

Session 3

Reinforce what you just covered in the last session.

Sacraments work together and enhance each other. Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation fully initiate us into the faith. Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick heal us, Marriage and Holy Orders blesses our path in life if we choose to not follow single life.

Confirmation comes from the Latin *Confirmare* which means to strengthen. The Church teaches us that Confirmation strengthens us in 3 ways.

1. strengthens our relationship with Jesus,
2. strengthens us to defend the faith and
3. strengthens us to spread the faith.

Next we will learn about the first “Confirmation” the first time the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus’ followers at Pentecost.

Leader share these facts:

“Pentecost” means “fifty.”

Our annual celebration of Pentecost comes 50 days Easter and ten days after the Ascension of Our Lord. The Church commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit to the early followers of Jesus. Pentecost is the day on which the church was started. For that reason, it is often called the "the birthday of the Church.”

At Pentecost the Holy Spirit came down upon the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire.

So let’s review what has happened in Jesus’s life to this point up to the point of Pentecost.

1. born
2. adult preaching/ministry began at age 30
3. preached/taught for 3 years
4. crucified
5. died
6. buried
7. rose from dead
8. hung out with Apostles for 40 days after he rose from dead
9. ascended into heaven

Now we are at the point in the story where the Apostles are again in the Upper Room celebrating the Jewish Feast of Weeks. They were in the Upper Room celebrating Passover when Jesus instituted the Last Supper. They were in the Upper Room hiding when Jesus appeared to them after he rose from the dead (remember Thomas) and again now they are in the Upper Room when Jesus sends the Holy Spirit to descend upon them and remain with them.

Read the story of Pentecost from the Bible Acts 2:1-13 (“Acts of the Apostles Chapter 2 verse 1 through 13”). If you don’t have a Bible at home [click this link](#) to find the Scripture passage.

So how does the Holy Spirit come to the Apostles?

- Answer: a rushing wind came into the room and tongues of fire descended and came to rest upon them.

Why did Jesus send His Holy Spirit to the Apostles?

Because when he Ascended to heaven that’s what he promised. Acts 1:6-9

This is how the church was designed. Jesus spent time with 12, he empowered the 12. They actively chose to follow Jesus (Baptism) they were taught, “fed”, by Jesus (Eucharist) and now Jesus is giving them his Holy Spirit (Confirmation) so they can be strong enough to go and continue his mission. At Pentecost Jesus not only established the Church but he set it up for success by giving his followers all they need - His very Spirit- the Spirit of God so that they could accomplish the goal of sharing Jesus’ message with others.

Each year the Catholic Church celebrates Pentecost as part of its calendar. It always falls 50 days after Easter. Each year the reading for the Mass on Pentecost varies but they always call us to reflect on the beauty of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Watch this video from Sr. Miriam James as she reminds of the power the Holy Spirit can have in our lives. [Sr. Miriam Video](#)

Images, Names and Titles of Holy Spirit

"Holy Spirit" is the proper name of the one whom we adore and glorify with the Father and the Son. The Church has received this name from the Lord and professes it in the Baptism of her new children.

The term "Spirit" translates the Hebrew word *ruah*, which, in its primary sense, means breath, air, wind. Jesus indeed uses the sensory image of the wind to suggest to Nicodemus the transcendent newness of him who is personally God's breath, the divine Spirit.

Titles of the Holy Spirit

When he proclaims and promises the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus calls him the "Paraclete," literally, "he who is called to one's side," or advocate. "Paraclete" is commonly translated by "consoler," and Jesus is the first consoler. The Lord also called the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of truth."

Besides the proper name of "Holy Spirit," which is most frequently used in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles, we also find in St. Paul the titles: the Spirit of the promise, The Spirit of adoption, The Spirit of Christ, The Spirit of the Lord, and the Spirit of God - and, in St. Peter, the Spirit of glory.

Symbols of the Holy Spirit

Now that we have discussed the names or titles of the Holy Spirit, let's have a little fun discussing the symbols for the Holy Spirit.

Display 3 items listed in front of the group. (examples are soda can, candy bar, Rice Crispy treat-you can use any food item in your house)

Say "When you see this Snickers wrapper (Insert your first item) , what do you think is inside of it?" Have the kids describe in detail the chocolate, caramel, nougat and nuts...how it tastes, etc. Do the same with the Rice Crispy Treats (your second item) and with the Soda. (your third item)

Point out that they know what is inside just by looking at the wrapper -the symbol of the object- represents all it contains.

The same is true with God. We learn from the symbols used in Scripture and the Church's teachings on them to aid our understanding of all contained within it.

The third person of the Trinity, Holy Spirit, is a difficult concept for us humans. God the Father, a creator- we get. God the son, Jesus, who walked the earth as a human, we get. But God the Holy Spirit? Understanding the third person of the Trinity is difficult for us. So we turn to the symbols associated with the Holy Spirit to try to gain understanding of this third person.

<https://youtu.be/xmVF5AZ3gWs> Watch this video to introduce some of the many symbols of the Holy Spirit that we have in our Catholic Church.

Check out [this infographic](#) on the symbols of the Holy Spirit.

Discuss each of the symbols

Symbols of the Holy Spirit? (this background information/explanations are provided to help you, the leader, in the discussion of the symbols. Share the info as best suits your personality and family style)

Dove. The dove is the most common symbol of the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, it was a dove that signaled the end of the flood (Gen 8:8-12). When Jesus was baptized, the heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove (Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22; Jn 1:32). A dove is gentle, kind, and represents peace. Also, a dove's flight from above helps us make a connection with God in heaven and his power coming down to earth.

A Tongue of Fire or a Flame. This symbol is taken from Luke's Pentecost account when a tongue of fire came to rest over the head of each of the disciples and they were filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:3-4). Fire is an age-old symbol for God, whether it be God making the covenant with Abraham in a burning torch (Gen 15:7), speaking to Moses from the burning bush (Ex 3:2), guiding the Israelites with a column of fire (Ex 13:21), or sending down fire to consume the holocaust offered by Elijah (1 Kgs 18:38). God's voice is a fiery flame (Ps 29:7). Jesus baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire (Lk 3:16). Jesus said, "I have come to set the earth on fire" (Lk 12:49). The tongue is a metaphor for speech, and those who receive the Holy Spirit are to use their tongues to proclaim Christ and speak words of kindness. When an object is set on fire, the object changes, takes on new form. Fire warms, fire ignites, fire energizes.

The Wind. This symbol is very difficult to show artistically, but one of the key ways that Luke uses to describe the presence of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:2). The wind represents the Holy Spirit's share in the creation of the world (Gen 1:2), and the breath or wind of God represents the Holy Spirit's participation in the creation of human beings (Gen 2:7). The Holy Spirit is present in the whispering wind (1 Kgs 19:12). Wind itself cannot be seen, only the effects of it can be seen. So too is the work of Holy Spirit in our lives. Only the effects of it can be seen.

A Cloud. The Holy Spirit is the mysterious and abiding presence of God, and clouds appear frequently throughout both the Old and New Testaments to signify God's presence. In the Hebrew scriptures, God was present in the pillar of cloud that led the people through the Red Sea and the desert (Ex 13:21,22; 40:36-38; Num 10:12,34; 1 Cor 10:1-2); the cloud that served as their rear guard when they camped near the Red Sea (Ex 14:19-20); the glory of the Lord that was revealed in a cloud in the desert after the feeding with the manna (Ex 16:10);

God spoke to Moses from a cloud on Mount Sinai (Ex 19:9; 34:5); God was present in the cloud that enshrouded Horeb when Moses received the Ten Commandments (Ex 19:16; 24:15-18); a cloud covered the meeting tent where the Lord dwelt in the midst of the people (Ex 33:9,10; 40:34-35; Num 9:15-23); God came down upon Moses in the form of a cloud as he spoke to the seventy elders (Num 11:25); God promised to be present in a cloud over the sanctuary (Lev 16:2); a cloud descended upon the temple in Jerusalem at the time of its dedication (1 Kgs 8:10); and a cloud filled the inner court of the Temple (Ez 10:3-4). In the New Testament, when Jesus was baptized God spoke from the heavens, presumably from behind the clouds (Lk 3:22); when Jesus was transfigured he “entered a cloud” (Lk 9:34) and God’s voice spoke from a cloud (Lk 9:35); when Jesus ascended to heaven he was taken up on a cloud (Acts 1:9); and when he returns on the Last Day he will come on a cloud with great power and glory (Lk 21:27).

The Seal. “The seal is the symbol close to that of anointing. ‘The Father has set his seal’ on Christ and also seals us in him (Jn 6:27; 2 Cor 1:22; Eph 1:13; 4:30; 5:5). Because this seal indicates the indelible effect of the anointing with the Holy Spirit in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, the image of the seal (*sphragis*) has been used in some theological circles to express the indelible ‘character’ imprinted by these three unrepeatable sacraments” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 698).

A Hand. Jesus heals the sick and blesses little children by laying hands on them (Mk 6:5; 8:23; 10:16). In his name the apostles do the same (Mk 16:18; Acts 5:12; 14:3). Even more pointedly, it is by the Apostles’ imposition of hands that the Holy Spirit is given (Acts 8:17-19; 13:3; 19:6). The Letter to the Hebrews lists the imposition of hands among the ‘fundamental elements’ of its teaching” (Heb 6:2). The Church has kept this sign of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in its sacramental epiclesis (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, No. 699).

Water. The baptism of Jesus is a baptism of the Holy Spirit (Lk 3:16). In Baptism the newly baptized is given to drink of one Spirit (1 Cor 12:13). The water that flowed from Jesus’ pierced side is the source of this fountain of grace (Jn 19:34). When the water is poured during Baptism, the person receives the Holy Spirit. In the Hebrew Scriptures, the Holy Spirit was present in the water from the rock (Ex 17:6; Dt 8:15; Wis 11:4). Through the prophet Isaiah, the Holy Spirit invited the people to approach the Spirit’s fountain of grace: “All you who are thirsty, come to the water” (Is 55:1). The water flowing from the Temple represents the life-giving and regenerative power of the Holy Spirit (Ez 47:1-12). On the Lord’s Day, “living waters shall flow from Jerusalem” (Zech 14:8). Water is a common element yet given holy powers when used by God. So, to we are common yet made holy when we allow ourselves to be used by God for his good.

Oil. Sacred Chrism is used at Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, and it imparts the gift of the Holy Spirit, as well as the gift of knowledge (1 Jn 2:20) and truthful teaching (1 Jn 2:27). The Oil of the Infirm reassures someone who is sick or injured of the healing, strengthening, forgiving, and consoling presence of the Holy Spirit (Jas 5:14-15). In the Hebrew Scriptures, priests were consecrated in the power of the Holy Spirit with holy oil (Ex 29:7; 30:30); and anointing oil was used to consecrate the meeting tent, the Ark of the Covenant, and all its furnishings (Ex 30:24-29). Samuel used oil to anoint Saul as king (1 Sam 10:1), and he poured a horn of oil upon David as the future king, after which the Spirit of the Lord rushed upon him (1 Sam 16:13); and the priest Zadok anointed Solomon with oil to install him as king (1 Kgs 1:39). The prophet Isaiah said, prefiguring Jesus, “the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me: he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly” (Is 61:1; Lk 4:18). Oil does not wipe off it the skin easily like water does. Oil needs to be absorbed into the body. So does the Holy Spirit. We must invite Holy Spirit in, the gifts are there if we choose to use them.

Fun facts to share at the end of your discussion: the number 7 is associated with the Holy Spirit.

Biblically, when we hear the number 7 in Scripture it represents “perfection” or “all that we need”. There are seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: “wisdom, understanding, knowledge, fortitude, counsel, piety, fear of the Lord”. Those gifts are *perfect, all that we need* to be able to fulfill our baptismal call.

Indelible mark activity

Just as in Baptism, God’s grace is poured out through the Sacrament of Confirmation and you are sealed with what the Church calls an indelible mark of the Holy Spirit.

Think of the many tattoos you have seen on people. A tattoo is probably the closest we can come to referencing an indelible mark in a material way. Tattoos make an indelible mark on the skin a mark that cannot be erased, removed, that cannot be eliminated, forgotten, changed.

What is poured out to us in Confirmation is an indelible mark on our soul. Think of indelible as permanent, cannot be erased, removed, that cannot be eliminated, forgotten, changed. Basically no take backs- once it is given by God, it will not be taken away and lasts until eternity. That is why sacraments that confer an indelible mark can only be received once in your lifetime. (Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders)

So the closest we may get to an indelible mark on the outside of our body is a tattoo. Think of the many tattoos you have seen on people. A tattoo is probably the closest we can come

to referencing an indelible mark in a material way. Tattoos make an indelible mark on the skin a mark that cannot be erased, removed, that cannot be eliminated, forgotten, changed.

If everyone were asked to get one tattoo as a way of showing the world who they are or what is important to them, what would yours look like? Allow them 1 minute to think then ask each person to answer.

Leader Note: It's important to emphasize that tattoos are permanent, and we are not encouraging the candidates to go get one. Getting a tattoo is an adult decision that should not be taken lightly nor done at a young age. We are using this worldly example of a permanent mark to help explain how Confirmation is an "indelible mark" (something that can never be taken away) that marks us as followers of Jesus.

Not part of the lesson but...If you would like to hold a discussion on getting tattoos with your children here is a video from Fr, Mike Schitz that may create healthy discussion <https://youtu.be/PpGNzlwSrSs> Fr. Mike Schmitz Can I Get A Tattoo?

Now what if God were to give each of you a tattoo when you are Confirmed. This would be the first thing someone saw when they met you and they would know right away that you are a Catholic Christian. What would it look like? Would you choose one that focused on what you think God may be calling to you in life or what you think is required of you to be a strong Catholic Christian? Parents and candidates should draw or write a description of it. (15 min) The internet may be a great place to look for ideas if you are comfortable doing so.

Ideas to get them thinking: fire, dove, heart, crown, mountain, cloud, lyrics from a song, design of their own, etc. Challenge: Encourage people to think of something other than the Cross. That's too easy. Both parent and candidate should share their ideas with each other and explain the meaning behind their choice.

Closing Prayer

This week we encourage you to wear a symbol of your faith. It could be a piece of jewelry such as a cross necklace or a saint medal, or a t-shirt from a youth trip or retreat. Reflect on how you felt wearing it, did anyone ask you about it? Did you act differently wearing it knowing you were in some way representing the Catholic faith in the world? Text or email or Judy with any cool experiences.

Play FULLNESS by Elevation Worship. [Link to video here](#) We will use this as a prayer to close our lesson, sitting quietly with Jesus and letting the impact of this lesson sink into us.

After the song, share any personal prayer intentions with one another then close with:

God, our loving Father, today we were reminded that through Baptism and Confirmation we are anointed as followers of your Son. Thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit who helps us live as Jesus taught us. Be with us as we walk our journey as your follower. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.