

Catechumenate Session

APPRENTICES IN FAITH: A Resource for the OCIA
Pentecost Sunday • Year C • June 8, 2025

Catechist Preparation

Scripture

FIRST READING—ACTS 2:1-11

The Spirit's descent is told in very few words, which describe its manifestation: a loud sound like wind and tongues like fire coming to rest on each disciple.

SECOND READING—1 CORINTHIANS 12:3B-7, 12-13 OR ROMANS 8:8-17

This passage develops the theme of the Spirit's diverse but united gifts. Saint Paul explains that the multiplicity of gifts in the Church finds unity in their source, the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the body of people that is the Church is also diverse and yet one because of Baptism and the Holy Spirit.

GOSPEL—JOHN 20:19-23 OR JOHN 14:15-16, 23B-26

This reading draws our attention to the changing of the disciples' fear to joy and their transformation from frightened followers to apostolic witnesses (*apostle* means "one sent").

Church Teaching

The Risen Lord appears to the disciples, passing through locked doors. He greets the disciples with words and actions of peace, and bids them to pass that peace on to others.

Reconciliation is central to the mission of Christ. It is the foundation for the new creation we become when we enter the waters of Baptism. Incorporated into Christ, we are adopted as children of God and able to call upon the Father without fear. Fearlessness is prompted by the Holy Spirit. It issues forth in a multiplicity of gifts as believers pursue the building up of God's kingdom in this world.

Additional Background

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1287–1289, 1296

United States Catholic Catechism for Adults: pages 201–211

Compendium—Catechism of the Catholic Church: 265–270

Dismissal Session

(Approximately 20 minutes)

Have the space set with chairs in a circle. On a small table, place a red cloth, a candle, and a vessel containing the Oil of Chrism.

Discover

1. Invite the participants to share what they observed as they entered the church on this Pentecost Sunday. Then ask the following questions and invite the participants to reflect on them quietly before sharing their responses with one or two other people:

What did you see or hear in the Liturgy of the Word?

What word, phrase, or image from the readings stays with you?

2. Invite several participants to share their reflections with the large group. Continue by asking the large group, "What does Pentecost celebrate?"

Deepen

Proclaim the First Reading (Acts 2:1-11). Encourage the participants to imagine themselves in the crowd gathered in Jerusalem. Then ask the following questions:

How would you have responded to the noise like a strong, driving wind?

In what way would you too have been confused to hear people speaking in various languages and to understand them?

What do you think were God's mighty acts that the people were speaking of?

Pray

Use a musical setting of today's Responsorial Psalm, "Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth," or one of the music suggestions for today's session. Conclude by together praying the prayer on the participant page: *Father of light, giver of every good gift, send your Holy Spirit into our hearts that we might weave your love into our words and deeds and become a heavenly leaven for this world. Amen.*

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Extended Catechesis Session

(Approximately 45 to 60 minutes)

Readings

Acts 2:1-11

Psalms 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34

1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13 or Romans 8:8-17

John 20:19-23 or John 14:15-16, 23b-26

Welcome

Welcome everyone who is present, including sponsors, team members, and spouses who are joining the group. Begin with a discussion of the participants' memories and experiences of Pentecost. Explore what they already know about the Solemnity of Pentecost.

Engage

Proclaim the Gospel (John 20:19-23) and allow some silent time for reflection. Then discuss the following:

- The setting is a locked room; the disciples are afraid.
- Jesus stands in their midst and greets them with peace. The disciples rejoice to see him and believe it is the Lord.
- Jesus sends them out to tell the Good News of his Resurrection and to forgive sins.
- Jesus breathes on them the Holy Spirit.

Explore

1. Lead the participants in a discussion around the following points:
 - Pentecost is celebrated on the fiftieth day of Easter. It concludes the Easter season.
 - The birth of the Church is celebrated on Pentecost. It is the day the disciples, having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, go out and make bold proclamations about Jesus Christ. Many come to believe in Christ.
 - The Spirit descends upon Jesus at his baptism. The outpouring of the Spirit is intended for all believers.

- The laying on of hands and the anointing with the Oil of Chrism are the two essential signs of the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - Different pastoral practices exist within the Church regarding the timing of the celebration of Confirmation. In the early Church, it was celebrated with Baptism. Later it became separated from Baptism.
2. Highlight key points from *Catholic Teaching: The Gifts of the Spirit and the Sacrament of Confirmation*. Also highlight the *Key Terms* and *Voices of Faith* sections.

Apply

1. Encourage the catechumens and candidates to complete these statements:

From the prayer, discussion, and study for this Sunday, I understand the Church's teaching to be . . .

I am challenged to live the message of this Sunday by . . .

2. If possible, have someone who has been confirmed address the group about the meaning of Confirmation in his or her life.
3. Explore the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Invite the participants and their sponsors to choose one of the gifts and spend time this week discussing how this gift would help them in their lives as disciples.

Pray

Pray together the following prayer: *Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy his consolations through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*