Ve0_rTg) Julie Maners (3.34min)

## Scripture and Reflection

**Acts 2:1- 4, 5-13** Pentecost – *The Power of the Holy Spirit*

### Introduction

As we have already heard the disciples are gathered in the upper room, unsure, but waiting as instructed. The video clip provides a wonderful depiction of the scripture passage.

- Invite the young people to watch the video clip from the Bible Series – Pentecost <https://youtu.be/Gt16nVZ0qSQ> (2min)
- Invite the young people to reflect on the following questions, recording responses in their journals.
- After they have reflected on the questions ask them to share their responses with one other person.
- Invite each pair to share one point, others can then add to this if they wish.

### Ponder

- Ask the young people the following questions.
  - How is the Holy Spirit depicted in the video clip?
  - How did the disciples respond? and how do you think they were feeling after the coming of the Spirit?
  - Who else witnessed the event? what might they be thinking or feeling?
  - What do you think happens next?

Explain to the young people that the mighty wind represents how the disciples, will drive a wind of change to the lives of many, destined to be the ones who will go out and preach God's word to all nations.

Instantly, having received the Holy Spirit, the disciples were strengthened to become the witnesses Jesus asked them to be. They overcome their fears and so, the barriers that previously prevented them from doing so.

The list of places from which the people gathered have travelled shows how quickly the Gospel message will be taken to other places and spread to the ends of the earth.

*Notes adapted from the New Testament, by Nichola King, Kevin Mayhew Pub, 2004*

## **Recognising Gifts**

### **Introduction**

On the day of Pentecost the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit. Each of us also has received gifts and talents given to us by God. Some of these gifts are unique to us, while others such as family traits, behaviours and talents in we share common with parents and siblings.

### **Activity – Family gifts**

- Gather the group in a well-spaced circle, standing.
- Ask the young people to call out the gifts one at a time.
- As particular gifts are called out, those who recognise these as family traits (not necessarily every member, but strongly evident in the family) step forward towards the centre for each gift that applies, then step back for any that do not apply. For example: having musical talents, being hospitable, generous, having courage etc.

The shape of the 'circle' will show the extent of family gifts as all will have moved inwards at some point. Some will be common amongst the group.

- Ask the young people how they think these gifts compare with those the disciples received from the Holy Spirit?

Explain to the young people that coming to faith is not so much acquiring a new set of beliefs about God but discovering God's existence within the realities of our own lives.

The gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit help us to be more attuned to the actions of God at work within us, and in the world. At baptism, the newly initiated receive the Holy Spirit, and at confirmation, the Spirit of God is renewed and confirmed in each person to strengthen us and help us bear witness to the love of God at work in them.

## **Going Deeper**

### **Gifts of the Spirit - 1 Corinthians 12:4-11**

There are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit Christians receive in Baptism and are then affirmed and in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

### **Activity – Gifts of the Spirit**

- Check how many of the seven the young people remember.
- Chart them on a large sheet / white board.
- Provide a brief explanation of how the gifts help to strengthen our relationship with God.

Explain to the young people the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.  
(see 12-15 C&S L the F Step 3 Gifts of the Spirit).

**Wisdom** – Far more than human wisdom; the fruit of knowledge and experience. Through the gift of Wisdom the Holy Spirit enables us to see things with the eyes of God. Such wisdom develops from intimacy with God. Wisdom is the sign of a Christian who knows what is, and is not, of God.

**Understanding** - Not human understanding, the intellect with which each of us has been given. The gift of understanding is grace which the Holy Spirit infuses in us to awaken the ability to go beyond the outward appearance of reality and to probe the depths of the thoughts of God and his plan of salvation.

**Counsel (right judgment)** - Through the gift of counsel God's spirit informs our heart so we understand the right way to speak, to behave and to follow in the ways of Jesus. When we welcome God into our hearts the Holy Spirit make us sensitive to his voice, guiding our thoughts, our feelings and our intentions according to the heart of God.

**Fortitude (courage)** – Through the special gift of fortitude the Lord sustains us in our weakness. The Holy Spirit liberates our heart, freeing it from sluggishness, from uncertainty and from all the fears that can hold it back. The gift of fortitude allows us to put the Lord's Word into action, enthusiastically and with joy. Fortitude gives us strength, enabling us to overcome obstacles in our path.

**Knowledge** – Far more than human intellect, the gift of knowledge that comes from the Holy Spirit, helps us to realise, through creation, the greatness and love of God and his profound relationship with every creature. This gift allows us to recognise God, in the beauty of nature and grandeur of the cosmos, and so discover how everything speaks to us of God and His love. We respond with great wonder and a profound sense of gratitude!

**Piety (reverence)** - Piety is the gift of the Holy Spirit most often misunderstood or treated superficially. Yet, piety touches the very heart of our Christian life and identity. It is synonymous with the genuine religious spirit; with filial trust in God, and capacity to pray to him with the love and simplicity that belongs to those who are humble of heart.

**Fear (awe) of the Lord** - Fear of the Lord does not mean being afraid of God. As our Father, God loves us and wants our salvation, and he always forgives, always! So, there is no reason to be scared of him! The gift of fear of the Lord, reminds us of how small we are before God and his great love for us. It reaches us to be humble, respectful and to place ourselves in self-abandonment into the good ness of God's hands. It is here we will find our fulfilment.

*Catechesis by Pope Francis at General Audiences, April 2014 - the Vatican website*

### **Activity – our personal gifts**

- Place A4 sheets containing the name of each gift of the Holy Spirit on the floor, well apart.
- Invite each person to go and stand by the gift they believe to be their strongest.
- When all have moved, ask them to explain of the gift using an example.
- After the brief sharing invite all to move to the gift they consider to be their weakest.

- Rather than commenting on these, invite each person to offer a prayer to the Holy Spirit naming the gift to strengthen within them. For example:

*God our Father, we thank you for the gifts you have given to each of us and acknowledge those to which we need to pay more attention. Holy Spirit help me to cultivate the gift of.... We offer these prayers confident of a loving response. Amen.*

Explain to the young people that the Church also recognises twelve fruits of the Spirit: personal characteristics that develop when we live in relationship with God, following the ways of Jesus, attuned to the Spirit within them. The fruits of Holy Spirit are:

***Charity (love), joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control and chastity.*** [CCC 1832]

### **Activity – evidence of the Spirit at work**

- Invite the young people break into 2's or 3's to consider how the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit are evident in our Church, and society in general. Offer an example to help kick start conversation if needed.
- Allow a few minutes then invite each pair / threesome to share one comment with the group.

### **Cultivating Gifts to become a miracle worker**

#### **Introduction**

Following the descent of the Holy Spirit the disciples not only had the courage to go out and preach the Gospel they also had the power to perform miracles in the name of Jesus.

In a world where increasing numbers of people choose not to believe in God, we need to be the ones who help show the face of God to others. How can we do this? By asking the Holy Spirit to help us develop the gifts and fruits given to us, so we become more Christ like. We need to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world today.

### **Activity – Celebrating Gifts**

- Invite the young people to sit in a circle.
- Ask each person to identify one fruit of the Holy Spirit they recognise in each of the three people sitting to their right.
- Each group member is given three paper doves or flames on which to name the person and thank them for using well the particular fruit of the Spirit they recognise in that person.
- When all have finished, the doves or flames are passed on. (Everyone will receive three, regardless of the size of the group). See *L the F 12-15 Step 3 Holy Spirit Symbols*

Explain that essentially the disciples embraced the gifts of the Holy Spirit and were strengthened to go out to share these with others. Each year the feast of Pentecost, which is celebrated fifty days after Easter, reminds us of this event, and of our responsibility to also use our gifts in service to God.

## Closing Prayer

Ask the young people to gather in a circle / semi-circle around the prayer focus.

Invite the group to offer thanks to God for the spiritual fruits that others have recognised in them. As the candle is passed around each person offers their prayer.

**Leader** Together let us ask the Lord to hear our prayers and strengthen us to remain on the path to holiness.

Through our lives, and through our prayers:

**All** May your Spirit come.

**Leader** In our words and in our understanding.

**All** May your Spirit be known.

**Leader** By our attitudes and our actions.

**All** May your Spirit be known.

**Leader** Through our loving relationships.

**All** May your Spirit come. Amen

## Closing Remarks and Next Step

- Invite response to the Step 3 gathering
- Introduce Living the Faith Step 4 – **Missionary Disciples**
- Encourage personal and prayer support of one another and attendance at Mass.