

# Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit to Those Who Follow Him

**Objective:** The students will be able to tell the story of the descent of the Holy Spirit. They will state that the Holy Spirit helps us love one another and helps us be brave.

## **For the Catechist**

The lesson tells the story of Pentecost, which we call the Feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. The children learned this story in Preschool and in the Grade 1 text. Here it precedes the lesson on receiving the Holy Spirit at Chrismation. The lesson endeavors to have the children think about the term "spirit" as something real yet unseen in order to understand the reality of the Holy Spirit.

The next lesson on Chrismation mentions the naming of the child as a Christian and also the naming after a patron saint. You may wish to research who the patron saints are for the children in your class.

**The Spirit's Presence in Scripture.** The Holy Spirit proceeds from God the Father for all eternity. As a person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit has been with God the Father and Jesus the Son since the beginning. In the Old Testament, the Spirit was referred to as "spirit of God" since the Trinity was not yet known and the role of the Spirit not clearly defined. In the New Testament the Holy Spirit is first made manifest at Jesus' baptism and spoken of by Jesus, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always, the Spirit of truth . . ." (John 14:15-17). The Holy Spirit was given formally to the disciples at Pentecost, which we call the Feast of the Descent of the Holy Spirit.

**The Holy Spirit helps us love one another.** It is through the Holy Spirit that the Church is built. It is the Holy Spirit whose gifts of "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control" (Galatians 5:22-23) create individuals willing to give and forgive so that we can continue to come together as a people. It is through the Holy Spirit that we call God, "Father." It

## **Lesson Plan Overview**

**Opening:** "All of You"

**Introduction:** Exploring real things we can't see **Need:** candle from icon corner.

**Read Text Aloud:** Have students read text aloud.

### **Activity Tracks:**

Choose a basic, group, or craft activity to reinforce the lesson (detailed on the pages that follow).

- *Basic:* The Holy Spirit Makes Us a Church

- *Group:* "Build a Story" Puzzle

- *Craft:* "Holy Spirit" Card

**Closing:** "We Have Seen the True Light"

## **Come Bless the Lord Icon Packets:**

Packet I: The Descent of the Holy Spirit  
Packet II:

## **Teaching Pic:**

#F8 Pentecost

is through the Holy Spirit that we are able to have faith, to say "Yes" to Jesus. "And no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3).

The mysterious work of the Spirit can only be understood by analogy and by His effects. Like air which we cannot see but must have in order to live and grow, the Holy Spirit is our spiritual breath. The Holy Spirit changes our attitudes so that we are willing to be Christlike and able to be unselfish and heroic. The Holy Spirit inspires us to be Christlike each day as does the "spirit of Christmas" at its best. The team spirit at a sports event inspires us to cheer. The Holy Spirit inspires us to worship.

### ***Background Reading***

*(Direct quotations from the sources noted.)*

#### **The Promise of the Holy Spirit**

"When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me" (John 15:26).

"The inheritance that our Lord left us after His death, resurrection, and return to glory is the gift of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul writes, 'In [Christ] you were chosen; when you heard the glad tidings of salvation the word of truth, and believed in it, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit, who had been promised. He is the pledge of our inheritance, the first payment against the full redemption of a people God had made his own, the praise his glory' (Ephl:13-14). The Holy Spirit, given to us in baptism-chrismation is our assurance of salvation and sanctification. Through Him God promises begin to be fulfilled, and in Him we are being brought to perfection. As St. Paul writes, 'God is the one who firmly establishes us along with you in Christ; it is he who anointed us and has sealed us, thereby depositing the first payment, the spirit, in our hearts' (2 Cor 1:21-22)" (*LLI 57-58*).

#### **The Holy Spirit: God with Us**

"The Spirit continues to reveal Christ. The movement of the Spirit in history has built upon the apostles' experience to give us our image of Christ. The Spirit has moved among the Fathers, the writers of our liturgical texts, the establishers of our iconographic types to build up our picture of the Lord. We see Christ through their eyes and, ultimately, through the eyes of the Spirit who has enlivened their work by His power. Through them the Spirit has touched countless generations including our own to make Christ known, not simply as the Nazarene, but as the Pantokrator, the Lord of glory. This developing image of Christ is the work of the Spirit who continues to unfold for us the depths of the mystery of God's love" (*WEF 52*).

#### **The Giver of Life.**

"The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth, who makes the gospel known to the world. He is also the Giver of life from whom 'streams of grace will flow to refresh the whole creation, to bring it to the fullness of life' (*festal matins*). Because He dwells in us since Pentecost, the life He gives us is nothing less than the divine life, the share in the divine nature. And so the Spirit is our sanctifier who puts us in touch with the Holy that we might be transfigured. As the Church, we are the 'holy nation,' the 'communion of saints'—the fellowship of people who are made holy by the operation of the Spirit of God" (*WEF 52-53*).

# The Lesson Plan

## Opening

*Let's gather together and pray our opening prayer for this unit, "All of You."*

## Introduction

*[Have candle from icon come in front of you.] For the last two weeks we've learned about our baptism. Through Baptism we joined God's people. Right after our baptism we received another gift—the same gift the disciples received after Jesus rose from the dead. It is a real gift. But we cannot see it. There are very real things in the world that we cannot see. Let's talk about these kinds of "invisible" real things before we begin our lesson.*

*Watch this candle flame. [Blow on the candle flame so it flickers.] What happened to the flame? (It flickered.) What made it move? (Air, breath) Can you see air? (No) Yet air was real enough to make the flame move. Sometimes candles have a fragrance. Have you ever been around a candle with a fragrance, or even someone wearing perfume? Can you see the fragrance? (No) Yet it is very real. Sometimes it can make you sneeze.*

*Let's see if we can find other real things that we can't see. Any ideas? [Allow responses.] How about courage (or bravery)? Is that something we can see? We see it when someone acts it out. What about team spirit at a game? Can we see team spirit? We see it when it is acted out in a cheer or in clapping.*

*Do you know yet what the gift from Jesus is that we cannot see? [Allow responses.] It is the Holy Spirit. Tell me what you know about the Holy Spirit. [Allow responses.] Let's read our lesson.*

9

## Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit to Those Who Follow Him

When Jesus was with the disciples, He told them, "I am going to have to leave you."

The disciples were not happy to hear this. They were afraid to be without Jesus. Jesus said, "I will send you a helper."

The disciples wondered what this meant. They found out 50 days after Jesus rose from the dead. The Holy Spirit came to them as tongues of fire.

Here is the story from the Bible.

36

## Reading of Text

*As the children read aloud, help them interact with the text using the comments or questions below which are keyed to the text phrases (in bold type).*

**Jesus said, "I will send you a helper."**

*Do you know why the disciples were afraid? They saw that Jesus had been arrested and crucified, and they thought that might happen to them, too.*

*Does a helper make a difference? Have you ever wanted to do something, but were afraid? [Allow responses.]*

**The Holy Spirit came to them as tongues of fire.**

*How did the Holy Spirit come to the disciples? (As tongues of fire) You know the Holy Spirit is SPIRIT. That means we really can't see the Holy Spirit. In fact, the Holy Spirit is in each of us because of our baptism, but we can't see Him. We can see Him only when He decides to come in the form of something we can see.*

**They locked all the doors and windows.**

*Who gathered in the room? (Mary and the disciples) Why did they lock the doors? (They were afraid.)*

**The disciples told everyone the Good News that Jesus rose from the dead.**

*What happened after the doors were locked? (They heard a mighty wind. Then tongues of fire came down on them. Then they weren't afraid and began telling everyone about Jesus and that He had risen from the dead.)*

*The Holy Spirit performed a miracle. The Holy Spirit allowed the listeners to hear the preaching in his or her own language. Could you understand if someone spoke to you in Greek? (No) Can you imagine what it would be like to hear the disciples preaching and to be able to understand them even though they didn't speak English?*



Mary, the Mother of God, and the disciples were together praying. It was only a short time since Jesus had left them. They were afraid. They locked all the doors and windows.

Suddenly a great wind swept through the room. Then tongues of fire came down on each of them. After that Peter and the others were not afraid. They began to tell everyone about Jesus Christ. Many people were in Jerusalem at the time for a festival. These people heard the disciples speak in different languages so that everyone could understand. It was a miracle. The disciples told everyone the Good News that Jesus rose from the dead (Acts 2:1-12).

37

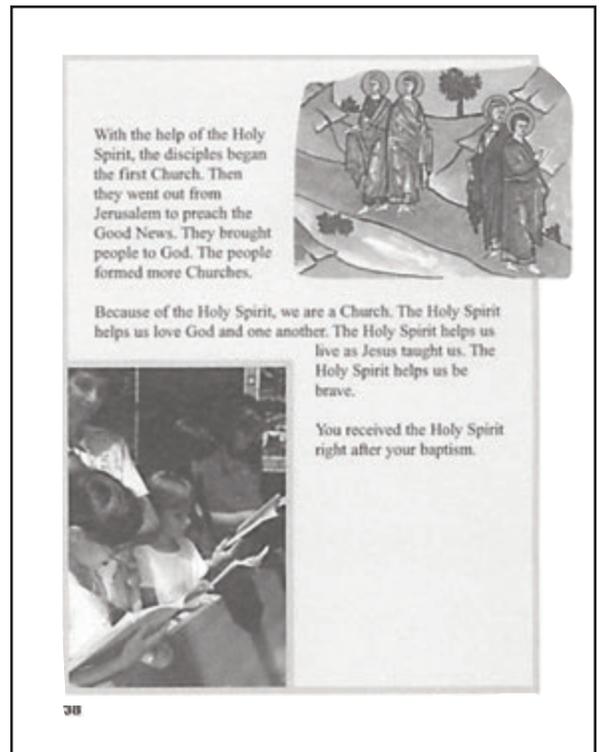
## The people formed more Churches.

*With the help of the Holy Spirit, what happened? (The disciples formed the first Church and went out from Jerusalem to preach. More Churches were formed.)*

## The Holy Spirit helps us be brave.

*How does the Holy Spirit help us today? (Because of the Holy Spirit, we are a Church. The Holy Spirit helps us love God and one another. The Holy Spirit helps us live as Jesus taught us.) Imagine if we didn't love one another. Could we be a Church? The early Christians were known by their love for one another. The Holy Spirit helps us love.*

**Let's review:** We learned the story of the Descent of the Holy Spirit. Who can help retell it? [Assist them in retelling the story.] What are two things the Holy Spirit helps us with? (Loving one another, being Church, living as Jesus taught, being brave) Next week we'll learn about how we received the Holy Spirit.



With the help of the Holy Spirit, the disciples began the first Church. Then they went out from Jerusalem to preach the Good News. They brought people to God. The people formed more Churches.

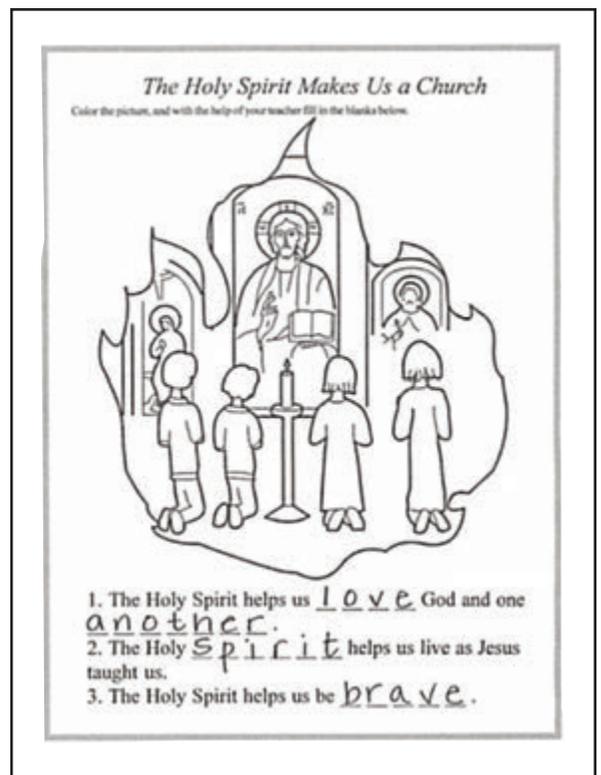
Because of the Holy Spirit, we are a Church. The Holy Spirit helps us love God and one another. The Holy Spirit helps us live as Jesus taught us. The Holy Spirit helps us be brave.

You received the Holy Spirit right after your baptism.

## Activity Tracks

### Basic: The Holy Spirit Makes Us a Church

*Let's see what you remember from the lesson. We'll look first at the bottom of the page. What words will complete these sentences? Then you may color the picture.*



**The Holy Spirit Makes Us a Church**  
Color the picture, and with the help of your teacher fill in the blanks below.

1. The Holy Spirit helps us love God and one another.

2. The Holy spirit helps us live as Jesus taught us.

3. The Holy Spirit helps us be brave.

**Group:** "Build a Story" Puzzle

*Materials:* Pentecost worksheets copied onto heavier paper, Pentecost worksheet for groups or individuals to refer to if necessary

[Ahead of time determine according to how many students are in your class, whether to cut apart words or phrases from the sentences. Every child should have a piece of the "puzzle" so each can have a turn. Allow them to refer to the story in their texts if necessary.] *We learned about how the Holy Spirit came or descended upon the disciples. Let's play a game to help us remember the story. I have important words from four sentences of the story on these slips of paper (or cards). The first person will get a card but won't show it. Then that person will toss the ball to someone, saying: "My word (or phrase) begins with \_\_\_\_." The one who is guessing can look at the Pentecost story in our text, guess the word and throw the ball back. If the person guesses correctly, I'll take the card and we'll try to build sentences from the story. Then it will be another person's turn. [Have a place on blackboard ledge or table to try to piece together the sentences. You might wish to have a poster board and tape. If you want, you can make the sentence puzzles by taping on the cards. Have someone read the sentences when you are finished.]*



**Craft:** "Holy Spirit" Card

*Materials:* Coverweight paper, scissors, "Holy Spirit" title and template worksheet copied onto heavier paper, scotch tape, pencils, Exacto knife and cutting board, scissors, glue stick, crayons or markers

[Ahead of time, cut a slit into the half circle above the flame so that children can fit their scissors in to cut the rest of the semicircle.] *We learned today that the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in the form of a flame. The Holy Spirit really isn't a flame; He is a spirit that we cannot see. However, the Holy Spirit took the form of a flame that day. [Show example.] To begin, paste the title onto the bottom front of your card. Then color your flame. Finally, with your scissors, cut the semicircle above the flame. I've made a starter cut for you. then cut out the part of the flame that's in the semicircle. Last, fold the in the middle, but don't fold the flame. Then, when you*

*close the card so it stands up, the flame will look as if it's coming out of the card.*

**Closing:** [Gather the students at the icon corner.] *We learned today that the Holy Spirit came as tongues of fire. Whenever I see a flame, I think of the Holy Spirit. Our closing prayer for this unit also talks about light. Sing "We Have Seen the True Light" with me.*

*Suddenly a great*

*wind swept*

*through the room.*

*Then tongues of*

*fire came down on*

*each of them.*

*After that Peter*

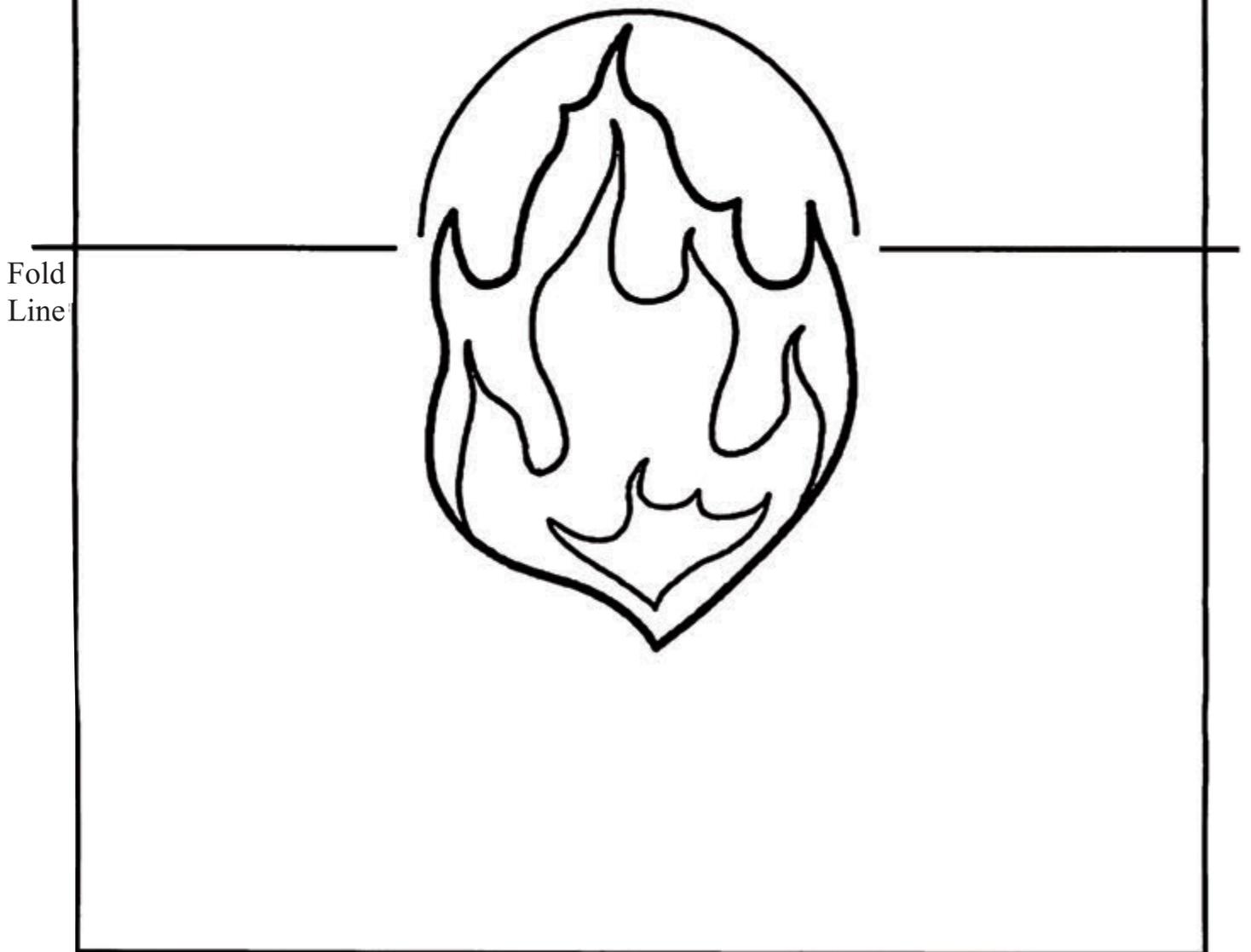
*and the others*

*were not afraid.*

*They began*

*to tell everyone*

*about Jesus Christ.*



The Holy Spirit descended on the disciples  
as a tongue of fire.  
The disciples were no longer afraid.

The Holy Spirit descended on the disciples  
as a tongue of fire.  
The disciples were no longer afraid.

The Holy Spirit descended on the disciples  
as a tongue of fire.  
The disciples were no longer afraid.

The Holy Spirit descended on the disciples  
as a tongue of fire.  
The disciples were no longer afraid.

The Holy Spirit descended on the disciples  
as a tongue of fire.  
The disciples were no longer afraid.