

WONDERS IN HEAVEN, SIGNS ON EARTH.

Here are 8 ways to celebrate
Pentecost with families or groups.



1.

Say a Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful
and enkindle 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.
Amen.



2.

Read the passage together in Acts 2:1-13 that tells the story of Pentecost.

Ask different people to read separate parts of the text to benefit from a range of voices.

Challenges:

How many images and symbols can you find?

What are they?

How many places are mentioned?

Going deeper – download an ancient Bible map and see these places in context.



3.

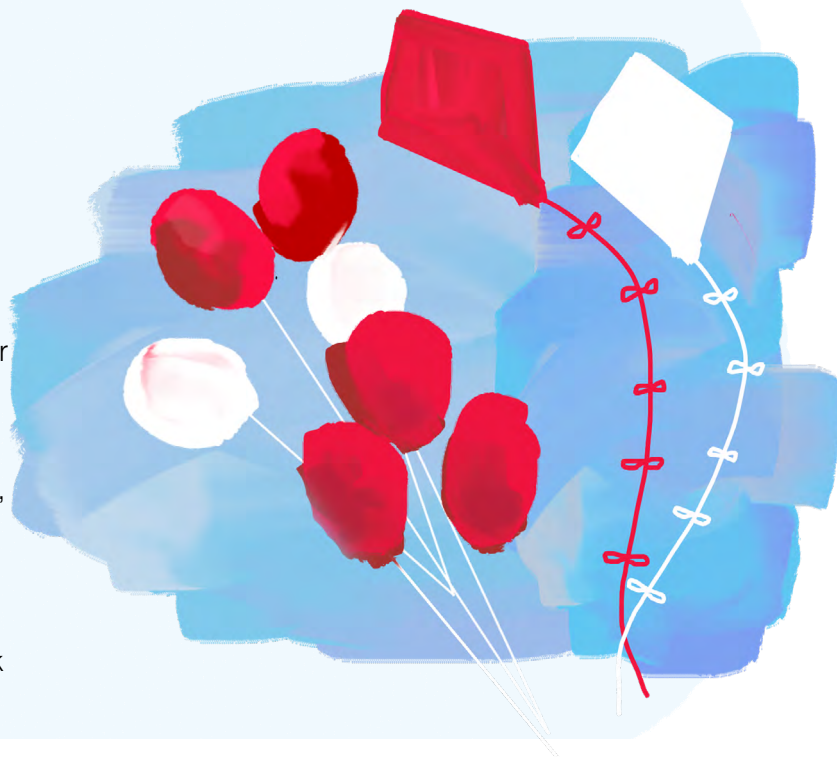
Fly a kite or blow up some balloons

Enjoy the tradition of flying kites on Pentecost. You could make your own kite and incorporate some special Pentecost imagery.

You can also buy red and white balloons, blow them up and string them together to make a symbol of the Holy Spirit around your garden or house.

Pentecost is the Birthday of the Church so celebrate it as you would a birthday with fun, food, good music and some balloons.

Ask your family and friends which gift of the Holy Spirit they would like to be given today. Then agree to pray for them during the week to receive that gift.



4.

Wear red or white

In some places, it is traditional to wear red or white on Pentecost.

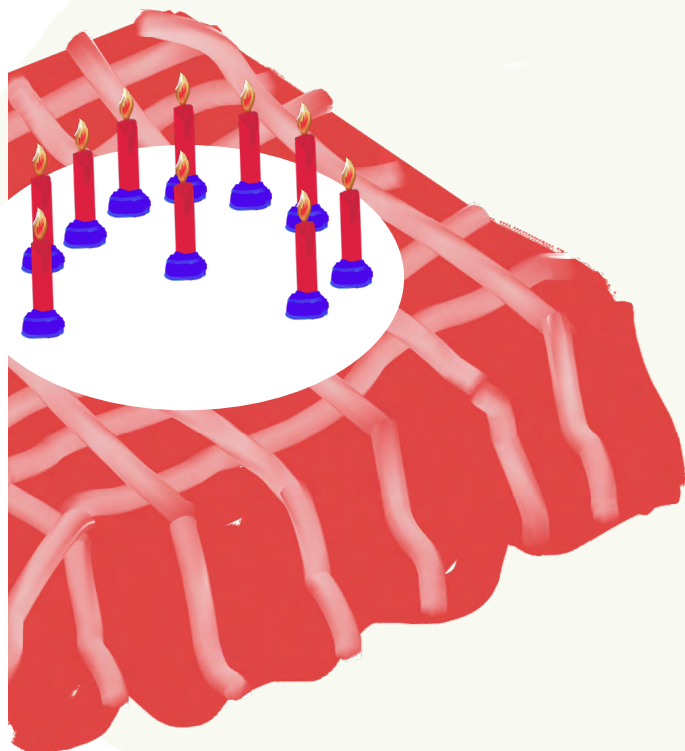
Red represents the flames that descended on Mary and the apostles of Jesus at the first Pentecost, and it is the liturgical colour of the day.

White represents our new life in Christ.

Light thirteen candles at lunch or dinner sometime this week to represent the descent of the Holy Spirit on the twelve apostles and Mary.

Decorate your main dining table in red or white; a white tablecloth sprinkled with red rose petals or a red tablecloth with white petals, with a vase of white flowers in the centre.

You could also decorate your table or windows with paper doves.



5.

Talk about the Holy Spirit

Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

What does the phrase "I believe in the Holy Spirit"? mean to you? (#136)

Before Christ came to earth, how was the Holy Spirit at work? (#140-141)

In what ways was Mary transformed by the Holy Spirit? (#142)

What is the relationship between the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ? (#137)

What does the Holy Spirit do in the Church? (#1458).





6. Read and discuss Peter's speech in Acts 2:14-41

What do you find most interesting in the speech?
Which words or phrases are you drawn to?
Stay with those words or phrases in your prayer this week.

Ask God to show you their deeper meaning in your life this month.

Discuss the symbolic significance of the Holy Spirit overcoming barriers of language and geographical space.

What do these say about how God sees the human race?
What do these say about what God wills for the Church?

How can we celebrate the languages and countries of all the parishioners in our church?
Can we invite people to read the intercessions at Mass in different languages?
Can we host an international meal with different cultural dishes in our parish hall?

Compare the Pentecost story with the story of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1-9.

What is the most important difference between the two stories for you?

7.

Learn about the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit over a week

The seven **gifts of the Holy Spirit** are: **wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.**

Six of them are found in Isaiah 11:2 when the prophet foretold that the Holy Spirit would rest upon the promised Messiah, Emmanuel. Piety is the only one not found in Isaiah's prophecy. Piety was added to the gifts of the Holy Spirit to highlight the importance of reverence for God and to encourage a loving relationship with God and others. Christian tradition and the Greek translation of the text interpreted a "spirit of godliness" as distinct from "fear of the Lord," leading to its inclusion as a distinct gift.

And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. Isaiah 11:2

As Jesus was blessed with these gifts by God the Father, every believer is also blessed with these same gifts by the Holy Spirit.

Ask to deepen your understanding of these gifts on each day of the week.

SUNDAY

Wisdom is first gift of the Holy Spirit. It is the ability to exercise good judgment: right from wrong, justice and injustice. It comes from lifelong experience and ongoing reflection. In the Old Testament wisdom is feminine and personified as Sophia while in the New Testament wisdom is personified in Jesus himself.

MONDAY

Understanding is the gift of reason, intelligence and discernment. It is the ability to perceive with insight, comprehend and interpret information and meaning.

TUESDAY

Counsel is the ability to give and receive good advice: to teach, guide and direct, warn and challenge, recommend and encourage. The Holy Spirit offers this gift to all those who have a role of responsibility e.g. parents and teachers, companions and mentors, advisors and guides, leaders and managers.

WEDNESDAY

Fortitude is the faithful commitment to God, to others or to a specific type of action. It shows itself as moral strength, courage, determination and patience, as perseverance, trust and resilience.

THURSDAY

Knowledge is the ability to study and learn and which can be gained in many different modes, levels and formats. It is the skill of acquiring, retaining and managing a wide spectrum of information as well as its application for constructive and positive purposes.

FRIDAY

Fear of the Lord is awe, reverence and respect for God. It accepts that we are not self-sufficient or independent but that everything comes from God. It is rooted in humility and trust, praise, worship and adoration of God alone.

SATURDAY

Piety is the ability to nurture personal holiness. It models a life which seeks freedom from sin and reconciliation with God whenever we fall. Through obedience and devotion to God's will, we are transformed by his love and forgiveness.

8. Learn about the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit over a week

The fruits of the Spirit are the ideal virtues which the Holy Spirit nurtures in us and which can inspire us in our daily life.

The tradition of the Church lists twelve fruits:

love, charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control.

Start this activity in the morning, ready to start the day with your themed spiritual fruit.

At the end of your chosen day(s), you can then review your theme as set out below.

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Galatians 5.22–23a.

This activity is based on 10 of the 12 fruits of the Spirit. It is a variation on a well-known Spiritual Review invented by St Ignatius of Loyola, a 16th-century Spanish saint. It uses biblical ideas to help us focus on the day ahead or the day just gone, and to become more aware of our experiences through this lens. Through this review, we can discern where God is for us now and what he is saying to us.

Set aside some time to sit in your kitchen in the morning and evening. You will need one or more different fruits to represent any of the fruits of the Spirit. You can reflect on just one fruit on one of the days of the week or use up to seven fruits - one for each day of the week.

Once you have decided which fruit of the Spirit you want to review, hold the fruit you have chosen to represent it, and ask the questions listed below, once in the morning and once in the evening. It's up to you when you decide to eat that fruit.

Love:

Morning – with whom do I need to show love?

Evening – did I show this love or what hindered me from showing this love today?

Do I show enough love to myself?

Joy:

Morning – where would I like to find joy?

Evening – did I encounter joy or what prevented me from this joyful encounter today?

Where can I find more joy in my life?

Peace:

Morning – with whom do I need to be at peace?

Evening – did I find peace today?

Where can I begin some gentle steps to be reconciled with a person or situation?

Patience:

Morning – with what or whom do I need to be more patient?

Evening – did I practise patience or is this something that I still need to work on?

Whom would I like to be more patient with me?

Kindness and Generosity:

Morning – what kindness and generosity can I give today?

Evening – who received my kindness and generosity or was there no time in the day?

When can I show kindness and generosity next?

Trust and Faithfulness:

Morning – when can I trust God faithfully?

Evening – where and when did God call me to be more faithful? Whom do I find hard to trust?

Can I ask God to help me with this over the next week?

Gentleness and Self-Control:

Morning – who needs me to be gentle today?

Evening – do I find it easy to be gentle or do I seek to be more gentle in my life? Who is a good role model of self-control for me?

Give thanks for any or all these fruits of the Spirit and what they have shown you about yourself. Do not worry about any areas in which you feel you have much to learn; our spiritual growth is a long journey. It will take us our whole life and God is with us all the way.

