

Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit to Help Us

Featured story from the *Catholic Children's Bible*; John 14:16-17, 26-27
(for the full story, read John 14:15-31)

Parent Activity Guide for use with children in grades 1-5 and their families – April home lesson

Gather

Gather your family members around a central table or activity space. Make sure everyone can see *The Catholic Children's Bible* or another Bible of your choosing.

Quiet yourselves and take a moment to enter into God's presence. Choose someone to lead the opening prayer.

Begin with the Sign of the Cross and then the reader should pray aloud the following:

Heavenly Father, you sent your Son, Jesus, to live among us and form a community of believers. Let your Holy Spirit open our hearts to hear what You want to say to us through the Bible passage today. Give us a mind like Jesus to understand your message to each of us. Amen.

Share in God's Word

Ask your child to read aloud the feature story from the children's Bible, John 14:16-17, 26-27 (found on page 1690 in *The Catholic Children's Bible* revised edition, copyright 2017). Provide support as needed.

The leader should explain the vocabulary from the passage:

- Reveals: makes known
- Holy Spirit: the Third Person of the Holy Trinity

Check to see if your child has any other questions about the passage and address them as needed.

Understand it

Leader: Let's review the main ideas of this passage from John's Gospel. This passage reminds us that God sent the Holy Spirit to help us.

Refer to your *Catholic Children's Bible* "Understand it!" section or read aloud the following:

Before Jesus returned to Heaven, he promised his followers a great gift. He said that he would ask his Father to send us the Holy Spirit. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God. They are the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity.

We receive the Holy Spirit's power at Baptism. The Holy Spirit also comes to us in a special way in the Sacrament of Confirmation. We cannot see the Holy Spirit, but he works within us. Jesus said he is our Helper. The Holy Spirit helps us to understand what Jesus taught. Did you ever get an idea to do something good? That's the Holy Spirit at work. Did you ever suddenly realize something about God? Or do a good deed that you thought you couldn't do? That too is the Holy Spirit at work in you. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you each day.

Live it *

The Holy Spirit helps us understand the Bible, God’s Word. Here is a prayer to the Holy Spirit that you can pray before reading the Bible. You might want to write the prayer on a small slip of paper and use it for a Bible bookmark.

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

Kindle in them the fire of your love. Amen.

Tell it

Using the pictures in the “Tell it!” section of the featured story spread, check your child(ren)’s comprehension by asking him/her to retell this reading in his/her own words.

Adaptation: If you do not have *The Catholic Children’s Bible*, ask your child to create a comic strip with three pictures to depict three main ideas from the passage and explain them to you.

Closing Prayer

Leader: We quiet ourselves now and ask God to be present with us as we pray. After hearing this Bible passage, who or what we should pray for today?

[Give everyone time to list anyone or any situation in need of prayers.]

Leader invites everyone to join in the Sign of the Cross, and then prays aloud the following prayer or adapts it to fit your family’s needs:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of our lives and the chance to share this prayer time together. We offer all of the prayer requests spoken here into Your care, trusting in Your great love for us and that You will take care of everything.

Thank you for the gift of your Holy Spirit and all of the ways that you help us. You are the source of our good thoughts and the spark of new understanding about Jesus, the Bible, and His church. Please be with us each and every day. Inspire good thoughts and actions and help us see your plan for our lives. Help us to know that you are always there inside us to give us strength and guide us.

In your most Holy Trinity we pray, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.

*** See optional additional activities on the next page.**

Additional Activities (Optional)

These interactive family activities could be used as an extra activity in the above family lesson or used at another time in the month to reinforce the main theme of the Spirit Empowered Heart of Jesus for April.

The following activities have been adapted from <https://d6family.com/splink/>.

You've Changed!

Items Needed: family photos or photo album, Bible

Look through the picture books (or look at family pictures online) and spot the changes.

As you are looking, ask questions:

- Do you see any changes?
- How have you changed?

We see physical changes in pictures, but what are some other kinds of changes? (Change in characteristics: Is someone more loving, more caring, more joyful, more patient, etc.) God changed Paul in huge ways, freeing him from a life of hurting followers of Christ to a life of leading others to Christ.

Read Galatians 5:22-23 to see some of the qualities God wants us to have—love, joy, peace, patience, etc.

God is working inside us by His Holy Spirit to change us to be more like Jesus.

Good Fruit

Items Needed: Bible, fresh fruit

Go to the grocery store and let each child pick out a favorite fruit. As you share it, talk about what that fruit needed to grow. (If you have older kids, you may ask them to find out something that others may not know about their fruit.)

For example: A pineapple plant starts from the pineapple itself (from the leafy top). Once the pineapple head takes root, it will take two to three years to bear fruit and it grows to be almost 4 feet high by 4 feet wide. Once it is matured, a large flower will grow in the middle of the plant and eventually be replaced by a pineapple itself. Once the pineapple is harvested, a new fruit will grow in its place the following year. That is a lot of work for one pineapple.

What does a plant need to grow fruit? (Good soil, water, sunlight, right temperature, etc.)

Growing fruit is a slow process (usually). When we plant the seed of God’s Word in our minds, it will produce fruit—not the kind we can eat, but good qualities and actions.

Read Galatians 5:22-23 aloud.

What are some of the fruit the Holy Spirit will produce in us? (Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, meekness, and self-control)

The more we read and obey the Bible, the more we will see good things—fruit—in our life.

Spot It!

Play a little game to see if your kids can pick out the change each one makes in their appearance. Ask each person to find a partner and look carefully at one another. Then have them turn their back and make a simple change. (It can be as simple as putting a strand of hair behind their ear or rolling up a sleeve.) When they turn around, see if their partner can tell what has been changed. Pick new partners and play a few more rounds.

Was it hard or easy to see the change?

Could someone tell by your behavior that you are a follower of Christ?

The Holy Spirit is the author of the Bible and He can use that to help you know the right way to live. Every time you say no to your own selfish way and yes to the Holy Spirit, you transform and have more of the mind of Christ.