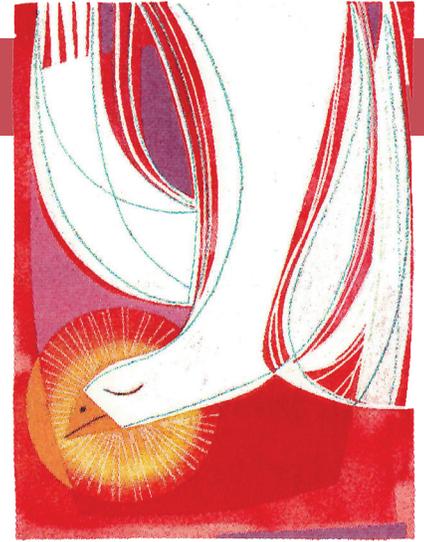


Pentecost: The Day the Spirit Came



Parents & guardians, start here.
Read these numbered instructions
to yourself throughout the process.

1

Thank you for guiding your child through this process. Please be sure you have **read the Parent Introduction Page** so you will understand your role.

2

Before you begin, read the introduction on the right to yourself. It will help you understand what you will be exploring with your child in the following pages.

3

With the help of your child, prepare the meeting space. Pull out your Bible, light some candles, and add any other decoration you'd like to make the space beautiful.

4

Getting started. Discuss together: What makes a special event “special” for you? What everyday events do you make special? How?

This retelling of the event of Pentecost comes from the first two chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. Pentecost is often called “the birthday of the Church” because receiving the Spirit enabled the apostles to preach and build community. God wants us to continue being a Church family. The Church helps us grow ever closer to God and to each other through the sacraments.

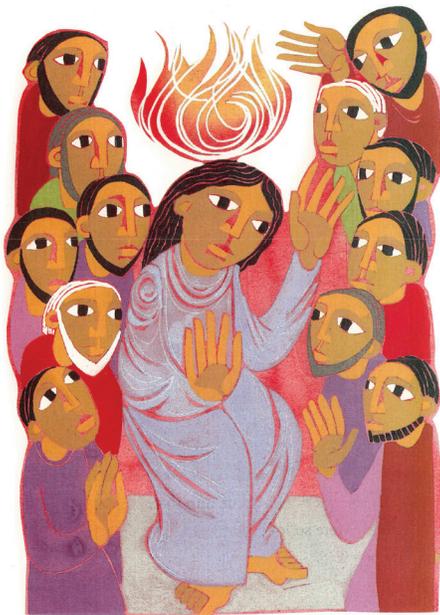
Have one family member read the text below out loud or take turns. Along the way, clarify anything your child might not understand.



A long time ago, Jesus died and rose from the dead. He spent some time with his friends, the disciples and apostles, after his resurrection. Jesus continued to teach them about the Reign of God, God's plan for harmony and justice. And Jesus told them that they needed to go out to the whole world and let people know that God loved them. Then Jesus ascended into heaven.

Days passed, and the disciples and apostles met often to talk and pray. What Jesus wanted them to be, witnesses to the whole earth, seemed impossible to them. They were uncertain about what to do, but they stayed in Jerusalem as Jesus had told them. "Think of all that has already happened," they would remind each other. "We must keep holding onto our hope and faith in Jesus."

On the day of Pentecost, Jerusalem was filled with visitors coming to celebrate the feast together. Jesus' mother Mary and the disciples were gathered to pray when a loud rushing noise, like a strong wind, filled their room. Tongues of fire appeared over each one's head.



As amazing as all this was, the truly wonderful thing was happening inside of each person's heart. All the power of the wind and all the passion of the fire was nothing compared to how people felt as the Spirit filled them!

These were people who had never traveled far from their own homes. They had never studied another culture or language. Just minutes ago they had been frightened and confused. Now they were courageous and sure. They found they could speak in foreign languages. They immediately rose from their seats and went out into the streets of Jerusalem. The message they had to share was too important to be held inside any longer.

The loud noise of the wind had been heard out in the crowded streets, and many people had come to the house to investigate. When they heard the disciples speaking, the strangers outside became very confused. "I am from Asia, a land far away. How can this Galilean be shouting

in my native tongue?”

“No one preaching is an Egyptian like me, yet I understand every word being said. How can this be?”

Others could not accept what their own ears told them. “These men are just drunk—and so early in the morning, too!”

No one could explain what was happening, but they were all hearing their own language being spoken. The friends of Jesus, simple people with little education, were teaching better than anyone else they had ever heard.

Peter stepped before the crowd and held up his hand, rough from his years with the fishing nets. He opened his mouth, and beautiful ideas poured out of him. “My friends, what you see happening was predicted by the prophet, Joel. He said that God’s Spirit, when poured into us, would change our lives. The young will see visions, the old will dream dreams. Many will prophesy. And all this will happen so you may know God has saved you.”

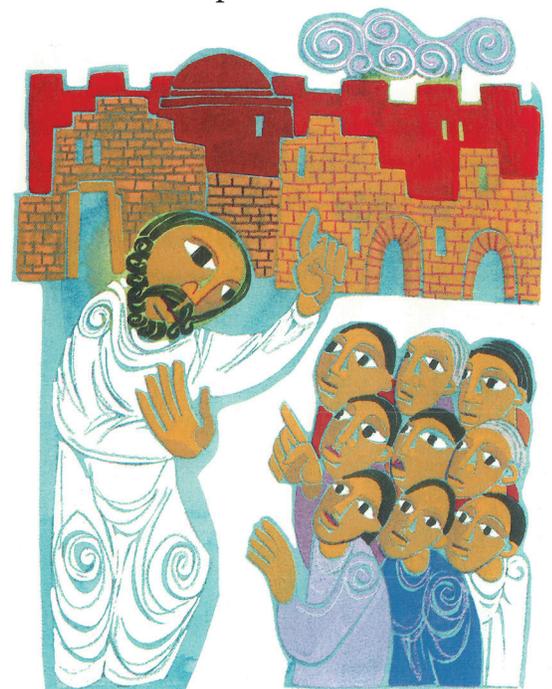
Peter showed how the prophets and teachers of Judaism had predicted the Messiah. He told the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. He told them that Jesus was this very Messiah, the Anointed One who had come to save God’s people. All there listened intently to Peter.

When Peter finished speaking, many wanted to change their lives and follow the ways of Jesus. “What shall we do?” they asked Peter and the other disciples.

Peter answered, “Be sorry for what you have done that was wrong. And be baptized in the name of Jesus the Christ. Your sins will be forgiven and you will receive the Holy Spirit, just as we have today. This promise is for you, and for your children and for people very far away from here, for God is calling all of us.”

The Bible tells us that 3,000 people were baptized that day, people who heard and welcomed Peter’s message. These new followers of Jesus began to do as the earliest friends of Jesus did. They broke bread together (as Jesus asked them to do in remembrance of him) and prayed. They shared things with each other, so no one would be hungry or poor. This was happening because the Holy Spirit filled their hearts with God’s great love.

The apostles and disciples who had been uncertain how to do what Jesus had asked them to do were no longer mixed up. On this



Pentecost day, the Spirit showed them exactly what was needed. This was the day when the Good News that Jesus was—and is—Lord and Messiah began to spread. This was when people joined together to live in community and to break bread together. This was the birthday of the Church.

The Spirit fills us today as well. We are still called to pray together, to celebrate the Eucharist, and to help each other. The Holy Spirit made the Church a sacrament, and made all of us sacraments, too.

1

Now discuss the story with your child. Use the following or other questions:

1. What most struck you in the story? Why?
2. How did Jesus' friends feel after Jesus ascended into heaven? How did that change after the Holy Spirit came?
3. Pretend you were in the crowd listening to the disciples and Peter at Pentecost. What would you have thought? What would you have done?

2

Get your child started on the activity on the next page, making sure they understand the instructions. (The answers are: 1. apostles 2. Holy Spirit 3. Reign of God 4. Pentecost 5. salvation 6. ascension 7. disciples 8. Peter. 9. Mary.) Then continue to read below.

3

Just for you: The Spirit of God is with us. Great things happen when we are open to the Spirit.

Peter promised those who listened to him at the first Pentecost that great things would happen. This promise is with us today! Peter used Old Testament stories and the stories of Jesus' life to convince those around him that the Messiah had come. We are saved by our Messiah, and we are called to do great things. Our present lives continue to teach us this, whatever our age.

Speaking in Tongues

At Pentecost, the disciples amazed everyone by speaking in many different languages. Each listener could understand what was being said.

Below are some words that come from the Pentecost story. Can you unscramble them to make sense?

SLEPASOT _____

YHLO TIPSIR _____

GIREN FO ODG _____

CEPSENTOT _____

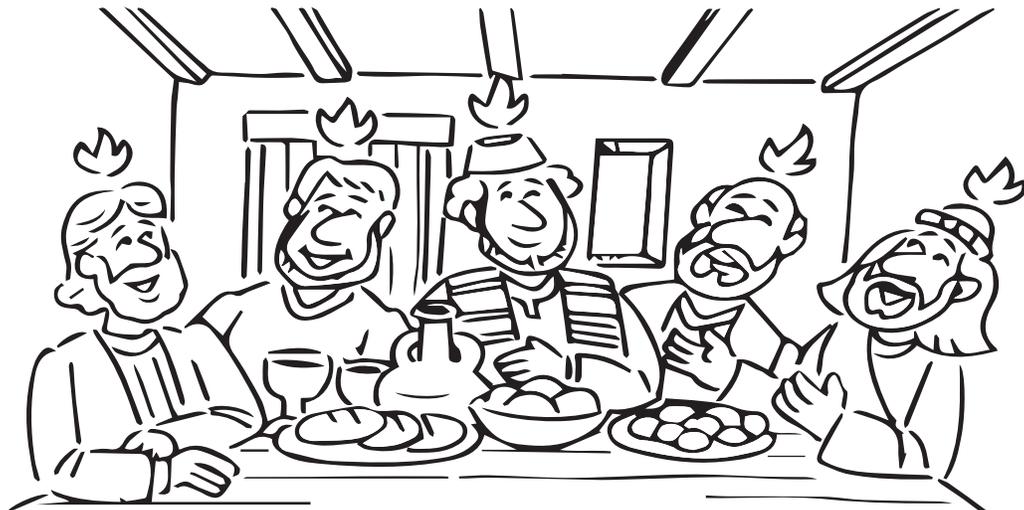
TALSAONIV _____

SONCINEAS _____

PLICESSID _____

REPTE _____

RYAM _____



The Spirit Weaves With Our Lives

1

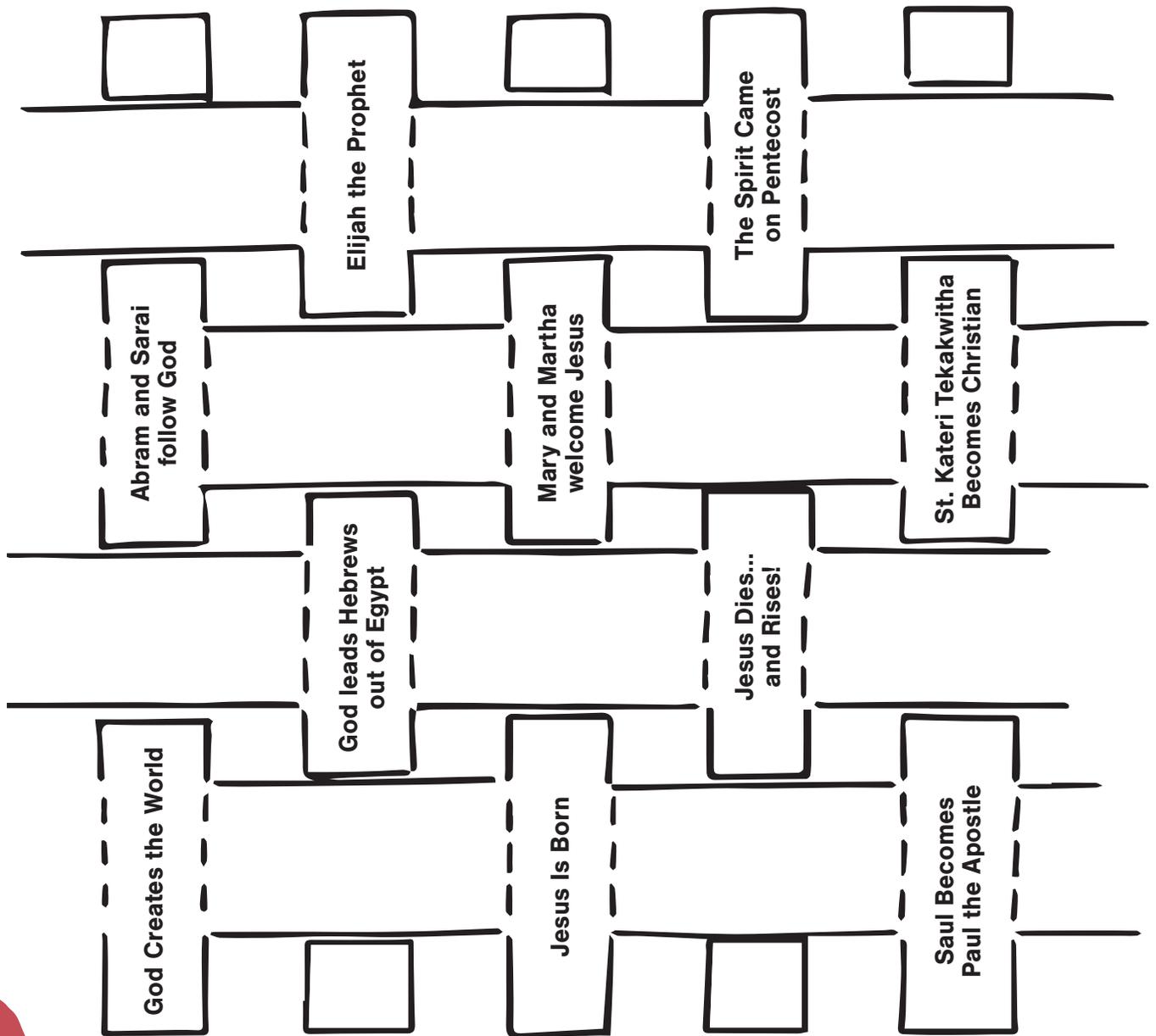
Help your child get started on their activity on the next page, and then continue to step 2.

2

Our stories, woven in with the stories of our faith family, form the fabric of salvation. In the blank spaces on the horizontal strips below, write down faith events that occurred through the years in your own family, including past generations. You could include sacraments received, when you joined a parish, or other ways your family has lived out its faith. Leave the last strip empty for events related to your child.

3

Talk to your child about how you each did your activity. Work with your child to write in faith events from their own life, such as their baptism, on the last strip.



The Spirit Weaves Our Lives Together

You wrote a story about how God and the Spirit have already acted in your life in our last session. Think about that story again. This activity is going to ask you to look even deeper into that story. This is called “reflection,” and it is a way for us to stop and identify when God is with us.

In your story:

How old were you?

Who was with you?

Where did you live at that time?

What school did you attend?

Who was your best friend?

How did you feel at the time this happened?

How did it turn out?

Special Events

1

Look at family pictures of weddings, Baptisms, First Communions or Confirmations. Notice how special we make these moments with fancy clothes, flowers, rings and so on. Make note also about who we invite to be with us at such cherished events.



Closing Ritual

2

Thank God by naming all the people related to the events on the weaving page. Finish with the closing prayer.

Through Jesus, with Jesus, and in Jesus,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, forever and ever.
Amen.

